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THE QUIVER



(*Drawn by* WILLIAM SMALL.)

THE ORCHARD.

WITHIN the orchard's many shadows,
Flitting softly round our feet,
While, burning hot, the sunlight shot
Between them in the summer heat;
We went at times, by dock-leaves falling
Limp beside the mossy walling.

The way from garden into orchard
  Through an arched gateway led,
Where rose a dovecote up above
  The grey old arch above the head,
By flow'r-beds of the oldest fashion,
Sweet with rose and red carnation.

There spreading trees of mossy oldness,
  This and that way, leaning lay,
And others, young and upright, sprung
  For year-stunned old ones cast away,
Within a thorny hedge that girded
Ground, and tree-bough many-birded.

There shone the boughs in May's gay sunshine
  Out in blooth as white 's a sheet,
Or else their flowers fell in showers
  Softly down about our feet;
Or else they nodded, many-appled,
Green, and lastly ruddy-dappled.

And then the time of apple-taking
  Came, and apples pattered down,
Below the trees, in twos and threes,
  Full thick, and yellow, red and brown,
To folks that filled, from baskets by them,
Bags as full as they could tie them.

CHRIST AND MELCHISEDEC.

BY THE REV. DANIEL MOORE, M.A., CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO THE QUEEN; AUTHOR OF "AIDS TO PRAYER," ETC.

"For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually."—HEB. vii. 1—3.

THE Epistle to the Hebrews occupies a most important place in our revealed theology. It connects itself with both dispensations, and throws a mutually reflected light upon both. By means of it we seem to be carried up to an exceeding high mountain of thought, whence we can behold on the one side the types and shadows of the law, and on the other their verified fulfilment and consummation in the visible transactions of the Gospel—can see, on the one hand, a sharply-defined and significant outline, plainly prefigurative of something which was then to come; on the other, this outline filled up, coloured in, made plain to the eye of faith as a map or plan of the Divine benevolence—the scheme unfolded by which God would save the world.

In the portion of the Epistle from which our text is taken the apostle is endeavouring to set forth the authority, dignity, and efficacy of the Saviour's priesthood, and that especially in relation to the priests that were under the law. And the basis of his argument is, that the Levitical priesthood was essentially temporary; that it bore the impress of something that was designed to pass away; being, in fact, an intermediate institution between two other priesthoods—one that had gone before, and another which was to come after. Accordingly, he shows that antecedently to the giving of the law and the setting up of an order of priesthood whose successions should be continued in the line of Aaron, there had risen up a priest who, in his resemblance to Christ, was far before any priests of the Levitical succession—one who, in his name, in his genealogy, in the conjunction of his offices, in the several functions he discharged, as well as in the peculiar homage which he received, stood out as an eminent type of Christ from the earliest periods of the world; that to this illustrious personage the great founder of their nation had borne witness; that Abraham their father had deemed it meet to be blessed of him; and that to David, rejoicing in the anticipation of Messiah's day, no aspect of Christ's priesthood was so grateful as that which connected it, not with any of Aaron's line, but with one of far higher antiquity, saying, as he does, "The Lord sware, and will not repent. Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec." This argument, as addressed to Jews, you would perceive, must be conclusive. So far was their claim of perfection as belonging to the Levitical priesthood from being established, that priesthood had not the merit of priority among preparatory institutions of the like sort, was not even the first intimation which God had given of the qualifications that should meet in a personal mediator. The law had its use, no doubt, and a noble use. It was a system of visible and material types, explanatory of the true principles of mediation, and foreshowing how a redemption was to be wrought out. But the most distinguished personal type of Christ had gone before, and is to be found in this Melchisedec, who, being "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually."

Let us proceed to peruse the apostle's parallel between Christ and Melchisedec, by considering the latter—I. *In his title as king.* II. *In his office as priest.* III. *In his origin as mysterious.* IV. *In his ministrations as intransmissible, and shared with none besides.*

I. And first, with regard to the *title of king*, as here given to Melchisedec—"For this Melchisedec, King of Salem."

It would not tend to edification to discuss the various surmises raised as to who Melchisedec was, as to whether he was Enoch, or Shem, or one of the posterity of Japhet. It is sufficient to notice that the nature of the apostle's argument requires that he should be a man—as distinguished from any angelic appearance—and a real person, actually living in the time of Abraham. His appearance on the stage of Old Testament history is singularly mysterious and flitting. He is no sooner come than he is gone again. He crosses our path in the Mosaic record; nine hundred years after, he is made mention of, prophetically, by the psalmist David; and then, a thousand years later, we have him made the subject of an important Scriptural argument in the hands of the apostle Paul. Our only historical notices of him are gained from the fourteenth chapter of Genesis. There we learn that Abraham, on returning from the slaughter of the confederate kings, rested for a time with his forces in the valley of Shaveh, which is the King's Dale, a place not far from Jerusalem. Now, it was an early Oriental custom, that forces on an expedition, when passing through the territory of any neutral or friendly power, should receive from such power whatever they might need of temporary refreshment. King's Dale belonged to Melchisedec; and as Abraham was both a neighbour and a friendly ally, we are not surprised to find that the prince came out and brought bread and wine for the refreshment of Abraham and his followers. Hence, if this had been all, the incident might have passed without special notice. But it is added by Moses, that this Melchisedec, whom we might have supposed to be no more than an ordinary Canaanitish prince, was also a priest of the Most High God; was recognised by Abraham as such; the father of the faithful deigning to receive the priestly benediction at his hands, and, in token of veneration for his character and office, awarding to him a tenth of the spoils. Here, then, we see how closely Melchisedec is a type of Christ, and how, both in his acts and titles, he sustains the eminence of his typical character. Even the little incident noticed in Genesis we can hardly suppose was without its significance. He is there represented as coming out to Abraham, bringing him a present of bread and wine, that his followers might be refreshed after the toils of conflict. What is this but a picture of the way in which Christ, the true Melchisedec, rewards and refreshes those now, who, in faith and in hope, are followers of faithful Abraham? Thus, are they wearied with the toils and burdens of their spiritual warfare, He says unto them, "Come unto Me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will refresh you." Are they tired out with the world's disappointing pursuits, having spent their money for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which satisfieth not, He says, "Lo, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters: come ye buy and eat: yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price." Nay, are they longing after greater nearness of spiritual communion, desiring to realise the presence of their God and Saviour, to see the King in His beauty, and receive from Him tokens of peace and love, He comes forth to them like Melchisedec, bringing bread and wine, offering to believing hearts the blessed sacrament of His passion, that so, with the sacred memorials of His body broken, and his blood shed fresh upon them, His people may go on their way rejoicing.

II. Still more typical of the Redeemer's royalty are the titles given to Melchisedec in the second verse:—"First, being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that, also, King of Salem, which is king of peace." These titles, as applied to the first Melchisedec, may mean no more than that in the methods of his rule he had earned for himself the reputation of being a scrupulously upright and peace-loving prince; that he stood high among neighbouring powers for the righteousness which characterised his regal administration, for the integrity and uprightness of his judicial decisions, for the amicable relations which he maintained with the different border-states, and for the tranquillity which marked his government at home. The custom of giving special titles to monarchs, based on their reputed personal qualities, has obtained in all ages. We read of Alexander the Great, and Charles the Bold, and Antoninus the Pious. And in like manner, the subjects of Melchisedec, ignorant of any prophetic mystery wrapped up in the designation, may have agreed to describe him as king of righteousness, and, after that, king of peace.

But who sees not the applicability of these titles to Christ in the exercise of His spiritual royalty? "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is His name whereby He shall be called, the Lord our righteousness." This language implies that our own righteousness is gone—gone past recovery and past hope; that one must be made a righteousness unto us; that a new and everlasting righteousness must be brought in; that one who knew no sin must be made sin for us, that we who knew no righteousness might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Such a High Priest became us. We must have this attribute of righteousness in our Melchisedec. If He cannot

satisfy every demand of a violated law, if He cannot meet all the conditions of unsullied holiness, if He cannot cancel every claim which heaven may have against us by the perfection of His obedience, nay, if He cannot present my soul before God as perfect, as unblamable, as free from blemish or spot as His own, the ground of my confidence is gone. To be called King of Mercy, King of Compassion, King of Love, is not sufficient for Him who is to undertake for me. In order to His mediation being effectual, He must be King of Righteousness.

And after that, also, King of Salem, which is king of peace. This also is beautifully typical of Messiah's kingship. In the Book of Psalms you will remember it is written of Him, "in His days righteousness shall flourish, and abundance of 'peace' so long as the moon endureth." And, again, in Isaiah, "The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever." You see in these passages the order in which our spiritual blessings are to come to us. The first thing necessary is to provide us with a righteousness, a clothing which shall hide our moral nakedness from the sight of God a suitable wedding garment wherewith we may sit down at the marriage supper of the Lamb in heaven; this done, however, the guilt removed, the curse done away, the sword of heaven sheathed, the face of the Eternal Father turned kindly towards us, all the enmities of our carnal nature broken down and destroyed, we attain to a sense of inward tranquillity. "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God." "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you." "Let not your heart be troubled," on account of my Father's ancient displeasure. I who am made to you Melchisedec, King of Righteousness, am made to you also King of Peace.

(To be concluded.)

MAKING FRIENDS OF MAMMON.

BY THE REV. SAMUEL COX, NOTTINGHAM, AUTHOR OF "A DAY WITH CHRIST," ETC., ETC.

Luke xvi. 9.

EVEN if we are honest and devout, and "our open eyes desire the truth," it is still very difficult for us to ascertain exactly what value we ought to put on money, what influence we should allow it to exert on our aims, our habits, our desires. It does not, indeed, take much wisdom to see that the love of money for its own sake is simply base, that it is fatally injurious and degrading to the heart that harbours it; nor does it take an heroic goodness to determine that, come what may, we will not let the pursuit of wealth be our supreme quest, that we will not take Mammon for our god. But, then, very few of us do love money for its own sake; and, probably, most of us would refuse to deliberately sacrifice character and principle, or even culture and enjoyment, to the mere acquisition of wealth. Yet, none the less, if, taking the New Testament for our guide, we honestly try to determine with any precision what place money, and the pursuit of money, should take in our thoughts, our endeavours, our aims, we may haply find ourselves involved in no little perplexity.

Nor shall we find our perplexity relieved, we may rather find it deepened, as we study the teaching of Christ and His apostles on this theme, for they lay down principles against which we may find much to object. Look, for instance, at what are probably their fullest utterances on it—1 Tim. vi. and Luke xvi.

In his Epistle to Timothy, St. Paul affirms that godliness with contentment is the true gain; that then only are we rich when we want nothing and long for nothing we do not possess, when our souls are settled in a sacred content undisturbed by lusts and cravings for aught beyond our reach. The love of money, he affirms, is a root from which all forms of evil spring. Impelled by this base lust, many have wandered from the Faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. The desire to be rich is a snare in which many feet have been caught; those who cherish it plunge into many foolish and hurtful lusts, and are drowned in perdition. The man of God will flee this love, this craving, this desire. Having food and raiment, he will therewith be content. Discarding the pursuit of riches, he will follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. He knows that as he brought nothing into the world, so neither can he carry anything out; why then should he neglect that in himself which is spiritual and eternal, in order to amass a burden that is only too likely to make his very life anxious and painful to him, and of which death will very certainly unlade him? The gains that *can* be carried into the next world, these, and these alone, should engage the heart of immortal man. In short, he speaks of wealth and of those who pursue it with a large tone of contempt and moral reproof which is really very surprising and perplexing to our English ears. For most of us frankly acknowledge that we should like to be rich, or at least somewhat richer than we are; some of us because we crave the ease, the

enjoyment, the security, the social position and influence which wealth confers, and others of us because we crave, or persuade ourselves that we crave, the leisure for culture, the refined habits and pursuits, the means and opportunities of doing good, which are at present beyond our reach. "Content with bare food and *covering*, as St. Paul contemptuously calls it? Not we! We want well-appointed houses, well-served tables, and garments cut in the fashion of the time. We want books, music, pictures, and leisure to enjoy them. We want to mix with the best people on equal terms, to give our children the best education and training, to feel safe for the future, to provide against rainy days and sick days, days of infirmity and age."

That wealth should never stand first with us; that it should never be indispensable to us; that we should value it only for the good uses to which we can put it—these are the three great principles we have found in the New Testament; and these are not only Christian principles, they are also principles that commend themselves to every man's reason and conscience in the sight of God. And therefore we shall be condemned by reason and conscience, as well as by Christ, if gain is more to us than godliness, if we dread poverty more than we dread sin, or sorrow more over a bad debt than over a bad action, over a loss of money than over a loss of temper, or if we do not seek to make a wise and generous use of our money, rather than to secure a selfish enjoyment of it.

But here the question naturally arises, What *is* the wise, what is the Christian use of money?—*i.e.*, what should be our ruling principle and motive both in acquiring and spending it, however much or however little we may possess? And to this question we can have no other answer than that of our Lord, if only we understand it rightly: "*Make to yourselves friends out of Mammon*, that when it shall fail you, they may receive you into the everlasting tabernacles." But it does not help us much to a right understanding of this answer to be told that *Mammon* is a Syriac word for "wealth," and that it is out of this wealth that we are to elicit friends more enduring and more hospitable than itself. To get into the true line of meaning we must remember that in these words our Lord gives the moral of a parable, that of the Unjust Steward, which He had just uttered. This Steward, while the rents of the estate were under his control, so used them as to gain the favour of the tenants, in order that, when he lost his place, they might receive him into their houses. Our Lord points the moral of the story by bidding us be equally prudent and forecasting. He would have us so use our goods and possessions as that, when these fail us, by our wise kind use of them, we may have made friends who shall welcome us into everlasting habitations, and be our crown and joy for ever.

Well, now, suppose a man has lived long enough to feel his feet, and to consider the courses that are open to him, and to be sincerely anxious to take the right course and to make the best use he can of his life. All around him he sees neighbours who are pushing on with the utmost eagerness in the pursuit of fortune, who are sacrificing ease, culture, pleasure, health, and at times conscience itself, in their love for that which St. Paul pronounces to be a root of all evil, a temptation and a snare, and which Christ says makes it very hard for a man to enter the kingdom of God. He has to determine whether or not he will join in this headlong pursuit—whether he too will risk health of body, culture of mind, and sensitive purity of conscience, in the endeavour to grow rich, or richer than he is. He sees that the dignity and comfort and peace of human life depend largely on his being able to supply a large circle of wants without constant anxiety and care; but he also feels that he has many wants, and those the deepest, which mere wealth will not supply. Accordingly, he resolves to work diligently and as wisely as he can, in order to secure an adequate provision for his physical necessities, and to guard his independence; but he resolves also that he will not sacrifice himself, or all that is best and purest and most refined in himself, to the pursuit of money and what it will fetch. Hence, so far as he can, he limits his wants; he keeps his tastes simple and pure, and by labours that do not absorb his whole time and energies he provides for the due gratification of these tastes and wants. Hence also he gives a good deal of his time and energy to reading good books, let us say, or to mastering some natural science, or to developing a taste for music and acquiring skill in it. He expects his neighbour, who had no better start nor opportunities than he, to grow richer than he himself has done, if his neighbour thinks only of getting and investing money; and therefore he does not grudge him his greater wealth, nor look on it with envious eye; he rather rejoices that he himself has given up some wealth in order to acquire a higher culture, and to develop his literary or artistic tastes.

Here, then, we have two men, two neighbours, before us. The one has grown very rich, has far more money than he can enjoy, more even perhaps than he quite knows how to spend or invest, but he has hardly anything except what his money will procure for him. The other has only a modest provision for his wants, but he has a mind stored with the best thoughts of ancient and modern wisdom, an eye which finds a thousand miracles of beauty in every scene of Nature, and an ear that trembles under the ecstasy of sweet harmonious sounds. By some sudden turn of fortune, Mammon fails them both; they are both reduced to poverty: both, so soon as they recover from the

shock, have to make a fresh start in life. Which of the two is better off now? Which of them has made real friends to himself out of the Mammon while he had it? Not the wealthier of the two, assuredly; for, now that he has lost his wealth, he has lost all that he had: he has lived only to get rich; when his riches went, all went. But the other man, the man who read and thought and cultivated his mental faculties, *he* has not lost all. His money has gone, but it has not taken from him the wise thoughts he had gathered from books, or his insight into the secrets and beauties of Nature, or the power to charm from the concord of sweet sounds. He is simply thrown more absolutely on these inward and inseparable possessions for occupation and enjoyment. While he had it, he made friends to himself out of the Mammon of unrighteousness; and, now that it has failed him, those friends receive him into tabernacles which are always open, and in which he has long learned to find pleasure and to take rest.

Poor and imperfect as this illustration is—for there are losses in which even science and art, even Nature and culture, can give us but cold comfort—it may nevertheless suffice to make our Lord's words clear. For, obviously, if a man give a good part of the time he might devote to the acquisition of wealth to *religious* culture, instead of to merely mental culture; if he takes thought and spends time in acquiring habits of prayer and worship and obedience and trust, in acquainting himself with the will of God and doing it; if he expend money, and time which is worth money to him, in helping on the work of the Church and in ministering to the wants of the sorrowful and guilty, he too has made to himself friends out of the Mammon of unrighteousness, and friends that will not fail him when Mammon fails him, but will receive him into tabernacles of rest. However poor he may be, he can still pray, and read his Bible, and put his trust in God, and urge the guilty to penitence, and speak comfort to the sorrowful; and, by his cheerful content and unswerving confidence in the Divine goodness, he can now bear witness, with an eloquence far beyond that of mere words, to the reality and grandeur of a truly religious life. Faith, hope, charity, righteousness and godliness, patience and meekness, will not close their doors against him, because Mammon has slammed *his* door in his face. *These* are eternal friends, who pitch their tabernacles beside us wherever our path may lead, and who welcome us to the rest and shelter they afford all the more heartily because we have not where to lay our head.

In fine, it is not simply a future reward which Christ promises to as many as make a wise use of money and money's worth, but a present, a constant, an eternal reward. Virtually He says to us, "Use your money for wise ends, whether you have little of it or much; make it your servant rather than your master; compel it to minister to your spiritual as well as to your temporal wants; expend thought and time and labour in the effort to become wise and good and kind: and then, whenever Mammon fails you, your wisdom and goodness and kindness will abide with you; and these will fit you, far more than any wealth, for a noble and happy life, whether in this world or in that which is to come."

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 1. Christ's Ascension.

Chapter to be read—Acts i. 1—14.

To the Teacher. It is intended in this volume to give a course of lessons on the stories in the Acts of the Apostles. It is believed that children often take a dislike to the Acts, from having to read the book regularly through, long speeches and all, but that if the different narratives were brought before them in a pleasant manner, they would take a great delight in this most interesting part of the Bible.

I. Preparation. (Read 1—5.) Have now gone through a number of scenes in Christ's life. (Vol. IX.) What was the last? How long did He remain with disciples after the Resurrection? Two distinct objects. (*a*) *To fully convince* them that he was risen; why was this so important? See 1 Cor. xv. 19—22, to show how our hopes depend upon it. How did He convince them? (ver. 3). Let children name some of these proofs about which there could be no mistake (infallible). Remind how they saw Him, heard Him, how Thomas was invited to touch Him (John xx. 27), how He ate with them (Luke xxiv. 43), worked a miracle for them, which was it? (John xxi.) So there could be no mistake. He *was* risen, they were *all* convinced, and would now bear witness to it (Acts ii. 32). The other object was (*b*) *to instruct* them for their future work. Had He not done so before? Remind of long conversation before His death (John xiv.—xvi.) But they only half believed; now, fully believing, would drink in words. What were his parting commands? (1) *To preach the Gospel.* (Read Mark xvi. 15—18), explain word "preach" as meaning "announce," "tell glad tidings," "do work of herald" proclaiming visit of king, rebels lay down arms and receive full forgiveness.

(2) *To baptise.* Ask what Christ said about confessing Him before men; would do so when come forward publicly for baptism. Remind of John Baptist requiring repentance and faith of the converts; read Mark xvi. 16 to show in whose name baptism was to be administered, and Acts ii. 38 for the benefits. (3) *To wait.* Apostles might perhaps be in hurry to begin work, must wait, for what? (ver. 4) could do nothing without Spirit, had been promised before (John xvi. 13), and partially given (John xx. 22) but must wait for its full gifts; then may begin public work.

II. The Ascension. (Read 6—11). Question the children upon the story, bringing out (*a*) *the time*, forty days, evidently a marked time in Biblical events (*e.g.*, Moses on Mount Sinai, Elijah in wilderness, Christ in desert). (*b*) *The place*, the same Mount of Olives where Christ had so often been; remind of His riding from thence into Jerusalem as king. (*c*) *The persons* who would be with Him besides the apostles? (ver. 14), besides the holy women would be some of His many friends from Galilee, in all 120 out of 500 spoken of 1 Cor. xv. 6. (*d*) *The last words.* What did they ask Christ? (ver. 6) Still had lingering notion of Him as earthly prince. How did He answer? They were to receive power to form a people for Him, a spiritual kingdom in whole world; such would be effect of Holy Ghost accompanying the preaching of the Gospel. Where must they begin? Why in Jerusalem? (*e*) *The parting.* Picture the scene—the hill-side covered with verdure, birds flying overhead (Matt. vi. 26, 28), Jerusalem in full view, and Calvary, where crucified; the large group around Christ; His laying His hands on them one after another (Luke xxiv. 50); the last words and parting blessing; the moment of departure come; the white cloud mantling on Saviour's head; He slowly ascending; the disciples awed into perfect silence, still looking up, straining eyes to see Him, cannot take gaze off cloud; recalled to themselves by strange voice; what do they see? Probably same angels kept watch at tomb (Luke xxiv. 4). How did the angels comfort them? So had Jesus before (John xiv. 3). How could they best be ready? By doing as He wished. So return at once the two miles (ver. 12), and wait quietly in the upper room.

III. The Lessons. (1) *The cause of the Ascension.* Perhaps may ask why did not Christ stay on earth—go about preaching, working miracles, &c.? Surely all would believe! Ask, did people believe even when saw miracles? Many only filled with envy, malice, hatred, &c.; besides, remind how Christ's bodily presence could only be in one place at once, whereas if departed would send Spirit to fill the world (John xvi. 7); also, this world no place for Christ to *stay* in; was here short time to teach, heal, set example, &c., must now return to His native heavens. (2) *The object of the Ascension.* (*a*) *To prepare heaven for man.* Remind how Resurrection was a pledge of our rising; so the Ascension was a type of our ascension. To rise and live again in this world of sin and care no comfort, therefore are assured shall not only rise but also go to heaven; therefore Christ gone first that may be ready to welcome us. (*b*) *To prepare man for heaven.* Why is man not fit? What is the state of heaven? (Rev. iv. 8; xxii. 27.) Who alone can make fit? How then is Christ preparing us? Must seek Christ if would live with Him (Col. iii. 1—3).

Questions to be answered.

1. What were our Lord's two main objects in His talks with the disciples after the Resurrection?
2. Name some of the infallible proofs of the Resurrection.
3. Give a short description of the Ascension.
4. Why could not Christ remain on earth?
5. What were the two objects of the Ascension?
6. What is our duty in connection with it?

THE VALLEY.

WOULD you learn what is joy to the heart,
Would you know what is ease to the mind,
Would you walk from contention apart,
And leave all your sorrows behind,
To this sweetest of valleys repair,
Tread but on this magical ground,
Contentment shall laugh at Despair,
And Hate flee away at the sound.

No troubles are here to annoy,
Nó cares to this valley belong,
The birds are a chorus of joy,
And the streamlet an anthem of song;
The woodbine and briar entwine,
The oak and the ivy embrace,
While the bee and the butterfly join
With Beauty in haunting the place.

How poor are the sports of the town
Compared with such pleasures as these;
The mammon to which we bow down
With the rivers, the flowers, and the trees!
With a cottage encircled with vine,
And a seat in the shade by the door,
With my books and the love that is mine,
I were richer than Cræsus of yore.

Matthias Barr.

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER I.

IN these days of constant improvements and alterations, when not only houses but whole streets are swept away, to give place to huge hotels and railway-stations, it might be useless to look for the dwelling in which our story opens. It stood in a court in Pimlico—a narrow thoroughfare leading from the terrace facing the Queen's riding-school to a quiet street behind—a court that vastly differed from the generality of the poverty-stricken teeming alleys in the metropolis, for a row of neat little houses standing back in strips of garden, and tenanted by respectable people, formed the one side of it, while the other was skirted by a high wall.

At the further extremity of this wall there were a couple of shops—a grocer's and a baker's—very prim, very much circumscribed both in space and business, depending for the latter on the tenants of the court—or row as we believe it was called—while, wedged between the wall and the one-storied shops, there was an ugly narrow slip of a house rising to twice their altitude, as if the builder had resolved to make up in height for whatever was wanting in the breadth of the dwelling.

In this house lived Mary Ingle, a gaunt grim-looking Buckinghamshire woman, who having furnished it with the proceeds of a small legacy, let the upper part, in order to eke out her earnings as a charwoman. She had a husband—an idle ne'er-do-well, who worked when he was in the humour, and spent his earnings at some favourite resort as soon as he received them—and she had a flock of children, whom she brought up in a fashion common enough among women of her class—petting and spoiling them during their infancy, railing and raving at them as soon as they were old enough to shift for themselves, and considering her duty done when she had paid for their schooling, and made a fair division of the broken victuals on which the young Ingles were accustomed to be reared. How they fared and what they did with themselves during the intervals betwixt and after school-hours she could not know, for her daily labours carried her away soon after their eyes began to open in the morning, and they were generally in bed when she returned, weary with the scrubbing and scouring that fell to her share. She stipulated with her employers for a day at home in each week, to be devoted to washing and mending for her progeny, but all else was left to "Ria," a great ungainly girl of fourteen, who "did" for the lodgers—when her mother had any—and slapped and scolded, in true maternal style, the little ones left in her charge.

It was one of Mrs. Ingle's home days, and more than once her arms had been taken out of the suds, and her feet slipped out of her heavy boots, that she might go softly up-stairs, and peep in at one of the doors on the first floor, or listen outside to such muffled sounds—a cautious tread, a low sweet voice, or a sigh of pain—as met her ear. The third time she went up in this way the door of the sitting-room had been opened for air, and a young girl, who sat in the arm-chair by the window, her arms raised and folded behind the head that lay back upon them with the languor of extreme fatigue, saw Mrs. Ingle, and made her a sign to come in.

Carefully setting down the boots she had carried in her hand, the woman advanced on tip-toe, glancing towards the inner room, and whispered, "Asleep, is she, Miss Eda? Then do 'ee go and lie down and rest a while. I'll stay here, and let 'ee know the minute she wakes. Do 'ee now! Ria can finish my work, and I'll be glad to sit still a bit."

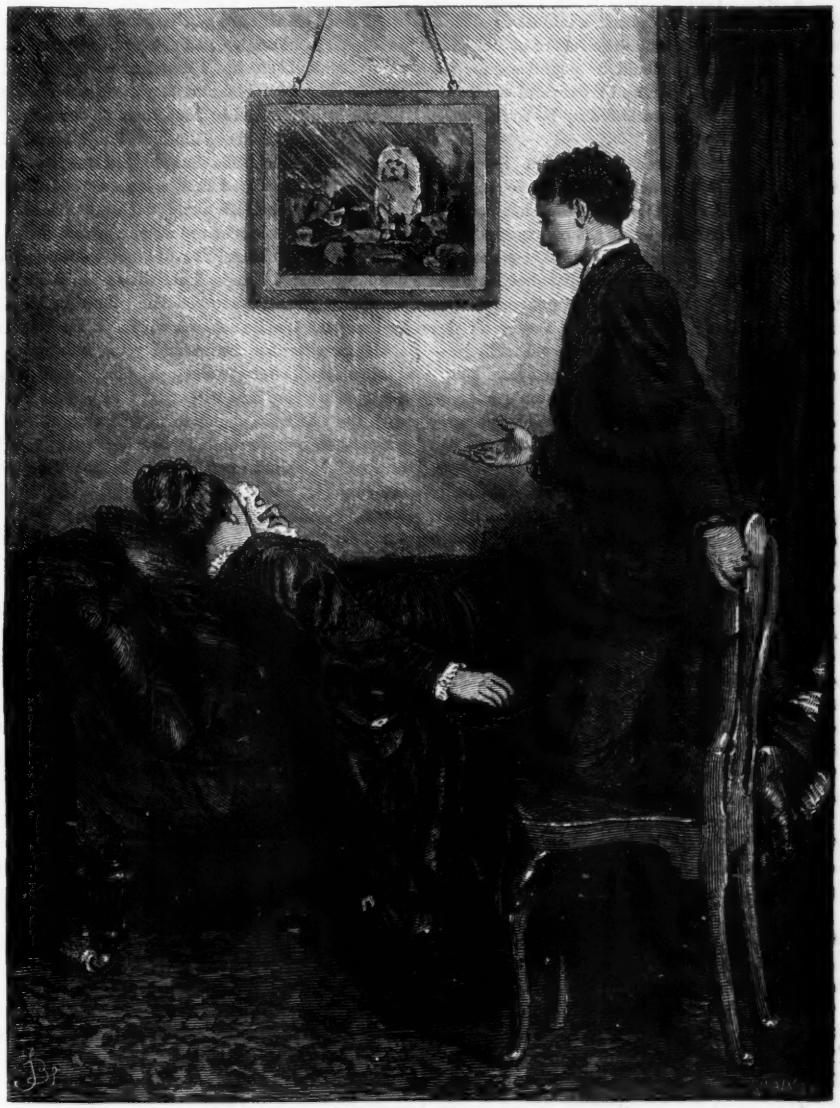
Editha Granton smiled gratefully. "Thanks, Mrs. Ingle; I'm very tired, but I could not leave mamma now."

"She isn't worse, surely! Why didn't 'ee call me, Miss Eda? I thought she seemed quite cheerful like this morning."

The young girl's lips quivered. "No, she does not *seem* worse, but I know the time is drawing very near. She said so herself not an hour ago, and I cannot, cannot leave her again till——"

She stopped suddenly, and struggled to keep back the tears that must not be shed while the sight of her swollen eyes would distress the dear mother who was slowly but certainly losing her hold on this life. It was Editha's first trouble, for she could not remember the death of her father; and Mrs. Granton had been a healthy cheerful woman until a year ago, when she was suddenly smitten with a painful and incurable disease. There had been the usual hoping against hope, and unwillingness to believe that nothing more can be done, that we testify in such cases; and Eda and her brother Mark had persuaded their mother—the most resigned of the trio—to give up her home in the pretty Welsh village where they had lived for some years past, and go to London, where she could have the advice of some eminent physician.

It was a wrench to tear herself away from the spot that had grown very dear to her, but she made the effort all the more readily because she hoped to meet in town a brother of her deceased husband, who was on his way home from India, where he had



(*Drawn by* F. BARNARD.)

"I really cannot take upon myself the burden of your support."—*p.* 12.

amassed a considerable sum of money. It seemed but yesterday that Mrs. Granton had been busy with the outfit of the stripling, and parting with one or two of her own treasured ornaments that he might not land on a foreign shore without a few pounds in his pocket. Now he was coming back, a middle-aged man, to whom she hoped to confide the future of her children, who at her death would be penniless, for her small income died with her, and the careful economies of many years had been swallowed up by the expenses of her illness.

Mrs. Granton had been in London for some months, deriving no benefit from the change of doctors. The good ship *Aquila*, in which her brother-in-law had signified that he might be expected, had long been overdue, and the mother's heart sometimes failed her as she asked herself what her children would do if the relative on whose generosity and affection she relied never arrived. Day after day passed on in the same suspense, till even Mrs. Ingle—who had attached herself warmly to her invalid lodger—caught the infection of Mrs. Granton's anxiety, and now made the inquiry, "Han't ye had no news of the ship? Oh dear, that's bad! but may be it'll come to-morrow."

"I fear not," was Eda's sad response, cautiously whispered lest it should reach the ears of her mother. "There was a report in yesterday's *Echo* that a homeward-bound vessel has picked up a boat and several fragments of a wreck, and that they are supposed to have belonged to the *Aquila*."

"It mayn't be true," said Mrs. Ingle, consolingly. "My Jan says it never does to 'pend too much on them papers; and he's a wonderful scollard is Jan! He often gets 'ticed into the public-house to read the news to them as can't read it for themselves. It mayn't be true, Miss Eda."

"Perhaps not; but we shall soon know, for my brother has gone to the offices of the ship-owners to learn how far the report is correct."

"You'll not tell your ma this, will 'ee?" asked the woman; and Eda shook her head.

"I have not done so yet. It would only distress her. Poor mamma! how will she bear it, if——" she checked herself, and bent forward in a listening attitude. It was Mark's step that she heard on the stairs, and her pulses quickened with eagerness to know what tidings he brought. The next minute he had bounded into the room so noisily that Mrs. Ingle put up her finger with a warning. "Sh—oh, Mr. Mark, your ma's asleep, poor dear!"

Mark Granton—a tall good-looking young fellow, Eda's senior by a twelvemonth or thereabouts, and strikingly like her, except that his eyes were black and her's of a soft deep grey—bent his brows in displeasure at the reproof, and turned brusquely to his sister.

"Have you anything for this good woman to do? Are you sure? Then why do you detain her? We'll not trouble you to stay any longer, Mrs. Ingle, but ring if we want you;" and with the elaborate courtesy that always discomfited the awkward but well-intentioned charwoman, he held the door open for her to take her departure.

"I can't think how you endure that creature here so often!" he said, when she had disappeared. "I rarely come home but I find her with you. If we pay her a reasonable rent for these rooms, I think we might be allowed to keep them to ourselves."

"Mrs. Ingle has been kindness itself, Mark. Don't forget how much she has helped me in nursing mamma!" murmured Eda, a little reproachfully.

"I'd rather be left alone if I were ill than have such a vulgar blundering woman about me!" the young man retorted. He did not know how often the large coarse hands, from whose touch he shrank fastidiously, had smoothed the pillow of his dying mother; nor had he noticed, with Eda, how the heavy tread grew light and the loud voice soft when Mrs. Ingle moved about the sick chamber. Mark Granton detested poverty and vulgarity, and had no patience with the weakness, as he termed it, that would have made Eda gentle and forbearing with the most unworthy. Knowing this, she hastened to change the subject.

"Have you brought any news, Mark?"

"Yes; the worst I could bring. The report is but too true. The *Aquila* has gone down, and not a soul is saved to tell how it happened."

"Speak lower, dear Mark! Are you certain of this?"

"Quite! I have seen the owners of the lost ship, and also the pieces of the wreck that were picked up, and the name of the *Aquila* is painted on one of them. I had but the one hope left, that uncle George might have taken his passage in another vessel, but even that is knocked on the head; for a telegram from Madras gives a list of the passengers who sailed in the *Aquila*, and his name is amongst them."

"Poor uncle George!" sighed Eda. "Oh, Mark, think of him dying in this sad, this dreadful manner! far out at sea, unable to send a farewell message to those who loved him, and perhaps drowned before he had time to put up a prayer for himself!"

"His money must have gone down with him," said her brother, echoing her sigh, "for he said in his last letter that he should convert all he had into specie. It is hard, Eda, it is very hard, to know that the good gold that would have done us so much service lies at the bottom of the ocean!"

"Do not think of that now, but of mamma. How shall we tell her such terrible tidings?"

But a faint call for Eda made her hurry into the adjoining room. There was no need to discuss ways and means of breaking the evil news gently to Mrs. Granton. She had been awake, and heard all; but she was either too ill to dwell upon this fresh trouble,

or she had learned to commit her dear ones to Him who clingeth closer than a brother; and could be content to leave them in his care.

Doubtless the shock acted on her weakened frame, for from this time she sunk rapidly. It scandalised Mrs. Ingle that in her last moments the dying sufferer's thoughts were less of the devoted daughter who never left her than of Mark—restless and often thoughtless Mark. Was it because he was her first-born that her eyes followed him so continually, and her prayers, her ejaculations, were always breathed for him?

"Wun't ye bless Miss Eda too? oh, Mrs. Granton, wun't ye bless *her?*" burst from the woman's lips, when Mark, with bowed head and brimming eyes, had taken his last embrace and quitted the chamber.

Involuntarily Mrs. Granton turned and looked at her daughter. Ah! there was no need of a spoken blessing; they understood each other; deep in her heart Eda knew that those prayers were wrung from the troubled soul of the mother, whose fears for her boy were stronger than her hopes. It was in Eda's arms she died, a look of unutterable love requiting her daughter's tenderness; but the last words she breathed were of Mark, poor Mark, who had yet to learn the true source of the peace that settled down on the face of the dead and robbed Eda's grief of all its bitterness.

CHAPTER II.

"Do you feel strong enough to-day, dear, for a little serious talk?" Mark asked, about a fortnight after his mother's funeral.

Eda, who had been too weak and ill—although she bore up bravely—to do more than lie on the sofa, and submit to the uncouth cosseting of Mrs. Ingle, made room for him beside her.

"I am much better and stronger to-day; but if I were not I could listen to you, Mark. Of course you feel anxious to be up and doing."

"Aye, but what? there's the rub, Eda! If I had but been brought up to any profession!" and he gave a doleful sigh.

"But mamma had not the means, and you objected to a trade," his sister reminded him.

"I should rather think I did! Can you fancy me standing behind a counter measuring yards of tape, or weighing packets of tea? No, no, Eda, my motto always has been *Aut Cæsar aut nullus*, which, as I choose to interpret it, means that if I cannot be at the top of the tree, there is still no necessity for me to sink to the bottom."

"Certainly not; with your abilities, dear Mark, I shall hope to see you a great man some day."

"Able to buy you pearl necklaces by the dozen, and settle a few thousands upon you when you marry, eh?"

"I said a great, not a rich man," she answered. "I can be content without the pearls."

"There's not much greatness to be achieved in this world without a long purse to back it," said Mark, discontentedly. "I am an unlucky dog to be so friendless, just as I want a helping hand as badly as ever a fellow did."

"But, Mark dear, you ought not to call yourself friendless. Recollect how kind every one has been to us, and how mamma's old acquaintance wrote, directly he heard of our loss, to offer you a situation in his office."

"Eighteen shillings a week for drudging over his accounts from nine till five daily, with a prospect of rising to a hundred a year by the time my hair begins to get grey. Very generous of him, truly!"

"It was kindly meant; and if——"

"Oh spare me your ifs pray, Eda! I have written to Mr. Bennett thanking him for his offer, and civilly declining it."

There was a short pause, for Eda did not care to acknowledge how much her brother's decision had disappointed her. She had been dwelling—more perhaps than she was aware of—on the prospect of returning to the neighbourhood of the Welsh village. Its homely associations might sharpen her grief for a while, but the fresh air and friendly faces would also strengthen her to bear it; and then she had made pleasant mental pictures of finding pupils at some of the farm-houses around the market-town at which Mr. Bennett's bank was situated, and adding considerably to Mark's earnings by her own; of long summer evenings spent in revisiting the scenes endeared to them by the recollections of their mother; and of tranquil Sundays such as *she* had loved to spend: but Mark began to speak, and she forced down her own regrets that she might seem interested in his plans.

"You see, I have had plenty of time to look about me since we have been here, and to pick up 'notions,' as the 'cute Yankees would say. I have spent a good many hours in the City, and made a few acquaintances there through Richie Atwood, my old chum, whom I contrived to rout out one day when I had nothing else to do."

The faintest tinge of colour rose into Eda's cheek. She had known Richie Atwood ever since they played together, the children of friendly neighbours, and still treasured the little brooch that had been his parting gift when he left home to take up his abode with an uncle who resided in London.

"I thought Richie had forgotten his old acquaintances," she remarked.

"Not he! You would not think so if you had heard how affectionately he inquired after his dear little friend Eda. I would have asked him to come and see you, but I knew you would only be upset and ill again."

Eda secretly thought that the sight of such a pleasant face as gay handsome Richie Atwood's

would not have been half so dispiriting as Mark seemed to fancy; but she only asked, "Is he much changed?"

"Not a bit, except that mixing with a better class of people has improved his manners and developed his mind; but I was about to tell you, that Richie and I have been talking over things, and we propose to row in the same boat. Both he and I have the same end in view—making our fortunes—and you know the old adage, "two heads are better than one." He will give me the benefit of his experience, and I believe my brains may be made as useful to him as to myself. An excellent arrangement, isn't it?"

But Eda did not immediately answer. She was struggling between her own liking for Richie Atwood, and a consciousness that she ought not to conceal from her brother that Mrs. Granton had not taken as favourable a view as her children of this young man's character.

"If I were you, Mark," she said at last, hesitatingly, "I would not be too intimate with Richie till I had assured myself that he is thoroughly well principled."

Mark smiled scornfully. "Wouldn't you really? Women never can resist giving advice, can they? May I ask why I am favoured with this precious piece of wise counsel? What has Richie, with whom we have been intimate from childhood, and never known any harm of him—what has he done, I ask, that you warn me against him?"

"Don't be angry, Mark," she pleaded. "I always liked Richie very much, he was so sweet-tempered so ready to give up his own wishes to oblige others; but I cannot forget that mamma once said those very qualities for which we admired him might do him infinite harm, and that she did not think him, though I scarcely know why, a good companion for you."

"Richard Atwood is my friend," said Mark, with a dignified air. "Whoever abuses him offends me. I am no mere boy, Eda"—he was barely twenty—"and should hope that I have too much sense to be led into committing a folly by any one."

"I do not distrust you," his sister answered, affectionately; "but now that we are left to our own guidance, ought we not to remember all our dear mother's wishes, and act up to them? She would not have liked you to associate with any person who is openly careless or irreligious."

"If there were many like she was," said Mark, more gently, "it would not be difficult to carry out her injunctions. But I tell you again, I know no harm of Richie; and our connection will be merely a business one. When a fellow offers to do one a good turn, one doesn't put the questions, 'Are you a consistent Christian?' 'Do you attend divine worship regularly?' It would be rather too absurd."

"Perhaps so; but still, Mark, we may try to choose our friends from those who do act consistently," Eda persisted.

"Oh yes, and we can be strait-laced and prejudiced, and think no one right who does not do precisely as we do," was the impatient answer. "But we will not argue this question any longer; you always were obstinate, Eda; and I can see that you have made up your mind to dislike poor Richie." His sister stifled an exclamation. How thoroughly he was misjudging her! It was because her own heart inclined her to think the best of her old playmate, that she had felt bound to remind Mark of his mother's objections to the acquaintance. "As you are resolved to dislike him," he went on, "we will speak of something else."

"Very well," she answered, quietly; "I would rather hear whether you have been able to decide on any plan for our future."

"For my own? Oh yes. I shall manage well enough, never fear; and a little knocking about in the world never hurts a fellow while he is young, and strong, and energetic. But what to do with you is the real difficulty. You are a dear girl, Eda, but I scarcely know what you are fit for."

Eda accepted this critique on her abilities meekly. "I know I am not sufficiently accomplished to offer myself as a resident governess. It was one of mamma's great troubles that she had not been able to finish my educatien; but I will make the best of what I have learned. I can keep books or teach little children, or if all else fails, I am clever at my needle. So that we can be together in the evening, dear Mark, I do not care how my days are employed."

"But Eda, this is just precisely what cannot be!" and to cover his uneasy sense that his sister would be both hurt and surprised at the announcement, Mark spoke with unnecessary sharpness of tone and manner. "We could not afford to keep these rooms, even if we wished to do so; besides, Richie has offered me a share of his lodging."

"And you have accepted?"

"Certainly. Circumstanced as I am, would it not have been madness to refuse? In fact, I have promised to join him as soon as I can contrive to settle you comfortably in something or other."

"So soon! are we to be separated so soon!" cried Eda, unable to restrain her tears at the prospect. "Oh, Mark, must this be? Mamma was very anxious that we should not be parted. She felt that we should better bear our loss if we clung together; and she died believing that we should be all in all to each other."

"I know, dear, I know; but at the present moment it would be impossible. When I have made myself a position, you shall be my housekeeper; but just now I cannot. You like me to speak frankly, Eda. I really cannot take upon myself the burden of your support."

Hurt, grieved, and even resentful, Eda lay back on the sofa and averted her face. In two short weeks had Mark discovered that his only sister would be a clog upon him?

"I never intended to be idle," she said at last; "I hoped to be a help to you, not an encumbrance."

"Of course you did. Don't I know that you are the most affectionate little sister that ever lived!" exclaimed Mark, patting her thin hand. "It will grieve me more than I can express to lose you, but it is for your good, Eda. I must think of your interests as well as my own. I cannot let you pen yourself up in the smoky city while I am learning the art and mystery of money spinning."

"Why learn it at all?" she boldly asked. "We should be happier, healthier, and more free from care if you retracted your refusal of Mr. Bennett's offer, and we went back to Wales together."

"So you say and think, but I cannot agree with you. I never will consent to vegetate behind a desk for a few shillings a week, while I know that I have energy and ability to make a fortune, aye, and tact enough to grasp the opportunity as soon as it turns up."

"But such opportunities do not turn up very often," Eda reminded him.

"Oftener than you think for. Why, there are scores of men now living in London who came here as poor or even poorer than I am, and yet roll by us in their carriages and enjoy every luxury of life! Don't pretend that you despise the pleasures and advantages money gives, for if you do I shall not believe you."

"I do not despise money. I have often wished, especially while mamma was ill, that I had more of it; but, Mark, I could'nt make the getting of it my principal end and aim."

"Of course not; no one does; at least not exactly; but if one must work, one may as well be striving for a million as the munificent salary old Bennett so graciously offers me."

"But, situated as we are," retorted Eda, gravely, "would it not be more prudent to accept a certainty, however small, than to wait for the chance of some day possessing the million?"

"You think so?" queried Mark.

"I do indeed," was the earnest reply.

"Then act upon it. I cannot. I have a little ambition, and am not ashamed to own it; but if you are content to dawdle through life in some quiet country place——" He paused, and looked at her inquiringly.

"There is nothing I should like better," was the eager reply; "always provided that you could make yourself contented there too!"

"You forget that my plans are settled, and that I cannot afford to be biassed by mere sentiment. It is of your wishes we are talking."

"I am ready to lay them aside for your sake, dear Mark," she assured him.

"But I shall not let you make any more sacrifices for me. You are a dear little thing; but I wish you would see that our separation for a time is inevitable."

"I do begin to see it," said Eda, choking back a sob. "I am in your way; that is what you mean, is it not?"

Mark rose with an offended air.

"Perhaps I had better leave you till you are more reasonable. When I was flattering myself that I am doing my best to carry out your ideas of happiness, I did not expect that you would be angry with me for what I have done."

"I am not angry, and I will try not to be unreasonable," she answered, as calmly as she could. "But please go on," she added, feeling that she had something unpleasant to hear. "You have made some arrangement in my name which I shall be expected to fulfil. If I can do so with a clear conscience, I will. Does that promise satisfy you? Then tell me precisely what you have been doing."

(*To be continued.*)

MAY FLOWER, OR, "SERVANT OF ALL."

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LITTLE BUTTERCUP," "NOTHING BUT A SONG," "HOW TO ENTER INTO REST," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

"If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all."—MARK ix. 36.

"Whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."—MARK x. 44, 45.

SHE sat up in bed, bright, sweet May Flower Colwyn, her golden hair rough and tumbled, and waving in the morning air that blew in over clover and hay fields, her face all beaming with pleasure, as she held a small dark book with gold clasps, in her hand, turning it over and over.

"What a pet!" she exclaimed. "How good of her; and the inside just the same as her own, though the outside isn't! What a beauty!"

Then she opened it again, and read the title page—"Light on the Path—the Morning Hour."

Then she turned back the leaves to see if her name was in it. Yes there it was, "May Flower Colwyn," and underneath it was written, "Servant of all, *Mark* ix. 35."

"Why, what a strange text! I don't believe I even knew it was in the Bible. 'A servant of all!' What does it mean? I shall have to ask her about it.

XUM

Oh dear! what shall I do when she goes away! There's only to-day left now," and May's bright face grew long and grave.

But it was getting late, and she sprang out of bed.

She had to hurry, and only got down too late for morning prayers, and not before her brothers and sisters had sat down to breakfast.

"There you are, May, late as usual. How is it that you never manage to get down in time? It is every bit as easy to be two minutes early, instead of five late. You know you'll have to sleep with some one else if you don't get up in time in the mornings."

The rebuke came from her eldest sister. May grew red and angry.

"Well, not with you, Phillis, I hope," she cried, "I *wouldn't* sleep with you!"

"Now, May, you'd better just eat your breakfast," said Tom, the one next older than herself.

"You need not talk, Tom; you are often late; indeed, you all are!" she retorted, defiantly.

"Come, come, May, be quiet, and don't talk any more; sit down, and eat your breakfast."

And obediently she sat down, and ate it very quickly; but the little fracas had taken away her appetite, and for the time her day was spoilt.

She felt angry with them all; and as soon as she could she slipped away.

She seized her garden hat, and ran off at once down through the little wood that skirted the house, till she came to a rustic gate, on the other side of which stood the cousin she was seeking—Rosamond Fernaval.

"There you are!" called May.

"Here you are, darling!" answered Rosamond; and then May poured out her ready thanks for the book.

"Well, I thought, May, that would help you, now that we shall not be able to choose daily texts to think about together."

"But, Rosamond, what a queer text you've put inside!"

"Have I, May Flower?"

"Yes; what does it mean? 'Servant of all?'"

"Why, you know what a servant is."

"Of course I do, Rosa; and very glad I am not to be one. I shouldn't like to do house-work one bit; nor to be a cook, or nurse, or anything."

"But, you know, we decided last Sunday that we are both servants—servants of Jesus Christ," she added, reverently.

"Yes, Rosa, I know; but that's quite different to this."

"I don't think it is, May Flower. The verse was spoken by Christ Himself. Perhaps it seemed a strange thing when He first said such words, and they have lost none of their strangeness now. 'If any man desire to be *first*, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all;' and a very short time after, He said it again, 'Whosoever of you will be chiefest, shall be *servant of all*.' And surely, May, that is what He was Himself—a servant to us; for He not only came to purchase our redemption, but besides that, He lived our lives, that we may have an example to teach us what our's should be and *must* be."

"But, all the same, Rosamond, I don't quite understand. 'A servant of *all*.' Does it mean of every one?"

"Yes, of every one."

"But you don't mean to say I'm to let Tom order me about just as he pleases!" May called out, excitedly; "and that I shall have to obey him, and always do just what he likes?"

Rosamond laughed.

"I shall never do it," May continued, rather angrily, "*never*. I see now what you mean by such a text; but I shall not take it for mine, for I could never do as it says. Be a servant to every one! Why, I should have time for nothing. They are wanting me to do something for them every minute of the day; besides, Rosa, boys ought to wait on girls. Hugh is always doing things for you, and Tom never does for me."

"But, May Flower, if you come to owing and paying, you will always lag behind. If a person is selfish, how must we help them out of it? It will make them worse if we are selfish as well. Must we not do as our Lord would have done, put self aside, and go down to them, and by our love and kindness teach them what a good thing unselfishness is? It is no use to talk at a person, and tell them what to do; the best plan is to lead the way. Ought you not to go back to your lessons now?"

"But, Rosa, I know I can't do it."

"May Flower, I know you can; and what's more, I know you *will*. I will walk through the wood with you, and tell you the thing that is my greatest help—shall I?"

"What is it?"

"Just this; that when we are serving others for Christ's sake, I believe He looks upon us, and may, perhaps, say that verse of us, 'Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me.' Now, isn't any trouble worth while that we take for such a Master as our Lord Jesus Christ is? Or, are we to love Him much, when all is easy, and forget Him, or turn our face another way, when something harder comes? That *isn't* love, I think; it is just selfishness and untruth. But, childie, you must run in; I shall see you again this evening. Mind, and let it be a nice bright happy day, to match this lovely sunshine." And she waved her hand, and ran back to the rectory house—that bright rectory house, where she and her brother Hugh spent so many happy days every year, but which visit was to terminate on the morrow.

CHAPTER II.

"Oh, let thy true refining love
Its utmost pleasure see;
And lift not up thy faithful hand,
Whate'er my cry may be,
Till I am strong for thy renown,
And pure for use to Thee."

"It must be good to share Thy cross,
Thou bearer of my sin." L. A. W.

MAY went slowly in, thinking much of all that lay before her.

Yes, she was quite resolved; she would try for to-day, and learn something of what it meant to be "a servant of all;" but for how much longer than that one day, she could not say.

She stood in the hall, hanging her hat on and off a peg, twisting on one leg, and thinking over the *pros* and *cons* of her undertaking. No doubt it was a very great and a very alarming business to be a servant to all in that house—Phillis, Jem, Stephen when he should come home, Geraldine, and Tom; but, still, was it worth it?

"Come, May, do be quick!" cried Phillis; "I can't have you dawdling there all day; you ought to have been ready before this. Get your books and run into the study, and do learn to do things without always having to be told first!"

May coloured, and pressed her lips together, as she said to herself, "Servants never answer."

She ran off, and got her books, and sat down. Phillis soon joined her, work in hand, and sat opposite to her; but the indolence and carelessness of yesterday told on to-day. The lessons were ill-prepared—indeed, more probably than not, not prepared at all—just read over once or twice, and thrown aside. She stumbled—waited—began again—stumbled—and finally stopped altogether.

Phillis sat motionless but for the rapid motion of her needle, her eyes bent down, and her mouth stern. May's lessons were never perfect; and Phillis had at last made up her mind that things must and should be different.

The book was put on one side, and another solemnly opened, which soon shared the same fate. Then May was severely rebuked.

"I will have no more imperfect lessons; and you must learn these again at twelve, instead of going out," was the stern rebuke.

"Oh, Phillis! not to-day," pleaded May, "it is Rosamond's last day, and I do care so dreadfully about missing her!"

"Well, then, it will teach you all the better. You are growing more indolent every day, and I will not allow it. Now, May, don't cry and be silly!"

The gathering tears swam, but she kept them from falling down. It was very unfortunate that, just as she meant to do better, Phillis had made up her mind to be severe. It was a strong temptation to let her tongue work, and she knew of such lots of things to say to Phillis which would annoy and vex her. If Phillis was cross and cold, why should not she be? but she thought hard of the duties of servants, and kept quiet.

The rest of the morning would have passed well, but that she could not pronounce her French; and having always taken so little pains with it, Phillis would not believe she was trying.

"I declare, May, you are the most tiresome and the naughtiest child in existence!" she said, as the clock struck twelve.

"I'm *not!*" shouted May, at the top of her voice, so loudly and so passionately, that her second brother, Jem, who was passing, came in.

"May," he said, angrily, "shouting at your lessons again like this! Upon my word you shall go to school if you are so tiresome at home. Has she been naughty all through?" he asked.

"No, no, no!" cried May. "Oh, Phillis, I didn't *mean* to scream like that!" and between the longing to be naughty, the want to be good, knowing that she had been trying hard but that it was only natural that they had not recognised it, the tears, already suppressed, burst out.

"I think she has been better this morning, altogether," said Phillis, "till now; but she didn't know her lessons, and has to learn them over again. Learn them quickly, May, and then you may go out," and she gathered her things together and went away.

"Why is it, May?" asked her brother, lingering, and unwilling to leave the sobbing little being.

"Oh, Jem, I did mean better—indeed I did; ask Rosamond—won't you ask Rosamond?"

"No, May Flower, I don't need to ask her, for I believe you; but as you meant better, how did it happen to come so badly this morning? Can't you tell?"

And somehow, May told of the odd conglomeration that had possessed her, ending with, "I don't believe I shall ever—ever be able to be a servant—however much I wish it—for it's so hard."

"Oh yes you will, May; don't make such a fret and trouble. Just be good and obedient to Phillis, and try and take more pains in learning your lessons; you know you can learn them very nicely if you try. You must not dawdle over them, and talk all the time, and play with Tom. Set to work, and think of nothing else, and when they are finished, go and play and enjoy yourself. Come now, lift up your head and learn them, and run away to the rectory. Rosa will wonder where you are—her last day and all. I shouldn't wonder if she came up to see what you are about. Now, set to work; let's see what they are—geography and poetry. Well, up with your head! I'll help you to learn them."

"Will you, really? Oh, you don't mean that!"

"Of course I will. Why, May Flower, what a wretch I must be, for it to be such a surprise! Come on, now."

The lessons were learnt, thoughtfully and accurately,

and May flew to repeat them to Phillis. She was deep in the mysteries of her sewing-machine.

"Well, May, I hope you will learn, and say your lessons at the proper time to-morrow. You must wait now."

And then Tom called out, "You should come to school with me, May, and you'd soon learn better; as you've learnt badly to-day, I shall get you a punishment. Run up-stairs, and get me my Charterhouse dictionary, and look sharp." And for once it seemed easy and even pleasant to run quickly up-stairs for Tom, instead of wanting to be begged and commanded.

"It does May good to cry," Tom was saying as Jem came in; "she's ever so much more agreeable for the next few hours."

"It wouldn't do her good, Tom," said his brother, "if her heart was not set upon being good."

"May's heart set on that! You won't make me believe that! She's as selfish, and cross, and indolent as you please."

"Well, Tom, and how much better are you?" asked Phillis; but Jem gave a funny laugh, as he said, "Well, Tom, I shan't afflict myself at such a remark; I well know it is only necessary for any one else to say the same, and you will paint the May Flower white."

Tom subsided; and May coming down, Phillis heard her lessons, and dismissed her. The rest of the day was a delightful time for May; her afternoon lessons were soon over; those for the next day prepared, and she ran off down to the rectory.

At the door she met old Dr. Hurst. "Welcome, my blossom," he said, as he kissed the smiling face. "Come to pack for Rosa? That's right. How long are you going to make your face grow when she and Hugh leave us to-morrow?"

May laughed gladly. "I shan't make it at all long, Dr. Hurst, for I could never make it long enough to reach to Uncle Fernaval's. May I choose you a rose?" and her quick little fingers gathered a beauty, and fastened it in the old man's coat.

"There, that'll do," she said, in a satisfied voice.

"That it will, little girl; but I'm going down into the village, so perhaps I shall leave it behind me there."

"Where are you going? Are you going to see Margery? I wish you would give it to her."

"Very well, then, I'll give it to her, with Miss May's love. Good-bye, my child."

May turned, and ran into the house, thinking all the while of poor suffering Margery Lellis, who had been crippled by a fall when she was fourteen, and had never walked since; and not only that, but had never been free from pain since then, now twenty years ago. What a strange thing it was, and yet Margery did not look unhappy and miserable; her face was always calm, and nearly always bright! How was it that such things were? Well, she could not tell. She quickened her pace, and ran up-stairs to Rosamond, and found her busy, but not too busy to find time for her. Phillis and Gerrie joined them later on; and at seven they all gathered round Mrs. Hurst's hospitable tea-table.

"Rosa, you make tea for me, my dear," said the old lady; and Rosamond sat down at the tea-tray, with Mrs. Hurst beside her on one side, and May, eager, on the other.

"I'm grieved to lose you two children to-morrow," continued the old lady; "we can ill spare you from our quiet little village, can we, May?"

"But I'm going to stay with them in the autumn."

"And you think it does not matter as long as you see them again," said Dr. Hurst.

"That's cool!" cried Tom; "I shall just go instead of you, May."

"You'll be at school, Tom."

"But I shall go in my holidays, and then you won't be able to go later on."

May laughed confidently; and then they began sending messages to Mr. and Mrs. Fernaval, till tea was over, and their last long country ramble began.

(To be continued.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

1. We read that, according to the Mosaic law, a Jew, when he came into his neighbour's vineyard, might eat "his fill of grapes." What restriction was imposed on one so doing?

2. How many times did the Lord Jesus cleanse the Temple?

3. In which of our Lord's miracles is reference made to the custom of employing professional mourners?

4. In what part of the Old Testament is mention made of that prophet who was "slain between the Temple and the altar," and where does St. Matthew record our Lord's upbraiding His enemies with the murder?

5. Though St. John does not formally record the transfiguration of the Lord, yet he has an allusion to it. Give chapter and verse.

6. We read that the words of Jesus at Saul's conversion were unintelligible to all around him Give a similar instance from St. John's Gospel.

7. Prove that the church at Corinth had not adopted the practice of that of Jerusalem with regard to a community of goods and one common purse (Acts ii. 42—47).

8. The phrase "maid child" occurs but once in our version of the Bible. Give chapter and verse.

The Secretary of the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, London, requests us to acknowledge the receipt of Five Shillings for the "QUIVER COT" *Fund.*



(*Drawn by* M. E. EDWARDS.)

LADY ALICE.

THE Lady Alice walks alone,
By forest glade and river brim,
A scarf around her shoulders thrown,
At morning dawn and ev'ning dim.

The early woodman often spies
A gentle form and face most fair,
With lids that droop above the eyes
To hide the sorrow seated there.

And, ling'ring by the silent lake,
She may be seen at twilight grey,
Feeding the swans that love to take
Their food from fingers white as they.

The hare she meeteth in the glade,
At her approach disdains to stir;
And in the farthest chestnut shade
The fawn is not afraid of her.

They seem to know, those guileless things,
That she is gentle and in pain;
And startled birds that spread their wings
Look at her, and alight again.

So her hurt spirit dwells among
Sweet friends that never make it smart:
And sympathy without a tongue
Is shed in silence on her heart.

ALEXANDER HUME.

COMFORTABLE WORDS.—X.

SHORT READINGS FOR THE SICK ROOM. BY THE REV. GORDON CALTHROP, M.A., VICAR OF S. AUGUSTINE'S, HIGHBURY; AND SELECT PREACHER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

"Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."—2 SAM. xii. 23.

IT is exceedingly painful to witness the death of an infant or of a little child. With the sufferings of a grown-up person we associate the idea of spiritual discipline; for the affliction, we think, sad and trying as it is, is working out its result in the perfecting of the Christian character. Or perhaps in such a case we find refuge in the thought that no adult lives can have been so blameless before God as to deserve exemption from sorrow. We do not judge. God forbid! We cannot trace, nor do we wish to trace—any connection between what is happening and any particular transgression. We only know generally that there is no man upon earth who doeth good and sinneth not. But this little one—in what hath it offended? And how can it—undeveloped, unreasoning, as it is, unable to interpret the Divine dealings—how can it be expected to profit by thus passing through the furnace of affliction? There is a mystery here. Christianity explains it—faith grapples with it; we are sure that the loving Father of all may be trusted to do what is best for His child; but still there is a vague feeling of perplexity haunting us. And the sufferings of a child—its wordless appeals for help, or its patient endurance of pain—affect us far more deeply than the spectacle of similar anguish borne by an older person.

But if it is distressing to see any child suffer, how much more so is it to witness the agony of your own offspring? and how unspeakably terrible must it be to have to admit to yourself that your folly, or your carelessness, or your sin, has been the procuring cause of the misery that has come—of the death that will follow?

Yet even such terrible anguish as this wrung on a certain occasion the heart of King David. Under any circumstances his affectionate nature would have felt keenly the loss of a little one: he would have grieved greatly if the ordinary ailments of childhood had taken an infant from his arms; but in this case it is he himself who is the author of the calamity. The blow which crushes him is not such as falls upon others: it is the direct consequence, the Divinely-sent punishment of, his transgression. The son is suffering for the sin of the father.

And now every cry and moan of the little sufferer cuts to the monarch's heart, as he lies there on the earth, fasting and weeping, covered with sackcloth, refusing to be comforted, and beseeching God, if it be His will, to spare the innocent and take the guilty.

Presently the struggle is over. The little tortured frame is convulsed no longer, but lies placid and fair in death, and the spirit has returned to Him who gave it. As soon as David knows this he ceases his mourning. Regaining some of his former cheerfulness, he goes back at once to his ordinary mode of life: and to the servants, who express surprise at the sudden change, he explains and justifies himself (for none could accuse him of want of feeling) in the words of our text. While there was life there was hope. God might, perhaps, be induced to revoke His decree. The calamity might, perhaps, not be so absolutely determined as that the repentance of the offender could not avail to avert it. At all events, God would hearken to prayer. But when the child was dead, all hope of course had vanished. What then was to be done, but to bear what the Divine will had imposed, and to bear it as cheerfully as might be, and to take the consolation which remained?—"Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him—but he shall not return to me."

It will be worth our while, we think, to examine these words with some attention. There are many households in which there is at least one little empty chair. There are many parents whose hearts turn wistfully at times to the recollection of some dearly-loved child "not lost, but gone before." The circumstances of David's bereavement were exceptional, as we have seen, but the

fact was not. And the thoughts which gave him comfort in his sorrow may be found to have some efficacy in comforting the mourner now.

Let us consider, then—though this is not one of the topics of consolation—that David's suspense was over. He knew the worst, for the worst had come. And this was something. Many a sufferer would tell us that the anticipation of evil is far worse than the evil itself. Many a one who has dreaded dying, with a dread beyond expression, has found death comparatively easy when it came. And many who have watched by the sick-bed of one they loved, who have witnessed the painful conflict of life with the forces of disease, who have alternated between the extremes of hope and despair, have felt a relief—perhaps hardly admitted to themselves—when the suffering was over and the end had come. Yes, suspense is sometimes almost unendurable; it is always a very bitter ingredient in the cup of sorrow. And David now was free from suspense.

But what are the other thoughts that his language suggests to us?

First, this:—That what God has done is not meant to be undone; and that it is as unwise and unchristian as it is useless to resent the act of His will. Far better is it to accept the inevitable; far better to acquiesce in the Divine decision: and this not merely because we have no power to resist, but because we would not resist if we could. The fact that the little one has been taken indicates of itself that is the best event that could have befallen. We cannot alter it; but also we ought not to wish to alter it. We ought to feel—"if the turning of a straw could bring my loved child back again, I would not turn it, now that the Lord has decided otherwise."

Then there is the second thought: "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." Does David simply mean: "By-and-by I shall pass into the world of spirits, the unseen world, as he has done; I shall be gathered to my fathers in my turn, as he has been"? Surely not; for what consolation for an aching heart would there be in such a thought? But he means that although his child is taken from him, and will not return to this earth, there will be a meeting for father and son hereafter, in that brighter and better world beyond the grave. It is here that mourning parents find some of the consolation they need. A cold and cruel theology would persuade us to question the salvation of young children, dying in their childhood—would tell us that we cannot be certain about the happiness of our departed little ones. But we turn to Christ, the loving and gracious Saviour, who bids the children come to Him, and the heartless theory disappears at once, like a dark mist before the rising sun. We feel sure that the little ones are drawn into the embrace of the Saviour's infinite love. Whatever may be the case with *us* at last, they are safe—they behold the face of their Father in heaven; and whilst we are toiling and endangered here below, they are hushed in the bosom of eternal rest. And we shall "go to them" not as strangers, but to be recognised and welcomed. Can this be doubted? Think again of David's words. He draws his comfort from the hope of meeting his child, not from the idea of mixing with a crowd in which, somewhere or other, he believes his child to be. And bereaved parents may surely believe, with David, that they shall one day see their little ones again—changed, indeed, because radiant with the glories of Paradise, and yet the same—stretching out loving hands of welcome to them as they enter the golden gates of the City of God—the portals of their Father's house.

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God."—Rom. viii. 28.

You have probably seen a large and complicated piece of machinery in full play. The parts, as you noticed, were very various—various in size and shape, various in the material of which they were made. There were wood and leather and iron and brass; there were cranks and levers and pistons and pulleys, and wheels great and small, with other instruments of which both the construction and the use were strange to you. And besides the difference of material, you observed a difference of movement among the parts. There was contrariety and opposition. The wheels whirled round in opposite directions; the chains seemed placed on purpose to resist each other. Checking and counterchecking, strain and counterstrain, were to be seen everywhere. And you felt confused as you stood contemplating the ceaseless and unintelligible whirl that was going on around you.

But although you were puzzled, there was one thing which you could understand. It was obvious that all these parts of the machinery, however diverse in themselves or in their mode of operation, were *working together to produce a certain result*—somehow or other, their combined action led up to a certain definite point, and amidst all the apparent confusion, this point was invariably reached. Did you feel disposed to criticise the mechanism? Not at all. A suggestion might have only displayed your ignorance. If you had advised the removal of some insignificant-looking portion of the whole, and your advice had been acted upon, probably everything would have come to a standstill, and disorder and ruin have ensued. Like a prudent man, then, you admired the process, without attempting to interfere with it. A wisdom and a skill superior to your own had formed these

combinations, and adjusted these differences, and balanced these powers; and you were contented to receive with gratitude the benefit of the accomplished result.

If such an experience as this has ever occurred to us, we shall perhaps be the better prepared for entering into the significance of the Apostolic statement in the verse just quoted. There is marked diversity of importance in the events which befal the Christian disciple. Life, for the most part, is made up of trifling matters; but every now and then a great blessing or a crushing calamity comes. Then, again, there is contrariety of action as well as diversity of nature. Pain and pleasure, joy and sorrow, sickness and health, prosperity and adversity, possession and bereavement, life and death—what opposites are these! And yet they are sure to enter, in some proportion, into every Christian career. But all are adjusted, as in an elaborate piece of exquisitely-constructed mechanism, to produce a result in the advancing sanctification of the people of God. Considering, then, in whose hands the machinery is—would we like to criticise? would we wish to suggest an alteration, to hint that this trial or that loss might well have been spared us, or that such and such a blessing might have been advantageously bestowed instead of being withheld? Surely not. The system is too complicated for us to form a trustworthy judgment upon it, and we are satisfied to feel that "all" things, whatever they may be—great or small, pleasant or painful—are "working together" for our good. This is the end aimed at, and this—if we will have it so—will be surely attained.

"For good?" Yes, for the *highest good* of the Christian disciple. Not necessarily for his comfort, not necessarily for his release from trouble and removal into rest and ease; still less necessarily for his worldly advancement and prosperity; although these things may sometimes be given in, as it were, by the way; but for a nobler purpose still—even for his advancing conformity to the image of Christ, and increasing fitness for his post in the kingdom of God. We do not deny that many things which the world calls good are good also for the Christian, if he possess them and enjoy them in subordination to God. It is neither sincere nor right to speak slightingly of the comforts of existence, as if they should weigh nothing in the estimation of a follower of Christ. They should, it is true, weigh as nothing, when compared with spiritual blessings; yet in themselves they are things to be desired. A Christian disciple may legitimately ask for temporal mercies, provided always he is willing to leave it to God to decide for him whether it is well that he should receive them or not. In sickness, he may pray for health; in pain, for relief; in poverty, for a competence; in the prospect of failure, for success. Certainly these are "good things." But they are not *his* good things; they do not constitute his highest good. His highest good consists in the assimilation of his nature to that of Christ—an assimilation continually carried on by the inworking power of the Holy Ghost. And for this highest good, God, as we have seen, is engaged in providing, by the arrangement and adjustment of the various events of the Christian life.

"To them that love God!" There is a limitation, then, to the extent of the assertion? Yes; obviously there must be. The Divine gifts are blessings or are curses, according to our way of taking them. We make them what they are to us. Observe this, in the case of the greatest of God's gifts to man—that of His own Son. Christ is either a sure foundation on which to build, or a rock of offence on which men stumble to their destruction; and Christ's doctrine and Christ's ministers are a savour of life unto life to some, and of death unto death to others. And so with the Divine dealings with us. If a man does not love God, but is out of harmony with Him, it is impossible that the events of his life should produce a beneficial effect upon him. They are meant for his good; but they will work harm. Affliction will exasperate him; prosperity will puff him up; joy will make him thoughtless; failure will render him despondent; success will lift him to presumption. Mischief will every way be done. It cannot but be so. But let his attitudes toward God be reversed—let him come to love God—and that which has hitherto been against him will now be for him, and all things will work together for his good.

Lastly, "we know!" How do we know? From the character of our God and Father as He is revealed in Christ; from the recorded experience of the servants of God; lastly, from what we have observed about ourselves. Have we not lived long enough to detect the marvellous adjustment and combination of events by which our spiritual education is being carried on? Yes; we do not conjecture, we do not merely hope, and believe—we *know!*

"ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."

BY THOMAS ARCHER.

XIV. BLESSING THE LITTLE CHILDREN.

I CANNOT yet leave that sea-coast where so great a multitude go to find rest and healing. The Divine Narrative may well appeal to us in relation to such a locality, for it was by the sea-shore that the Gospel came to those who went out to seek Jesus of Nazareth; it was there that the poor people heard Him gladly; there that the sick who were brought to Him were made whole; there that He fed the great company who lacked bread.

All the needs of humanity were recognised by Him who called Himself the "Son of Man." The blessing of little children is one of those needs of true human life which the Lord recognised gladly. He recognises it still; and His solemn mingling of warning and of promise with regard to its observance, has an intensity that may well appeal to us all, now that, after eighteen centuries of comparative neglect and indifference, we are discerning that the only hope of social redemption is to be found in that care for children which shall forbid their being left either morally or physically destitute.

There is a house the walls of which are now nearly built—a house standing high above the sea, in that great breezy suburb of Margate known as Cliftonville—to which I want you to pay a visit when it is quite completed; and when the bright, cheerful, airy wards—whose walls will be decorated with pictures,—the light, spacious dining-room, and comfortable home-like enlivening influences of the place, will entitle it to be regarded as the fitting consummation of two other admirable institutions for the nurture and maintenance of orphan and fatherless children.

The modest little building referred to is named "The Convalescent and Sea-side Home for Orphans," Harold Road, Margate. The foundation-stone was laid on the 29th of August in this present year, by the youthful son of a gentleman who has liberally promoted the beneficent work; and the foundation was celebrated by a simple consecration service, conducted by the Reverend the Archdeacon of Canterbury, and made vocal by the singing of a few simple hymns by some of the little ones from the parent institutions in London. These institutions are "The Orphan Working School," at Haverstock Hill, and that most attractive series of pretty cottages on the brow of the hill at Hornsey Rise, which have been more than once spoken of as "Lilliput Village," but the style and title of which are "The Alexandra Orphanage for Infants"—a name the distinguishing feature of which is that it is immediately associated with its first patroness, the Princess of Wales.

Of the intended Home at Margate I need not now speak particularly, except to note that it is approaching completion, so far as its external structure is concerned; that much yet remains to be done in the way of fitting and finishing it for the reception of the little convalescents, who—suffering, as many of them do, from constitutional and hereditary weakness, which is yet not actual sickness, and recovering, as many of them are, from the feeble condition which has been to some extent remedied by the careful nurture, good food, and healthy regimen, of the large institutions near London—are not fit patients either for their own or any other infirmary wards, and yet require to be restored to greater strength before they can join the main body of their young companions in the school or the playground.

I cannot show you in words what kind of building this is to be. The foundations of it are already laid; and it will be plainly picturesque and substantially pretty, as becomes a place which is to become the home of thirty children, taken from among nearly six hundred, the parents of nearly half of whom have died of consumption, and so left to their offspring that tendency to a feeble constitution which can be best remedied by the grand medicine of sea-air, wholesome nutritious food, and a judicious alternation of healthful exercise and rest.

It is to Mr. Joseph Soul—the indefatigable secretary of the Working School, with which he has been connected for nearly forty years, and the honorary secretary of the Alexandra Orphanage, of which he may be regarded as the virtual founder—that the proposal to establish this Convalescent Home is due. He has determined to open up for it a fresh and distinct interest, so that, though contributions for this especial object are received at the office of the two charities, at 63, Cheapside, the subscription-list is entirely distinct from those of the two institutions, one of which has a remarkable history, to be presently referred to.

Mr. Soul has already triumphed over considerable discouragement, and has worked so assiduously to found his Convalescent Home, as a crown to his labours, that gifts in kind as well as in money have been sent [illegible] building and the furnishing of the house. All the window-glass, a handsome patent bath, the tesselated pavement for hall and passages, plants and trees for stocking the garden, Art Union pictures for the walls, a

harmonium, three furnished cots and a mahogany chair as a good beginning for the dormitory, besides a number of small but useful articles, have already testified to the sympathies ready to greet the completion of this Home for thirty weak and wistful little ones, who cannot obtain the requisite care and attention under the present system of placing them with private persons to board and lodge.

But it is necessary to tell as briefly as possible the story of the oldest of the two institutions of which this building is to be an accessory—not only the oldest of these two, but probably *the oldest* voluntarily supported orphan asylum in London, since it dates from 116 years ago, when George II. was king, when Louis XV. was scandalising Europe and preparing the Revolution, when Wesleyan Methodism was commencing a vast religious revival, when Doctor Johnson had but just finished writing his Dictionary, and when William Hogarth was painting those wonderful pictures which are still the most instructive records of society and fashion as seen in the year 1758.

It was in that year, on the 10th of May, that fourteen periwigged and powdered gentlemen met at the George Inn, in Ironmonger Lane, in order to discuss how they might best found an asylum for forty orphan children—that is to say, for twenty boys and twenty girls.

They soon came to a solemn decision that there was "a sufficient subscription for carrying the scheme into execution," and a record to that effect was soberly entered in the very first clean page of the first minute-book of the Charity, with the additional memoranda that a committee was chosen and a treasurer appointed to collect and take care of the money necessary to support the undertaking.

The early minute-books of this charity, by the way, are models of serious penmanship. Grave achievements of caligraphy, with engrossed headings, elaborate flourishes, and stiff formal hedgerows of legal verbiage, suggestive of the fact that the secretaries were either attorneys or scriveners, and regarded the entries in a minute-book or the opening of a new account as very weighty and important events not to be lightly passed over. In this they were probably right; and, at all events, just so much of the old methodical exactitude has come down to the present day in the history of the institution, that the published accounts of the Orphan Working School have been referred to by the *Times* as models of condensation cumbered with a clearness of detail, which may be regarded as the best indication of a well-ordered and economical administration.

It might not be too much to say that the old principle of carrying a scheme into execution only when there are sufficient subscriptions still characterises the operations of the institution. At all events, Mr. Soul had secured enough money for the completion of the new building at Margate before the actual work commenced, and his experience tells him that funds will be forthcoming to maintain it.

The founders of the original Orphan Working School, however, laid their wigs together to obtain a house ready built, and at last found one adapted to the purpose, in what was then the suburban district known as Hogsden—since gentilised into Hoxton. Like all really good work, the enterprise began to grow—there were so many orphans, and this was still the only general asylum maintained by subscriptions—so that, as funds came in, two other adjoining houses were rented, and in seventeen years the number of inmates had increased from 40 to 165.

Reading the formal and yet most interesting records of this parent institution for the care of the orphan and the fatherless, I fall into a kind of wonder at the enormous change in the method of "nurture and admonition," of teaching and training, which has taken place in the past eighty years. Even in this house at Hoxton, whereof the founders appear to have been kindly old gentlemen, the discipline was enormously suggestive of that stern restriction and unsympathetic treatment which was thought necessary for the due correction of the "Old Adam" in the young heart. We know how great an outcry has quite lately been made at the discovery of the remains of that mode of chastisement which seems to have been abandoned almost everywhere, except by a special revival in gaols, and at two or three of the public schools to which the sons of gentlemen are consigned for their education.

The discipline at the Orphanage at Hogsden was cold and repellant enough, perhaps—had very little about it to encourage the affections, or to appeal to the loving confidence of a child—but it was less barbarous than the code which at that time found its maxim in the saying, "Spare the rod, spoil the child." Only very flagrant disobedience, persistent lying and swearing, were punished with public whipping. But even in the case of ordinary falsehood, a child was placed with his face to the wall at meal-time, with a paper pinned to his back with the word "Lyar" written on it, till he was sufficiently penitent to say, in the presence of all the rest of the children, "I have sinned in telling a lie. I will take more care. I hope God will forgive me."

The name, "Working School," was then interpreted so strictly, that there was comparatively little margin for education. Arithmetic appears to have been regarded with peculiar jealousy by the founders of this institution, who, being perhaps bankers, accountants, and capitalists, looked upon

such instruction as calculated to give the poor little boys and girls notions beyond their station.

For ten years the teaching of figures was altogether ignored; and it was only when some of the children, having heard that there was a science called "summing" known to the outer world, begged to be taught, that a solemn meeting of the Governors was called to consider the question, when it was conceded, after great deliberation, and no little opposition from the anti-educational part of the Committee, that arithmetic should be permitted to be taught, as far as addition.

Thus, to their few and rigidly ordered recreations, their hours of manual labour in making nets, list-carpets, slippers, and other cheap commodities, to their instruction in plain reading, and to their times for partaking of plain and even coarse food, served in not too tempting a way, was added the art of writing, and of the first two rules of arithmetic.

This was the condition of the orphans in 1775; but still the charity grew—grew out of house-room; and as the funds grew also, it was determined that it should have a building of its own, on a plot of ground in the City Road, where, improvements having set in, the grand old charity moved with the march of modern improvement. Life became less hard, and instruction more extended. The influences of modern thought and education had superseded the old severity, and new Governors succeeded the bewigged and powdered founders, who had, after all, so well ordered their work, that it grew with the growth of intelligence.

During the seventy-two years from 1775 to 1847, the institution had received 1,124 orphans; and again the dimensions of the house were unequal to the demands of the inmates; while the house itself, and the ground on which it stood, had become so valuable, that it was determined to buy a plot of land at Haverstock Hill, and there to found a truly representative Home for 240 orphan boys and girls—a number which has now increased (as the building itself has increased also) till 400 orphans are taught, fed, and clothed in one of the most truly representative charities in all great London.

AUTUMN LEAVES.

HEAP them up quickly!
Yesternight's breeze
Shook them so thickly
Under the trees.

Look! the dull yellow
Of each in decay
Rivals its fellow—
They have lived out their day.

How they were fluttering
Like birds taking wing,
And bashfully uttering
Low music last spring!

How they danced wildly
To welcome in June,
The gales singing mildly
A silver-sweet tune!

How they basked lazily
In Midsummer's glare,
And rocked themselves crazily
In Autumn's fresh air!

How russet and sober
The garments they wore,
To greet brown October,
Ere strewing his floor!

Dead spoils of November!
Soiled "gold of the woods!"
We sigh to remember
Such perishing goods.

Ye types of the treasure
We lay up on earth,
Betokening the measure
Old Time grants to Mirth!

Ye show to us yearly
The value of bloom,
But not too severely
Foreshadow its tomb.

Fair Nature works kindly;
Grave truths she reveals,
Lest men wander blindly,
Unmarking her wheels.

If hearts echo drearily
Some words on her page,
The whole softens cheerily
Our life's pilgrimage.

The leaves we are heaping,
Ripen the mould.
Locked up in their keeping,
Now torpid and cold,

Lie germs of spring roses,
Young daisies, green leaves,
For earth has long dozes,
And in them she weaves

A web of creations;
Thus feeding reflection
With symbols for nations
Of man's *Resurrection*.

JANE DIXON.

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER III.

HALF stunned by the suddenness with which her future was being decided for her, Eda Granton sat and listened to her brother's rapid explanations. He had made inquiries at a couple of institutes for governesses, and advertised in her name in two or three of the daily papers, but had not heard of anything that promised as well as a situation mentioned to him by the clergyman who had visited Mrs. Granton.

"Did Mr. Gale approve of our parting so quickly and completely?" she roused herself to inquire.

"What are our private affairs to Mr. Gale, that I should thrust them upon him? I told him how we both felt that you must be up and doing as well as I, and this is the result of the inquiries he has made in your behalf. I wish you would not keep looking at me so reproachfully, Eda! You agree with me that it will be prudent to adopt this course"—she made a dissenting gesture, but Mark would not see it—"and yet when I take all the unpleasantness on my own shoulders, you find fault, instead of being grateful!"

Eda slid her hand into his, and tried to think that he was right; that her weak health and repugnance to his plans had made her irritable and unjust. "I did not mean to seem unkind," she faltered. I do not doubt that you are acting for the best, but you should not be surprised that I find it difficult to reconcile myself to the separation that mamma always deprecated."

"Let me read you Mr. Gale's note;" and Mark produced it. "He has a friend residing on his own estate in Surrey, about forty miles from London—just a pleasant distance, Eda, I should be able to see you often—this friend has built a school-house for the children of his own tenants and labourers, and is in want of a sensible well-educated young person to act as schoolmistress."

"You forget that for a village school a certain system is required, which I have never learned," Eda objected.

"So Mr. Gale was saying; but in this case your ignorance will be considered an advantage, for his friend has a system of his own on which he proposes to have the children instructed, and as he is anxious to carry out his plans for their benefit as quickly as possible, the sooner you can commence your duties the better it will please him."

"You talk as if the affair were already settled, although I never knew till this minute that it had been proposed!"

"It only waits your assent," her brother admitted. "As your natural protector, I thought myself justified in writing to Mr. Texley, to detail your acquirements, and ask what salary he proposes giving, and so on; and it appears that my letter, or Mr. Gale's warm recommendation, or both, have given so much satisfaction, that Mr. Texley is ready to induct you in your new office as soon as you feel well enough to make the journey to Weston Hayes. The pure country breezes will do wonders for you, Eda! I wish your trunks were packed, and you were just going to start; your pale cheeks trouble me every time I look at them!"

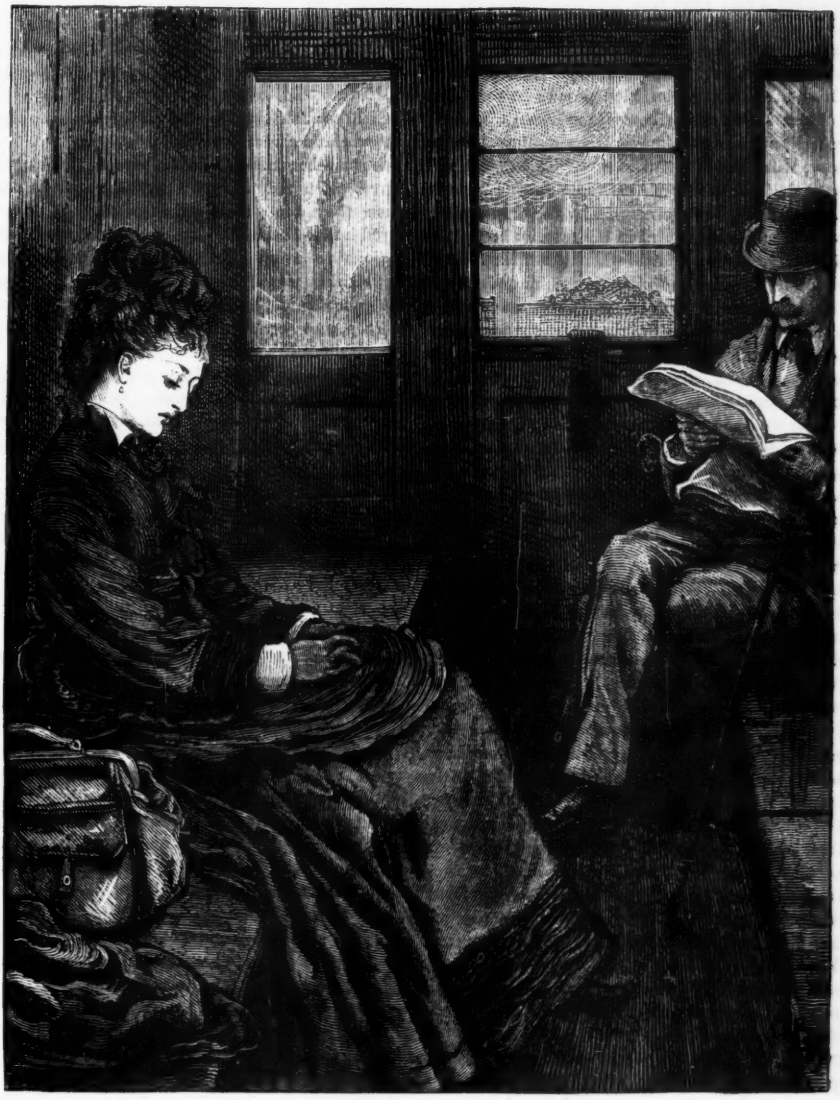
He stooped to kiss her, and Eda's tears burst forth; the prospect of such a speedy separation had quite unnerved her. She knew how her mother had relied upon her to keep Mark steady, by her gentle sisterly influence; to cheer him if he lost heart; to encourage him when he made renewed efforts; in fact, to step into the breach that the loss of an only parent would make. How could she do this if he sent her from him?"

"If we could but be together!" she sobbed; but his hasty "It is impossible!" was spoken in a tone from which she knew that there was no appeal.

"Mr. Gale will look in to-morrow, Eda, and ask you to fix a day for leaving here. Let it be an early one, for we shall only make each other miserable till it is over. When we are both fairly launched on the world, we shall leave off looking back, and fretting over what cannot be altered."

"Promise me this! only promise me this!" cried Eda, throwing her arms round him; "that if you miss me, or if you feel that you have made a mistake in joining Richie Atwood, you will send for me at once. You do not know how economical and industrious I can be, nor how I would work to make your home bright and cheerful! Promise this, for the sake of the dear mother who bade us love and cling to each other, come what might."

"I do promise, Eda," he answered, kissing her again and again. "It pains me more than you imagine to let you leave me; but it is the curse of poverty that we must trample all our best affections under our feet! Now lie down, dear, and keep yourself quiet, while I go and learn by what train you had better travel. You are to have rooms at the gardener's cottage—did I tell you? and Mr. Gale, who spent a week at Weston Hayes last summer, tells me that the scenery around the estate is lovely. How you will enjoy rambling in the woods and fields once more!"



(*Drawn by* F. BARNARD.)

"Now really and utterly alone."—*p.* 27.

"Alone?" Eda queried; but he closed the door so hastily, that she could not tell whether he heard the sorrowful question.

Mr. Gale called on the following morning, and was pleased when Eda gave him grateful thanks for the trouble he had taken on her behalf; but he was in too great a hurry to pay a round of visits to his sick poor to notice her increased dejection. Nor would she have cared to tell him, kind though he was, that the separation from Mark would cost her a sharper pang than any she had known when closing the eyes of their dead mother. The one had left her for heaven; but the other was plunging into the battle of life, unarmed for the conflict by the only armour that could be his safeguard in the fray.

Mrs. Ingle stood aghast when she first learned that her lodgers were going away; and Jan was fetched home from the tavern, and shook and scolded into comparative sobriety, that his spouse might have the benefit of his advice. After a long consultation with him, she went up-stairs to assure Eda that Jan wouldn't hear of her leaving them. She was quite welcome to the rooms as long as she chose to occupy them, and the rent could stand over till "any when" that suited her.

As Eda gratefully declined this offer, Mrs. Ingle took fresh counsel with her better half, and returned to say that if Miss liked to take out the rent in giving Ria a lesson now and then, Jan would be quite satisfied. Work was plentiful, and he had promised, *quite faithful*, to stick to it. Besides, the letting of the rooms wasn't so great an object that he'd hear of Miss giving them up as long as she could make herself comfortable in them.

"Say you'll stay, Miss Eda, do 'ee now!" pleaded the woman; "seems as if now you're to be left to yourself I can't let ye go. My poor motherless lamb, I can't abide for ye to go among strangers! Master Mark can fend for himself, never doubt him; but you——" and Mrs. Ingle's eloquence ended in such a burst of grief, that Eda crept into her arms and wept with her.

It was a long time before she could be comforted with assurances that Eda thought the change would do her good, and that if it did not, she would return to her kind friends at Pimlico. With this promise Mrs. Ingle had to be satisfied, and beat a quick retreat, for Mark was coming up the stairs, and she preferred to avoid him.

"That woman here again, Eda!" he exclaimed, angrily. "You allow her too many freedoms; you must assert your position more carefully when you are a schoolmistress! And look here! how dare she leave these disgusting things littering our sitting-room."

The "things" were Mrs. Ingle's boots, of which, true to her old custom, she always disencumbered herself when she came up to Eda. Viciously kicking these down-stairs carried off some of Mark's ill humour, but it revived when, in a voice broken by emotion, his sister related the disinterested kindness with which the Ingles had acted.

It was an insult, he declared. What did they mean by pressing their offers of assistance upon her, just as if she were a pauper? It was only that they might be able to bruit all through the neighbourhood the pleasant tidings that Miss Granton was living on their bounty. They meant it kindly! nonsense; or if they did, who would care to be beholden to such low-minded wretches as a tippling bricklayer's labourer and a charwoman.

Sick at heart, Eda said no more; and very little conversation had passed between her and her brother when they took their places in the cab that conveyed her to the railway station. Perhaps Mark was anxious to avoid altogether the painful subjects to which she would most probably recur, for they had not gone many yards when he signalled the driver to stop, and beckoned a person sauntering along the other side of the street.

"It is Richie," he explained. "You would like to see him before you quit London, would you not? if only to convince yourself that you do not leave me in the hands of such an ogre as you painted him the other day."

See Richie? Eda could have answered yes and no in the same breath, and with equal sincerity; yes, because he had been the hero of all her youthful dreams, and no, because some inexplicable feeling warned her that there might be danger in the meeting. But no option was given her. Mark's signal had been seen and obeyed, and Richie himself had opened the door of the cab, and was warmly shaking the trembling fingers she extended.

Mark was right; he was unchanged, except that the once boyish face had grown somewhat paler and more manly. There was the same gay light dancing in his blue eyes; the same haughty careless carriage of the head and impatient jerking aside of the wavy fair hair that would fall over his forehead, and, in all outward tokens, the promise of his youth was fulfilled. Richie Atwood had developed into a well-proportioned and very attractive-looking young man, dressed with a touch of foppery, yet foppery that sat well upon him, accompanied as it was with an utter absence of conceit or too much of that self-confidence so distasteful in the young.

His words, too, had all the pleasant but respectful familiarity which divests such a meeting of embarrassment.

"It is very delightful to see you again, Miss Granton, or may I say Eda, as I used to do? Thanks. I was on my way to Pimlico; for though Mr. Mark here demurred a little, and seemed to think I might be in the way, I could not resist my longing to say a how-d'ye-do and a good-bye to my old playfellow before she put so many miles between us."

"We have been in London nearly a year. Why have you never been to see us?"

"How could I intrude upon an invalid, even if I had known your correct address? But you must not think that I have been unmindful of you because circumstances have kept us apart. Mark will tell you how rejoiced I was to see him!"

It never entered the mind of Eda that if Richie had really been anxious to renew the intimacy, he would not have waited until a chance *rencontre* in the streets brought them in contact. Very few people ever did attempt to analyse Richie's motives while they were under the spell of his sweet low voice and sympathetic looks. To Eda, still smarting with a secret feeling that Mark had treated her like a wilful child who must be coerced and managed into taking the course proposed for her, these demonstrations of a more kindly feeling were so very soothing, that she started and sighed when the cab stopped, and Richie prepared to leave them.

"How sorry I am that you are leaving London!" he exclaimed, as he bent towards her with the caressing manner that was at once brotherly and tender. "But I shall hear of you through Mark, shan't I? Whenever there is no kind message for me in your letters to him, I shall revenge myself by being sulky till you write again. But in sober earnest, dear Eda, the knowledge that you are thinking of and praying for us ought to keep both of us straight, and I hope it will."

She could not trust herself to reply; and shaking her hand warmly, Richie alighted.

"May I go to the train with you?" he asked; "but no, I'll not press that wish. Of course, you and Mark have a few last words to say to each other, so adieu. Dinna forget old times, nor old friends!" and the next moment he was gone, and Eda stood bewildered in the bustle of the railway terminus. However, Mark safely piloted her through the throng, and his better self was heard in his farewells.

"I can scarcely let you go, my own dear sister, and I would not if I did not feel that it is for the best. Keep up your spirits, and recollect that I shall strain every nerve to win such a position that I can have you with me. You'll write often? I shall have nothing to cheer me but your letters."

"And you will not forget our mother, but try to live the Christian life she set before us?"

"It is you who must do that, Eda; and, as Richie told you, pray for both. See, here we are; and now to find you a comfortable seat. You'll not mind riding third class, will you? Now cash begins to run so short, one don't want to put more in the pockets of the railway company than one can help."

Eda raised no objection to any arrangement he chose to make. She wanted to say a few earnest words, to entreat him not to let this eager grasping after wealth get too strong a hold upon him; but when she began to speak he stopped her with an assurance that he knew all she wished to say, and would do his best to be good, &c., &c.

"Better take your seat at once," he added, hurrying her towards the train. "Get in here; I'll see to your luggage. God bless you, my precious little sister, and good-bye!"

Eda strained her eyes after him, as he went to the guard's van, and superintended the ticketing of her trunks. She hoped and expected that he would return to her for one last word, but Mark only waved his hand, and turned quickly away, as if he had not courage for a more protracted farewell.

There was no one in the same compartment with Eda but a young man, who sat in the further corner, absorbed in a newspaper; but even he was not disturbed by any noisy grief. The pale face of the young girl grew a shade paler, and her lips drooped more sorrowfully, but her eyes were tearless. It was with a sort of dull aching too deep for tears, that she was beginning to realise how she was now really and utterly alone; that from henceforth Mark's way through the world and hers would take different directions. Would these diverse paths ultimately bring them to the same destination? We shall see.

CHAPTER IV.

The bell rang loudly, every one had settled themselves in their places ready for the start, when a dozen or more of rough fellows came tearing across the platform, and scrambling into the compartment where Eda was seated, jostling, laughing, swearing, and, as the train moved slowly out of the station, cheering on two of their number, who were wrestling for the only seat left vacant. At last, amidst indescribable noise and confusion, one of the combatants was hurled violently on to the floor of the carriage, and the victor squeezed himself between a companion and Eda, who, terrified and disgusted by the blasphemous language these men were uttering, had drawn down her veil, and shrunk as far from them as she could. It appeared that they were all going down the line on the same errand—to be spectators of a fight that was to come off between a couple of noted pugilists, on a retired spot where the policemen were not likely to interfere with their amusement.

"Hope I'm not discommoding you, miss," said Eda's neighbour. "I'm very comfortable myself, I am, for I likes to be close to the ladies, I do."

Encouraged by a roar of laughter from his companions, he proceeded to be still more facetious.

"My elbows is squeedged into my ribs, or else I'd ask you to have a sup out of my bottle, miss. It's a *gen*teel drink I carries—cream of the valley, that's what it is."

Eda kept her face turned towards the window, or she would have seen that the young man who sat in the further corner was leaning forward, with his face flushed and brows knitted. He had a sister at

home, and longed to defend this modest-looking and half-frightened girl from further annoyance; but he was one against many, and knew not how to compass it.

"Hope you don't mind a bit of smoke, miss," Eda's tormentor began again; "for I'm a-dying for my pipe. If you'd like to fill it with them pretty fingers of your'n, I'm sure you shall. I likes to be waited upon by the ladies."

In a moment the young man had pushed his way to the place where Eda was sitting, and was good-humouredly remonstrating with the fellow, whose short black pipe was now in his mouth.

"My good friend, you cannot wish to annoy the lady. If you must smoke, go and sit somewhere else."

He was heard with an insolent stare. "To oblige *you*? no thank-ye. I likes my present quarters too well. I shan't stir to please nobody. Lend us a bit of that there rug o' your'n, miss, will ye? I begins to feel a draught to my feet."

As he put his dirty hand on the shawl across Eda's knees, she could not repress a little cry of terror; and her champion, prudence forgotten, seized him by the collar, and sent him sprawling into the arms of those who sat opposite.

"Make your mate behave himself, will you, my lads!" he exclaimed, in clear loud tones that arrested their attention. "There 's only one lady in the carriage with us, and she's in great trouble, as you may see. I'm sure there's none of you would like to let her be insulted at such a time."

This allusion to Eda's deep mourning had the desired effect. The fellow, who was fuming and raving, and making ineffectual attempts to grapple with her protector, was unceremoniously pushed down on the seat, and held there till his wrath subsided. The young man followed up his victory by announcing that he was an artist, and would sketch any of them who would like their portraits taken.

This proposal was received with loud acclamations, and although the motion of the carriage was not very favourable for drawing, he contrived with a few bold strokes to produce likenesses of two or three of the party, which were handed round, and pronounced excellent.

It was amusing to see how these men, brutalised by their associations, smoothed their sullen brows, and were flattered to see their disfigured noses, thick lips, and coarse animal jaws, so faithfully reproduced by the artist. More than one hand was held out to him as the train stopped at the station for which they were bound, and then they struggled out of the carriage, impeding one another in their haste, and again horrifying the shuddering Eda with oaths and exclamations too horrid to repeat.

"I am very much obliged to you, sir," she said, gratefully, when once more left alone with the young man.

"Do not mention it. I think we both made a mistake in getting into an empty carriage," he added, with a smile; "another time I should advise you to secure yourself against such fellow-travellers as these have been by taking a seat where there are two or three babies. They may be troublesome companions in their way, but they would not pollute your ears with such language as those blackguards have used."

"There is no danger of their returning, is there?" she asked, apprehensively.

"Not the slightest. We shall be off again directly; but if you are going much further, and would like to change carriages, I will call the guard."

"I am going to Weston Hayes," said Eda.

"And I to a station beyond, so I think I can promise that you shall not be molested during the remainder of your journey. You are bound for one of the prettiest spots in Surrey!"

"Am I?" she asked, listlessly.

The question betrayed that this was her first visit to the village thus eulogised, but her companion was too polite to notice this, and went on chatting pleasantly.

"It was there Blank the Academician painted the picture that was so much admired at the Royal Academy last year. When you ramble as far as the old water-mill, which he reproduced very faithfully, you will agree with me that he could not have chosen a more charming subject for his pencil. Perhaps you will be tempted to sketch the mill yourself."

"I have not touched a pencil for many many months," said Eda. "Mamma drew beautifully—but she did everything well."

There were tears in her eyes now, and to banish them the artist opened his sketch-book, and began to show her its contents, trying to interest her in them, and explaining that some of the curious little unfinished-looking bits of woodland—a stunted tree, a bed of tall king-ferns, a bosky dell—were studies for the background of a scene from the "Midsummer Night's Dream," which he was commissioned to paint for one of his patrons. There was also an unfinished female head—an arch, spirited face—which he told her he had sketched from behind a screen, the original refusing to submit to the tedium of sittings for her portrait, although her parents were very anxious to have one painted.

But just as, with much humour, he had described his various attempts to obtain a profile of the young lady, and how frequently he had been frustrated by her restless flittings to and fro, and suspicions of his design, the train stopped, and Eda knew that she was at her destination.

"I hope you have friends here to meet you," said the artist, scanning the empty platform.

"I am a stranger, but an expected one," she answered, with a forlorn glance in the same direction.

"The village is a mile from here; are you going to it? To the Texley's? the Hall? that is still

further. Let me make inquiries for you!" and leaping out, in spite of the guard's warning that they were going on directly, he interrogated the station-master.

No, there had been no conveyance sent down from the Hall, and there was no fly to be had without sending into Weston for it. The young lady's luggage could be taken on a truck, if she liked.

So Eda had no choice but to walk, and, once more bidding the artist adieu, she stepped briskly towards the lane pointed out to her as the nearest route to the Hall.

For some distance the railway ran parallel with this lane, and Eda's new acquaintance, watching from the carriage window, caught more than one glimpse of the slight figure in black wending her way along it to a new home. He had felt interested in Eda from the moment he saw the forlorn glance she sent after the brother who, instead of lingering beside her till the last moment, had seized the first opportunity to leave her. Left to her own resources, exposed to insult on the journey, and now, if not absolutely forgotten, so unkindly neglected, that his chivalrous spirit would have induced him to remain with her if he had not feared to distress her by too much urgency. To see a young girl—one too who was evidently unused to roughing it—in such a position, was enough to arouse all Fritz Allonby's kindest feelings towards her; and he continued to gaze from the window, hoping to see the carriage that should have been sent to the station to meet her, till the train entered a cutting, and he sat down to recall the pure pale face that had pleased his artistic eye, and rather idly wonder if he should ever see it again; while Eda, her step lagging when she was fairly under the elms that shadowed the lane, thought sadly of Mark, and Richie Atwood, till the sight of a church steeple told her that she was nearing the village of Weston Hayes, and would soon have to summon up her courage for an interview with her new employer.

(To be continued.)

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 2. Matthias.

Chapter to be read—Acts i. 12—26.

INTRODUCTION. The teacher may commence by a picture of state of the world at that time, and of the work lying before the apostles. What was their command? (Mark xvi. 15) Show by a map the extent of the Roman Empire. What was its religious condition? See Romans i. 29, 1 Cor. i. 21, Eph. ii. 12. Was there not one nation better, to whom God was known? But what was the state of the Jews? Whom had they just crucified? Remind of Parable of Wicked Husbandmen. So wanted teaching as much as others. What a great work! Apostles would be eager to begin their work at once. Did they? Why not? Had ten days to wait, then Spirit came.

I. Apostles Waiting. (Read 12—14). (*a*) *The room*, probably the same room prepared for Christ and disciples to eat the Passover. Who were sent to get it ready? Must have been a large room (Mark xiv. 15). How many were assembled? (Acts i. 15) (*b*) *The persons.* How many apostles were there? Ask who wrote the Acts, and, referring to Luke vi. 13—16, show how in the Gospel they are given in the same order when Christ called them, except that Andrew there follows his brother Simon. Why are Peter, James, and John, now placed together? Remind how three times had been more favoured than the rest. Bartholomew, the same as Nathanael, who prayed under the fig-tree (John i. 50). Besides these were the holy women—who were they? And also about one hundred brethren who believed. (*c*) *The occupation.* How did they spend their time? (ver. 14.) Would be very quiet and thoughtful after the excitement of parting with Christ. See His love in giving them ten days' rest before beginning hard public life. For what would they pray? Show from Luke xi. 13, John xv. 16, how the Holy Ghost is specially given in answer to prayer. For whom would they pray besides themselves? Show how Christ had prayed for the converts of the apostles (John xvii. 20), so would they pray for success in their work. Had they ever been without Christ before? Would remember their want of success while Christ was on Mount of Transfiguration. Could not heal the lunatic boy for want of faith and prayer (Matt. xvii. 21). Would make humble, more earnest in prayer.

II. Matthias Chosen. (Read vs. 15—26.) Who was the absent apostle? Explain apostle as same as missionary, meaning one solemnly sent forth. How many had Christ so chosen specially? Remind of twelve patriarchs, founders of twelve tribes, and how when Levi was taken away for the priesthood, the number was made up by Joseph's double portion in his two sons. So now number must be completed. Who takes the lead in the matter, and what book has he been studying? Let children read Ps. xli. 9, lxix. 25, to see that David was speaking of his enemies as God's enemies, and so was prophesying of Judas. How was he Christ's enemy? (ver. 16) yet had been one of the chosen apostles! What was to be the qualification for the new apostle? (ver. 21) Why must he have been with them all through?

XUM

Remind how Christ had seventy disciples besides the twelve apostles, who had heard his words and had power of working miracles (Luke x. 19). One of these must be chosen. For what especially? Why were witnesses wanted of the Resurrection? Remind how Resurrection proved Christ's divinity; and show, from Acts ii. 32, iii. 15, iv. 33, how much they made of this. But what else would the apostles be especially anxious about? Would they like another Judas? but how could they tell whether they made a right choice; so what do they do? To whom was their prayer addressed? Who had chosen the apostles? (John xv. 16) Christ had selected them, Christ knew all hearts; so would ask Him to guide them. Remind how Christ showed such divine knowledge when He spoke to Thomas (John xx. 27), and how this same Peter had used same words before (John xxi. 17); so they for the first time pray to Jesus. Then what did they do? Ask for other instances of lots being cast, viz., the Israelites when Achan was discovered (Josh. vii. 16), Saul chosen for king (1 Sam. x. 21), sailors when Jonah was cast into the sea (Jonah i. 7), the soldiers for Christ's garment (Matt. xxvii. 35). Picture the scene: the rising from their knees, arranging the lots, the two candidates waiting for the result, lot given, the eager expectation, the congratulations to the successful one. How may be sure they were guided right? See Prov. xvi. 33. From Acts xv. 33 show Barnabas still held in honour by apostles.

III. PRACTICAL LESSONS. (1) *Patience in waiting.* The apostles, eager to work, waited paitently for ten days. Sometimes strength is to sit still; wait, to learn God's will. For example, a boy, strong and well, meets with accident, has to lie still, suffer, wait, &c., is learning patience; a girl wants to go out into world, earn own living, do much good, be useful to others, detained at home, must wait and be patient. How long was Christ before beginning public life? (Luke iii. 23) (2) *Prayer in difficulty.* Apostles did their best, selected two, used judgment, but let Christ decide. So always; God has promised to help in time of need. How often do we ask His advice? Remember Israelites in difficulty at Red Sea, cried to God; bidden go forward. Can always see one step before us, take that, will be guided on.

Questions to be answered.

1. Describe the state of world at time of Ascension.
2. Who were present in the upper room?
3. How did they spend their time?
4. Quote the prophecies respecting Judas.
5. What were the qualifications for an apostle?
6. What practical lessons does the story teach us?

MAY FLOWER, OR "SERVANT OF ALL."

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LITTLE BUTTERCUP," "NOTHING BUT A SONG," "HOW TO ENTER INTO REST," ETC.

CHAPTER III.

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it *abide* in the vine; no more can ye, except ye *abide* in me."—*John* xv. 4.

"Here would I find a settled rest,
Whilst others go and come;
No more a stranger or a guest,
But like a child at home."

IT was strange to find the happy six weeks that the cousins had spent together so soon at an end; they seemed to have flown away.

May pulled Rosamond back as they were entering the house again.

"Rosa, of course, you'll write to me sometimes?"

"Of course, darling May; and you must let me know how you get on, and if you find you are making a good servant."

"Rosa, I don't like to think of that; it is such hard work; I tried to-day, and everything went as wrong as possible; much worse than when I don't try."

"I don't think that, May; I expect it was that when you began to try, you also began to find out that you never tried before, and how careless and idle you are sometimes. And there is another thing, my child; as soon as we turn our backs on sin and on ourselves, and our faces straight towards God, then it is that Satan is so busy putting stumbling-blocks in our way, and not only trying to make us fall, but trying also to make us tired and careless of all that is good and right. So we must be on the watch for him, and send the idle uncaring feelings away, and not listen to them."

"But they will *keep* coming back, Rosa; very often I don't care a bit about anything that is right and good, and that makes me sure that I am just fit for nothing, and can't be in earnest at all."

"Do you know what grafting is, May?"

"Grafting?"

"Yes; don't think I am not going to answer what you were saying; I am only coming round to it by another way. You know how it is done?"

"Why, I know what it is, but not how it 's done."

"Well, it is often done when a tree gets old, or if its fruit is not very good. The gardener does not take it away, and say it is useless, but he cuts a slip from off a good tree of the same kind, then he brings it to the poor bad stock, and he cuts one of its limbs, just exactly to fit against the good branch. Then he takes clay, and matting, and string, and binds it

round and round, till it is quite firm and safe, so that if a wind came it would not be blown away. Suppose that the next day he went to the tree, and looked at it, and began wondering if it were growing, and holding on rightly, and that by-and-by he were to cut the string, and take off all the bandages he had put on so carefully, so as to *see* if it were growing, what do you think would happen?"

"Why, of course, the little branch would fall off; it wouldn't have had time to grow."

"No, of course not; and yet, if you were to look very closely at the two ends that had been cut to fit each other, you would see that there had been growth; the sap from the stock would have run into the new slip, and the tiniest fibres possible would have stretched across to join it, and life between the two would have begun."

"But no gardener would be so stupid as to go and undo what he had done the very day before."

"No, he would not; he would leave it alone, and go about his other work. By-and-by the time would come when the bindings might be taken away quite safely; and, at last, you would find it quite impossible to sever the branch from the stock; you would have to tear the tree itself, for they would be so firm—so entirely *one*."

"But what do you mean by all this, Rosamond?"

"In the Bible—it comes in the Epistle to the Romans—we read about grafting; that *we* are grafted into Christ; but you see there is a difference—our gardeners put good branches on bad stocks, but God, the great Husbandman, puts bad branches on the good Stock. Well, little May, you have given your heart to the Lord Jesus; that is like being grafted into Him; and now you are always looking to see if you are growing, and you spend so much time in the looking, that you have none left for the growing. You think the great good Stock cannot take care of a tiny branch like you. It is a simple fact that you are joined on to Him. What binds you is not only your feeble fitful desire towards Him, but chiefly, and most of all, His mighty tender desire to you."

"But what must I do, Rosa?"

"Just let things be, my child. Don't be always untying the bindings to see if you are *on* the Stock. You *are* there. Just rest quietly on the Stock, and let the life that is in Jesus our Lord flow through into you. Don't be always on the look-out to see *where* you are; only be careful to turn away from any and all hindrances that will keep *His* life from you, and make you miss His desires for you."

"What sort of hindrances will those be?"

"One great thing is disobedience; not to delay to follow and do that which is right; and so often as we do, to go at once and tell it out to God, and get His forgiveness, and go on again very humbly, but very cheerfully, because we are confident not in self, but in *God*."

"Is that the chief thing?"

"Yes, in one way; but there is yet another, and it is very dangerous because it is so hidden."

"What is it?"

"Why, it is just ourselves."

"Ourselves?"

"Yes, ourselves. They are always in the way; either troubling about something they have done, or have not done."

"But, Rosa, we *must* always have ourselves as long as we live!"

"Yes; but then the question is, what are we to do with these selves? Are we to pity and coax them, or to learn with God's help to have nothing to do with them?"

"Well, as you say, 'by God's help,' I suppose we ought to learn to have nothing to do with them. But I don't see why."

"I think the reason is that they hide Christ away from us. We sometimes get to be so busy about ourselves, that we forget all about Him. When we are praying, I think we ought to tell Him all that we know that is wrong and foolish in us; but then, having done that, I think we ought to leave it, and not brood over it alone."

"But then how can we see if we are going right?"

"Certainly not by looking into our own hearts. Have I never told you that favourite little sentence of mine, that I picked up I don't know from where?"

"What is it?"

"'Faith takes in what God says, because it looks, not at the thing to be done, but at the One who can do it.'"

"I see; then perhaps it is better so."

"Of course it is. Don't fret about all you have to *do*, but leave yourself quietly in our loving Father's hands, and obediently follow Him. Now, that must be all for to-night, my childie. I don't need to say how much I shall think about you. God bless you, darling!"

CHAPTER IV.

"O God, who art the Truth, make me one with Thee in everlasting love!"—*Thomas à Kempis.*

"Would that I were more closely bound
To my Beloved, who ever lives;
Would that my soul were always found,
Abiding in the peace He gives."—*L. A. W.*

"His presence in the soul is a perpetual feast—the one thing that cheers, strengthens, elevates."—*Sermons, Rev. J. Bolton.*

ROSAMOND was gone, and May was very lonely without her. The days and weeks passed but slowly, and though now and then there came a letter to cheer her up, she was rather beginning to feel that all her efforts after good were in vain; and sometimes she regretted that she had ever begun to walk in the narrow path.

This was only sometimes. In her inmost heart

she knew that she would sooner part with anything than with this new life of serving God.

When she got to feel thus, she would go into the village, and call at Margery's little cottage.

Often she said nothing of how cross and naughty she was feeling, but just stayed and looked at Margery, and somehow it always did her good. She returned home feeling ashamed, feeling tender and gentle, and wishing she had not grieved God.

"Margery," she said one day, "I wonder why it is that you always do me good. I feel so much *gooder* after I've been to see you."

"I can tell why it is, Miss May."

"Why is it?"

"You never come empty-handed to me; you always bring me some flowers, or fruit, and kind words and that makes you forget all about yourself."

"I don't think it is that, Margery."

"I can't help thinking it is, Miss May. It is just the same as I used to do; I used to think so much about myself, that it was almost as if I had to save myself, and rule and govern myself, instead of the other way."

"What is the other way? and how did you find it out?"

"The other way, Miss May dear, is that the Lord Jesus *has* saved me, and is now ruling and governing me, and that my part is to obey. And the way I came to find out about it all was just through our dear Dr. Hurst. One day when he came in to see me I was feeling that miserable and ill I did not know what to do. It was Dr. Edwards' day for seeing me, and he was just going away as Dr. Hurst came in, and said to him, 'Dr. Hurst, I think you will do more for my patient to-day than I shall;' and so he went, and Dr. Hurst came in, and stood by me for some time without saying a word, only just looking at me crying so foolishly; and at last he spoke. And what do you think he said?"

"I don't know, Margery."

"He just said—and I shall never forget the words, for they often help me now—he said, 'Margery, you are making a great mistake.' So I looked up at him, and then he added, 'You are not the doctor, you're the patient; you are not the doctor, you're the patient!' Just nothing but that, and he put his roses on the table, and went away."

"But how could that do you any good?"

"Why, Miss May, it just showed me what a foolish, ignorant, wicked creature I was. When Dr. Edwards came to see me, I just told him all that was wrong, and left it to him; but with the blessed Lord Jesus, who was with me always, I told Him what was wrong, it is true, but I did not *leave* it with Him. I kept worrying, and grieving, and sighing, as if I were some one very good who had suddenly become wicked, and instead I ought to have been glad and rejoicing, for I *am* very bad, and, myself, can never be good, and Christ knows that, and is ready to let His beautiful holy life shine through me, and in me, if I will let Him."

"But I don't see how it was that you were not letting Him."

"I was so busy making myself good; sorrowing over my quick temper and impatience, and want of love, that I lost sight of the Lord, and so then and there I just gave it all up. I told Him I knew there was no good in me, and so I came to Him to give myself up entirely to His power and love; and since then I think so much about Him, that I have no time to moan over myself; and yet, somehow, I hardly know how, since then, I am sure that Christ does indeed live in me, and I in Him."

"But, Margery, how I wish I loved Him more!"

"You will not learn to love Him, Miss May, by looking at your want of love, but by thinking of His great tender love to you."

"But I don't *feel* it."

"Then believe it—trust it."

"But it doesn't make me feel *satisfied;* I should like to be quite satisfied."

"And so God means you to be, Miss May. 'Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst, for they *shall* be filled,' 'He satisfieth the hungry soul,' are His own words; and surely, if you were to give up all your wonderings and questionings and wants into His gracious hands, and trust Him, you *would* be satisfied."

"Well, Margery, I must run home for to-day. I wish I were like you!"

"You have some one better and surer to try to be like, Miss May. I don't know what we should do if we had to take each other as our examples, instead of Christ."

"No, I suppose that is the best," answered May; and with that she nodded her good-bye, and ran homewards.

(To be continued.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

9. "Get thee behind me, Satan," said the Saviour when tempted. Give another instance of the use of these words by the Lord Jesus.

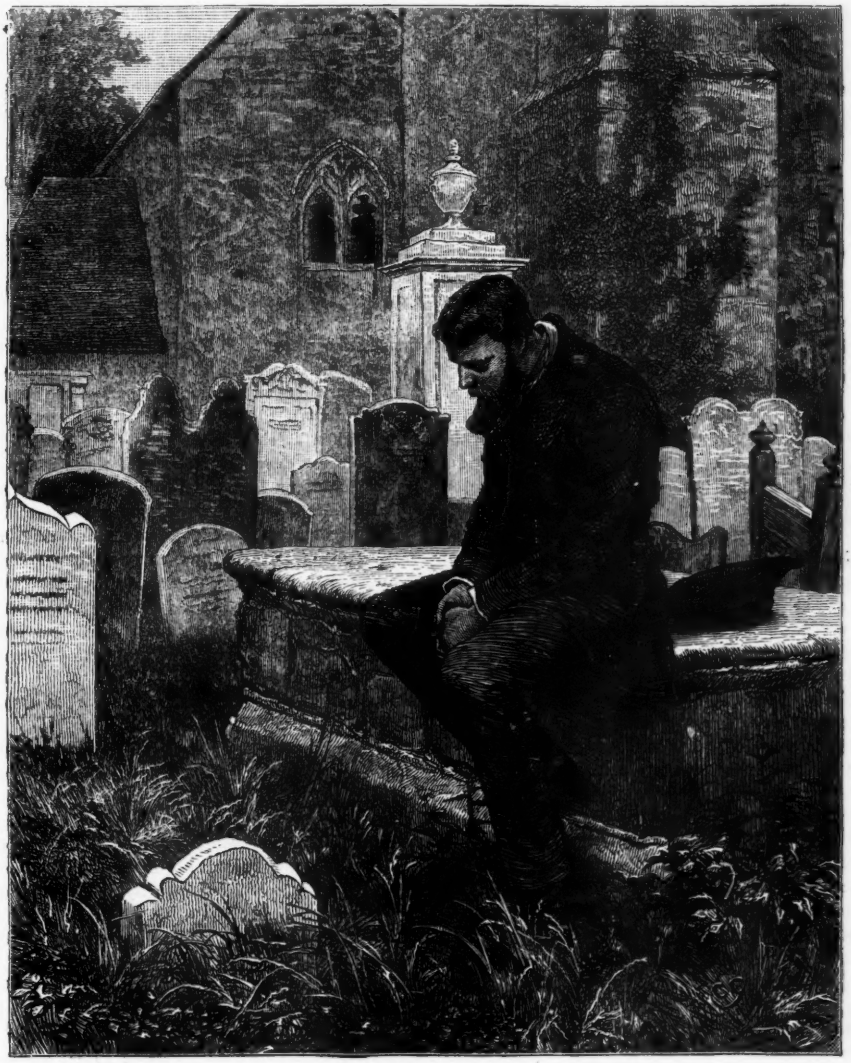
10. How many years after planting a vine were to elapse before the Jews were allowed to eat of the grapes?

11. Where do we find that baldness was produced artificially, as indicative of mourning?

12. The day of Atonement (Lev. xvi. 29, Numb. xxix. 7) was the *only fast* enjoined by the Mosaic law. Show that the Jews of our Lord's time did not strictly follow this injunction.

13. Which were the three principal promises that God made to Abraham?

14. Which of Evangelists record the command of the Saviour, after the feeding of the five thousand, to "gather up the fragments?"



(*Drawn by* CHARLES GREEN.)

FLITTING FRIENDS.

THE swallows' nests beneath our eaves
Are tenantless again to-day,
The silver birch its golden leaves
Drops noiseless on the public way,

And childhood's footsteps, that of yore
Before our window blithely sped,
Now, perished foliage pressing o'er,
Move with a sad and muffled tread.

And if we walk our garden round
  At early dawn, we mark a rime
Upon the fence and border ground
  Prophetic of the coming time;
A lingering blossom here and there
  With faded countenance we trace,
Looking like love in mute despair
  Beside some dear one's resting-place.

But though the birds have taken wing,
  And though our floral beauties lie
Prone in the mire, and Winter bring
  His bitter wind and leaden sky,
We know, however harsh his hand,
  The birth of Spring will end his reign,
And love and joy throughout the land
  The birds and flowers recall again.

But other friends have gone away,
  Ne'er to resume their olden place,
Who've found, and joined the bright array
  Of singers at the throne of grace;
Yet though they cannot pass the Gate
  Which looks abroad from saints to men,
We know, if we but trust and wait,
  We shall behold them once again.

JOHN G. WATTS.

EDWARD TURNER, CARPENTER AND BUILDER.

BY AGNES MACDONELL, AUTHOR OF "MARTIN'S VINEYARD."

CHAPTER I.

OPENING PROSPECTS.

"What trade art thou?
Why, sir, a carpenter."—*Julius Cæsar.*

I WAS bred a carpenter, and born in the country. I do not think you will find a prettier village fifty miles round London than Birchfield, in Kent, and there it was that I was born. Our cottage stood in a hollow of the downs, with a little bit of garden in front, where my brother Robert grew his auriculas and carnations, for he was fond of gardening as a boy, and having weak health, he was often able to work about among his flower-beds when he could not go down to the workshop at Birchfield. I was a stout lad always, and a good workman, and was often able to make up by extra work for the odd days that the poor lad was kept at home. I took my father's place in Brereton's workshop when he died, which was when I was just twenty-one. We went on living in the old cottage on the heath, where my mother had lived ever since she was married. I always had a liking for my work, and never was happier than with a tool in my hand.

Our master in the workshop, Mr. Brereton, owned a timber-yard beside the shop, and employed seven men, not to speak of Charlie Brereton, his nephew, who had the prospect of following him in the business, for Brereton had been a widower for many years, and had no children.

Charlie Brereton took the first place in the workshop, although there were at least two better workmen there than he. Old Brereton was a clever man at his trade, and often did work for the gentlemen of the country-side without ever troubling an architect for a plan; and in some of the smaller jobs—when there was a greenhouse to be put up or a coach-house built—he would give his nephew the management of the work. Charlie used to scribble over a fine sight of paper with his plans, but he never knew his own mind about it, and it was not seldom that his measurements were wrong, or part of the common working drawings left out, and often he would say to me when a job was on hand, "Here, Ned, just look at these drawings and see if those stairs are turned right, or if those shutter-boxes will do?" And I used to take his designs home with me, and set up at night scratching out, and measuring, and putting them straight, and many a time I should have liked to tear the paper across and make a fair plan out of my own head, for I saw the building as it ought to have been, straight and clear before my mind all the time. And that was the way I first came to study Nicholson and other books on building, just through working over Charlie Brereton's plans.

I cannot say exactly how it came about, but gradually, though Charlie always held the same place in the shop, and took the orders from customers, Brereton came to give me more of the work to manage, and often called me into the little office behind the shop to consult about the plans for some of the bigger jobs, which he usually managed himself alone.

I never had a hard word with Charlie. I liked him, and he was always friendly towards me. He was a good-natured, easy young chap, fond of pleasure, and a bit vain of his good looks, which was not to be wondered at, for he was just as handsome as a picture, with brown hair curling round his forehead, and red lips, that had a proud and smiling look, even when he was busy at his bench. He would speak quick sometimes, and be nettled at my altering his work, but he would forget it all next day, and be ready to stroll down the street with me as I went home, for our cottage lay on the other side of the village, not so far from the new junction of the Weald of Kent line of railway. He often came in to

look at my lathe-work—for I used the little lean-to at the back of the cottage where my mother kept her pans as a workshop—and often of a Sunday afternoon he came down to get a nosegay of my brother's flowers to take to some of his sweethearts—for he was always following some girl about—but more through fancy than love, I used to think, for Charlie Brereton never seemed a fellow who would settle down with a wife at his fireside, and be content to live like a hard-working man. And that was the reason that I never liked to see him loitering about the garden talking with my sister, for Ann was a quiet, serious girl, who thought a deal of going to church and Sunday-school, and being so steady in all her thoughts and actions, I knew she was not likely to take things in the light and careless way that Charlie did, and it troubled me to see them together.

It was one Sunday afternoon, as we were strolling through the lane, that Charlie told me of the scheme of going to London.

"It's an important thing," says he, "not so much in itself as in what it may lead to. Uncle has had a letter from a friend of his, a man with whom he worked as a boy, and who has a place in London, Duke Street, Blackfriars, London," says he, repeating the direction. "Mr. Smith has a big business, and he and uncle have always been friendly, and uncle has been proposing that I should go and take a place in one of his finishing-rooms, just to learn something of the London trade."

"Well," said I, "and what do you say to it, Charlie?"

"Oh, I think," says he, running his hand through his hair, "it's just the thing for me. I should have to work harder than I do at Birchfield, and I should learn a good deal of the London business, and be better suited for the shop here when it comes to me. I've always had such a fancy, you know, for going to London. Birchfield is a stupid place, after all."

"But what about the work," said I.

"Well, I'll tell you the whole plan, for it concerns you as well as me. Mr. Smith, in his letter, says he wants a man—a first-rate carpenter, with some theoretic knowledge—just such a fellow as you, you know, to take the head place in one of his rooms, and I said when I heard it, 'Ned Turner is the man for him!' Uncle did not want to part with you, but I said, 'Well, uncle, I won't take any man from Birchfield, but Ned, so you may please yourself!' You see, Ned, we've been so long together, and you know my ways, and—oh, hang it!—you've helped me a great deal, and I wanted you to go. Now, what do you say to it?"

Well, all that afternoon we talked about the London scheme.

Charlie lay among the heather in the sunshine, with his cap over his eyes, and his hands under his head, talking about the sights of London, the streets, and the shops, and the theatres, and I sat beside him with my elbows on my knees, turning the matter over and over in my mind. The idea of the London work suited my fancy very well.

The wages offered by Mr. Smith were not higher than I got at Birchfield, and I should have the extra expense of living in London. But the work was of a better kind, and in it I could use all the knowledge I had gained with my reading of winters' nights, which was useless store almost to me at Birchfield.

Before I reached our garden-gate I had made up my mind that if my mother did not take my going too hardly—and I did not think she need, with Robert and Ann still left at home—I would leave the country, and try my fortune in London.

As Charlie and I came in at the gate, we saw Ann standing among the rose-bushes. I do not know whether she had heard something of what he had been saying as we came up the path or not, it is very likely that she had, for the evening was still, and we talked of London all the way till we reached the gate, and saw her there. She looked flurried, and said, "I have just come in from church," and "Good evening, Mr. Brereton," and turned to go into the house, though Charlie began to laugh and joke her about saying "Mr. Brereton," instead of calling him by his christian name.

Charlie stayed the evening with us, and we opened the plan about the new work to my mother. She objected pretty strongly to it at first, though she owned it might be the best thing for me. My brother spoke up for the plan, though I saw the thought of the change troubled him as much as it did me. Charlie talked about London and all its glories, till you might have thought it the city of Bagdad in "The Arabian Nights" to hear him.

Ann said nothing, and only shook her head quietly when I asked her what she thought about the plan of the new work; but she meant no unkindness, for after Charlie had said "Good night," and she and I stood in the doorway, listening to hear if he latched the garden-gate after him, she turned, and clasped my arm, and laid her head against my shoulder with a sob.

"I am so sorry you're going, Ned," she said; "London is an evil place; I am so sorry you're going!"

That was all she would say; and in that moment a thought came in my mind that made me resolve that I and Charlie Brereton should go to London, whatever it cost, for it seemed plain to me at that moment that Ann was thinking more of his going than mine may-be; and that, partly through a sisterly sort of anxiety for him—gay and thoughtless as he was—going into all the temptations of London, and partly because his very thoughtlessness and gaiety had a charm for her gentle mind, she had grown to think too much about him, and had come to let the thought of him lie too constantly on her heart. It was a great deal better Charlie Brereton should go I thought.

XUM

CHAPTER II.

IN ST. PAUL'S.

'Twas on a Holy Thursday, their innocent faces clean,
The children walking two and two, in red, and blue, and green;
Grey-headed beadles walked before, with wands as white as snow,
Till into the high dome of Paul's they like Thames waters flow.

Oh, what a multitude they seemed, these flowers of London town!
Seated in companies they were, with radiance all their own;
The hum of multitudes was there, but multitudes of lambs;
Thousands of little boys and girls raising their innocent hands.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

I THINK I had been about a year at Smith and Horrock's when the work at St. Paul's began. I had learnt a good deal in that year, not being greedy in working over hours, but using my evenings in reading and learning what I could about my trade. My heart was in that, and I cared for little beside. Most of the planning in my department at that time fell to my share; and I often had whole jobs put under my charge. Charlie Brereton went on his way too. He was very fond of pleasure, but he kept closer and did better at his work than I had expected he would. We sometimes took a walk through the streets together, as we used to do in the country, but we did not see much of each other. I did not care for the things he liked, and the things I took pleasure in were nothing to him.

London is an awful place to either man or woman who had not always lived among its noise, and heat, and filth, and got used to it from the beginning; at any rate, to those of the working-class it is. I used to wonder sometimes, as I went across the park from my work, and saw the ladies rolling along in their carriages, looking with their delicate smiling faces over the heads of the crowd below them, I used to wonder whether they knew that the streets that they passed through so safely, sheltered by their rank, which seemed to protect them like an unseen angel—if they knew that these streets were unsafe as quagmires, were very often like roads to the bottomless pit to women of the poorer class. I saw enough and heard enough to teach me what a training an honest industrious girl must have that earned her bread in London, and had to pass to and fro in the crowded streets. It made my heart ache at first, but what was the good of it? They got used to the coarseness and the looseness of tongue, and grew hardened to it, if they did not sink into the midst of it themselves. I sickened over it at first, and then gave myself up to my work, and shut my eyes to everything else, but more through pity than hardness, I think.

Well, as I said, it was the beginning of May, just when I had been about a year at Blackfriars, that the work at St. Paul's began. The wooden cornices under the arches had to be renewed. I liked working in the old church better than anything I had ever done. The place was solemn and grand, and the very echoes of the hammer-strokes as we worked seemed to die away like music in the great dome. I often used to walk round of an evening, after the other men were gone, to look at the monuments, and read the inscriptions. I liked especially the one to Sir Christopher Wren, the architect, which tells you to look around you if you want to see his monument. There was something like a sermon to me in those words, showing how a man may build up his own record, and leave it, like this great church, for the good of others and the glory of God. And if it is true of Sir Christopher Wren, I thought it may be true of another man, however humble; for though he may not be able to plan or erect a great edifice like this by which to be remembered, he may still leave something behind him, through honest work or honest purpose, that will add a stone or a beam to the building.

Just when we had very nearly finished the work, there comes an order one morning for all hands to turn on, and put up scaffolding, and tressels, and seats, for the great festival service of the charity children. I was put at the head of this "temporary work," as it was called, and I was pretty hard pressed to get it all done by the Thursday morning. Mr. Smith was anxious about the hastily-constructed benches on one side, and gave me orders to stay in the building till the children were all in, and the service partly begun, to see that all was safe, and be ready to add some fresh supports if they were needed. "And, Turner," says he, "it will be but an hour to dinner-time; you can stay and see the show, if you choose."

I dare say nearly every one has seen the anniversary service, and knows all about it; but I had never even heard of it, and I think I should never have forgotten those thousands of children with their innocent faces, and white aprons, and bits of caps, till my death, even if the day had not been the beginning, as I might say, of a new life to me.

For an hour, standing under the scaffolding of the seats, I had heard the tramping of the children's feet overhead, as they were being led up in companies to their high seats in the amphitheatre under the dome. Charlie Brereton came to me quite excited, and said, "Come up for a minute, Ned, and see the fun, the children are all in. It's the finest thing you ever saw. There's the bishop and the Lord Mayor, and the sheriffs, and all the ladies; and the street outside the churchyard is filled with carriages." I had done all I had to do below, and went up with him, and we stood together at the base of one of the great pillars, where we could look down on the crowd. All the floor of the church was filled with spectators, and above them, rising into the dome, were the children, eight thousand of them. It was enough to make a man's heart swell to see that crowd of innocent faces, as I've seen a wide hollow among the hills in Kent white over with daisies. Only when you think that, instead of blooming in the sunshine on a quiet hill-side, that each of these little creatures had a heart under the blue jacket

or the white apron—a heart to be hardened, perhaps broken, by the rough work of the world—it makes you sad. That was what I was thinking, as, at a given sign, all those thousands of young heads were bowed, and the white aprons fluttered up to cover the faces while the first prayer was said, and the great organ thundered out the music of the "Old Hundredth," and all those children rose up to sing.

The swell of the clear young voices sounded above the roll of the organ like a blast of trumpets, and the great dome seemed to shake with the words:—

"With one consent, let all the earth
To God their cheerful voices raise."

My heart stood still before the grandeur of their great innocence and meekness, while the music filled the place like a sea. It made the scaffolding tremble, and must have terrified many of the children standing up there at that dizzy height.

(To be continued.)

CHRIST AND MELCHISEDEC.

BY THE REV. DANIEL MOORE, M.A., VICAR OF HOLY TRINITY, PADDINGTON; CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO THE QUEEN; AUTHOR OF "AIDS TO PRAYER," ETC.

PART II.

BUT let us pursue the parallel between Christ and Melchisedec next *in relation to the priesthood.* "For this Melchisedec, King of Salem, priest of the Most High God."

That which is especially worthy of notice here is, that Melchisedec is the first instance we have of a person specially set apart for the office of the priesthood. Sacrifices, as we know, are part of an aboriginal institution, commencing with the expulsion from paradise, and surviving the desolation of the deluge. But the persons who offered up the victims in the earlier ages of the world were not priests, that is, were never consecrated to such an employment as a distinctive office, but only performed this, as they did other religious services, in their proper capacity as heads of families; and, of course, by the act of sacrifice expressing their faith in the great Atonement. Here, however, is the case of one who, though a king, ruling among his neighbours as a king, appears before us as solemnly designated to the office of the priesthood; is regarded by Abraham as entitled to all the prerogatives pertaining to the holy office; is allowed to claim a fixed proportion of the spoils taken from the enemy, not because he is King of Salem, but because he is the priest of the Most High God. All this adds to the eminence of Melchisedec's typical priesthood. He is not one of a line of priests succeeding to the office in a certain family order. He is not one invested with authority by the hands of others acting under the prescribed rules of any ecclesiastical authority. But he is one who, long before the Levitical priesthood had any beginning, stands alone in a strange country, challenging homage from the greatest saint of antiquity as an ordained priest of God. In all this we see at once certain resembling features to the priesthood of Christ. *He* is not descended from any family line of priests. *He* receives no imposition of hands from men designating Him to the sacred office. Yet there rest upon Him the tokens of a holy consecration. The opened heavens testify to the indwelling in Him of the power of the Lord's anointed. The Spirit of the Lord without measure is given unto Him, and when He had made His soul an offering for sin, and when He had borne the sin of many, and when He poured out His soul unto death, believing souls did homage at the foot of His cross, and exercising faith in the great oblation, said, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

And then observe one office of the typical high priest which is here mentioned by the Apostle—"who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the Kings, and blessed him." Surely this is a work which specially belongs to the true Melchisedec. Benediction seems never to have been off the lips of Christ. With promises of blessing He opened His Sermon on the Mount; with hands of blessing He called little children to His embrace; with the uplifted voice of blessing He was borne away on the Ascension cloud; and when He shall come again to welcome, and claim, and receive His own, His language to them will be, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Yes, blessing was the first act of the Redeemer, after He had gone back to heaven. Unto you first, God having raised up His son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, and never will He lay down that glorious prerogative till we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Him. Especially will Christ bless us thus after our return from the slaughter of the kings; after victories obtained through His grace over all the potentates and powers of evil. Then, like the Melchisedec of old, will He come forth to meet us as we are laden with spoils, saying to us, "Come in thou blessed of the Lord, wherefore standest thou without? Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

XUM

But observe another act of Melchisedec noticed by the Apostle, namely, his receiving a portion of the spoils. "To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all." No question will be raised here as to the offering spoken of being a dedicated religious offering to God. Melchisedec was too rich to need any gift for his own use, and it were an affront to Eastern hospitality to suppose that it was offered as a compensation for his kindness to Abraham and his company. The gift was plainly what the Apostle's argument seems to make it—a recognition by Abraham of God's hand in his recent successes—a recognition regulated in amount by some traditional standard of the proportion of our goods which God had a right to, and governed as to the mode of offering by the consideration that it should be directly set apart to the Divine service. Abraham evidently recognised the principle that every man was bound to give of his substance towards the maintenance of a national worship. He had a church in his own house. He commanded his children and his household after him that they should keep the way of the Lord. But leaving to individual or sectional effort to accomplish what it may, our history suggests that in every land there should be one national witness for God, and that every man should give something for its support. To a priest by whose personal ministrations Abraham could not statedly profit, he yet gave a tenth part of all. Nor is this reference less noteworthy in its bearing on the general subject of almsgiving, and the proportion of our substance which belongs to God, and which is not at our own disposal at all. Under the Gospel we have no binding rule upon the subject. Faith worships by love, and love does not want rules. But there is something in this dedication of a tenth of their property to religious objects by good men of old time which, to say the least of it, is very striking. You will hear people say sometimes, "This dedicated tenth was part of an abrogated Levitical code, was, in fact, a mere form of Jewish poor-law." Here we have proof that it was no such thing. Four hundred years before the law was given Abraham sets apart his tenth for Christ; whilst a hundred and fifty years later, but long enough before the giving of the law, we have Jacob vowing a vow to the Lord, "Of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee." How carefully the same holy practice—especially after any great successes—was kept up by David and Solomon, and what a lasting blemish is made to rest on the fame of the good Hezekiah, for that he returned not unto the Lord according to the mercy which he had received, I need not stay to recite! The practical lesson is one which we can all draw for ourselves. "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase. If we have been prospered in the work of our hands; if we are returning after a victory over many foes, and hindrances, and difficulties; and if, above all, Christ, our great High Priest, is meeting us with tokens of His benediction, and favour, and grace, let us give Him a part—and a liberal part too—of these our captured spoils. Let one strength, one grace, one outstretched arm, be acknowledged in our deliverances; testifying that on earth we would lay our successes, even as in heaven we shall lay our crowns at the feet of Him who is "ordained a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

III. But the parallel between Christ and Melchisedec is pursued further in relation to the *mysterious circumstances of their descent.* This Melchisedec is declared to "be without father, without mother, without descent; having neither beginning of life nor end of days." Now, as Melchisedec was a veritable human person, these words cannot of course be understood in their strictly literal sense. Nor does the usage of Jewish phraseology require that they should be so taken. The expression, "without father, without mother," implies no more than there has been no record of the person's individual genealogy preserved. The point is insisted on in relation to Melchisedec's claims to exercise the functions of the priesthood. According to the Levitical rules, such a failure in the family history would have been fatal to him. It was fatal to some who had got into the priest's office in the time of Ezra, concerning whom we read, "These sought their register among those that were reckoned by genealogy, but they were not found: therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood." Having no descent preserved, they were reckoned as "without father, without mother." In a similar way we are to explain the language that Melchisedec had "neither beginning of life nor end of days," that is, that no account has been handed down to us of the time when his office began, or when it ended. Of Moses, of Joshua, of David, and other eminent types, we have such accounts, but none of Melchisedec. He starts up on the page of the sacred record as one exercising the mysterious functions of a royal priesthood, shrouding beneath a veil of impenetrable obscurity all the antecedents of his history, as well as all that relates to the ending of his days. The bearing of all this on the Apostle's argument with the Jews we may see at once. He wished to show that Christ's was an absolute, independent, self-originated, and eternal priesthood. He owed it to no law of human successions at all. So far otherwise, His human genealogy would have been an insuperable bar to His priestly claims, sprung, as He was, from the tribe of Judah, a tribe which by law was excluded from the office. His claim,

therefore, like that of this mysterious priest in Abraham's time, must have been of some higher and unknown origin. The consecrating unction must have come upon Him direct from heaven. In Him the successions of Aaron's line were set aside. He was made of God, a High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec.

And yet let us not fail to notice, in passing, the subtle beauty of adaptation which lies enfolded in these inspired words. See how the very language which we can apply to the typical Melchisedec, only with the limitations of a Jewish gloss, may be applied to the true Melchisedec without any limitation or any gloss at all. For, in relation to the great mystery of His incarnation, is He not "without father?" In regard to His proper and essential Godhead, is He not "without mother?" Did not Isaiah teach that He was without descent, when he said, "Who shall declare His generation?" And when Micah says, "Whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting," does he not testify that He has "neither beginning of days nor end of life?" Thus, in relation to Christ's priesthood, we may take the sublime description of our text in all its length and breadth, and depth and height. That priesthood has no beginning of days, and till all the elect of God shall be gathered in, it shall have no end of life. He is the Alpha and Omega. He is the ancient of days. He is the mighty Father of eternity. "From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God." "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

IV. And this brings us to the last point of the comparison here instituted, namely, that the priesthood of Melchisedec was an intransmissable priesthood; that he had no successor in his office; that a sort of typical perpetuity is attributed to his ministrations because there is no mention in Scripture of the time when they ceased. "Made like unto the Son of God, he abideth a priest continually." And in all this, argues the Apostle, He is a fit representative of the true Melchisedec, who does abide for ever, who has an unchangeable priesthood, who, in all the might and prevalency and sovereignty of an unshared mediation, ever liveth to make intercession for us. He is a priest for ever, and a king for ever, and an intercessor for ever; with none second to Him and none like, with none to co-operate and none to come after, with no interruption and no pause. One is our High Priest, and His name one. There is the same blood to cleanse there always was; the same voice to plead there always was; the same emblem of sacrifice is ever in the midst of the throne, and the same censer is still in the hands of the Holy One to receive the prayers of saints. "He abideth a priest continually."

Such are a few points of parallelism between Christ and Melchisedec, on which the Apostle claims our confidence, and rests the title of Christ to our eternal gratitude. Gathering up the argument in few words, we may observe:—In that Christ hath provided the means whereby God may be just and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, He is the King of Righteousness; in that He is our peace, and hath made our peace, and dissipated all trace of displeasure from the Eternal Father's countenance, He is King of Peace; in that He hath prepared us an altar, provided a lamb for our sacrifice, ordained a priest to slay—altar, sacrifice, and priest, all being found in Himself—He is "Priest of the Most High God;" in that He can challenge all the finite intelligences, whether of earth or heaven, to declare the fathomless mystery of His generation, He is said to be "without father, without mother, without descent;" in that He is now gone back into heaven, in that He now lives a priest on the throne, in that all the prerogatives and powers of an endless life are being now employed on behalf of all who will put their cause into His hands, He is said "to abide a priest continually."

And now, what more shall we say? What can we say more to add to the security and comfort of those who worship at the true tabernacle? Our Melchisedec is before the throne. He is exalted there to be a Prince and a Saviour; to give repentance, to scatter pardons, to send down gifts, to encourage faith, to strengthen the tempted in their conflicts, and to uphold the despairing in their fears. The proper scope and tendency of all our recent commemorations has been to show that the whole mediatorial life of our Lord, whether on earth or in heaven, was meant to assure our hearts before God. The cross and the sceptre, the grave and the throne, the fainting and the Almightiness, all that of humanity was kind and pitiful, all that of Godhead was infinite and supreme, must equally and alike conspire to stay our souls on Christ and His work. That work is perfect. None can succeed to, and nothing can supplement, the ministrations of our great Melchisedec. For, as our salvation has been purchased for us by Him, who is both King of Righteousness and King of Peace, so the application of that salvation to us is entrusted to that priest of the Most High God, who ever liveth to make intercession for us, and who to defend, to sanctify, to save, to bless, "abideth a priest continually." Amen.

XUM

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER V.

JUST as Eda was summoning all her courage for the very unpleasant ordeal of entering a strange place, and introducing herself to the people who seemed to have wholly forgotten her, she saw that a young woman, burdened with a baby, and panting with heat and haste, was coming rapidly towards her. On closer inspection she proved to be a trim little body, who, dropping a rustic curtsey, announced herself as "Dannle's wife—Dannle Jones, the gardener,"—and added, in gasps, that "master had been so terrible busy, overseeing the setting-up of a new chaff-cutting 'chine, that he had disremembered all about the new school governess coming that day, and so he had but just sent word that some one was to go and meet her; and Dannle hadn't come home from his work, and she hoped miss would excuse her if she wasn't very tidy, for she'd only time to put on her bonnet and come."

Dannle Jones's spouse was a rosy, girlish-looking woman, so weighed down by her fat placid infant, that Eda insisted on being allowed to relieve her of him till she was cooler; and as baby condescended to make himself quite at home with his new nurse, baby's mother soon overcame her dread of the young lady she had been required to receive as her lodger.

Before they reached the neat little lodge or cottage in the grounds where the gardener resided his wife had grown confidential enough to tell Eda that she had been half off her head ever since Mr. Texley, or "the master," as she called him, had sent her word that the new schoolmistress was to lodge with her.

"Were you afraid that I should give you so much trouble?" she was asked, with a smile. To which she was now sufficiently at her ease to respond, "Lor' no, miss; I don't mind trouble; I'm sure I'm not one that grudges a little extra work." And to prove this, Mrs. Jones danced her baby up and down till she was breathless with her exertions. "It didn't take no time to scrub out the rooms, and put clean curtains to the windows; and Dannle brought home some pots of fluchers and 'rangiums (fuchsias and geraniums), to stand in them, that looks beautiful!"

"Then I am very much obliged to him, for I dearly love flowers!" said Eda, speaking with more animation than she had before evinced. "But what is it that has so perplexed you?"

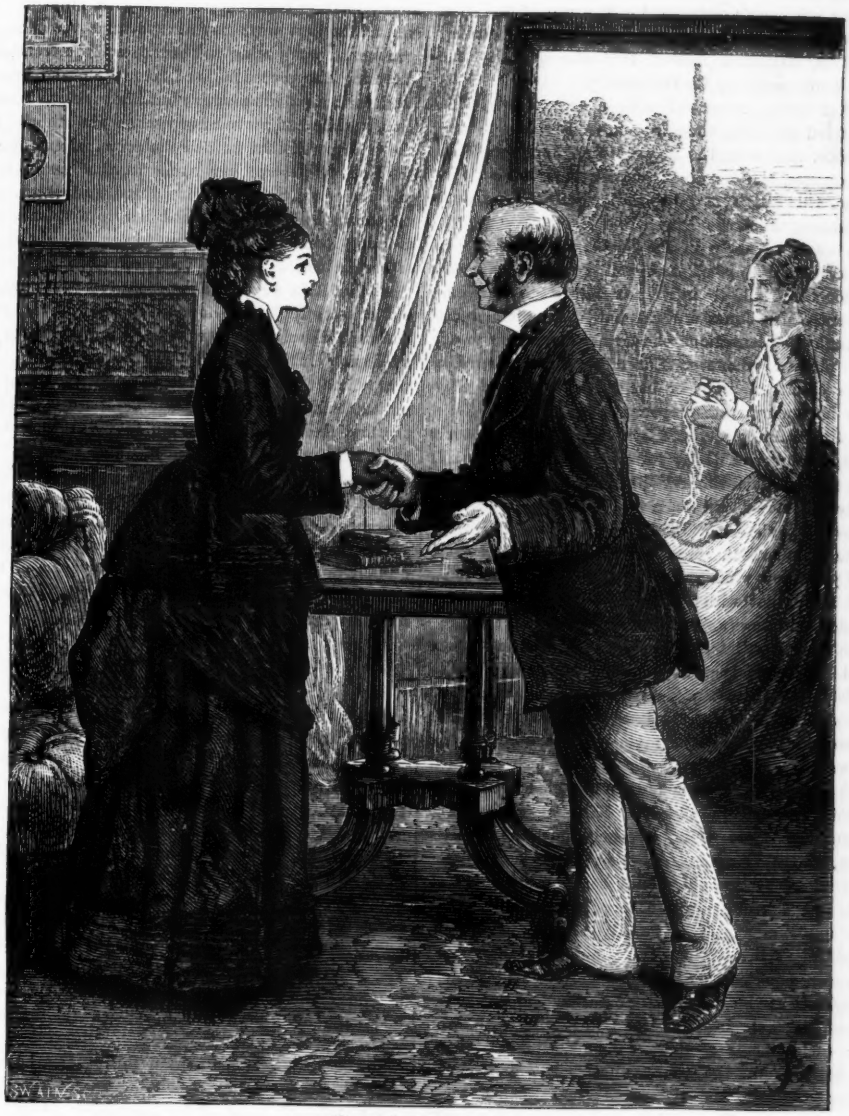
"It's the furniture sent down from the big house," Mrs. Jones ruefully told her. "I'd have liked to have everything nice and comfortable for you, miss, against you came; but I can't make out what half of it's meant for, nor where it ought to go; and Dannle's just as stupid as I be. Perhaps, though, miss, as you've come from London, you can tell us how to 'range the things. It 'd be a real help, if you would."

Eda's "Oh yes!" was spoken very readily; but she felt more doubtful when ushered into the small but pretty sitting-room—which, with an equally tiny chamber above, were to be her own—for a more heterogeneous collection of furniture never met the eye than she now beheld. The chairs may best be described as various, for they included an invalid-chair, fitted with so many appliances as to be quite bewildering, an American rocking-chair, a "prie-dieu," and two or three fauteuils, each of a different shape and make. Then there were more tables than she could use—tables, too, each of which had been patented for some strange contrivance that enabled them to be converted into chiffoniers, or shut up into travelling-chests, &c. There was also a couch that could be used as a chair or a bedstead; several ottomans, intended to serve a double purpose as coal-scuttles or cellarets; and no fewer than three clocks, each remarkable for something or other, though neither of them could be induced to keep correct time. Besides these articles, Eda found herself provided with a couple of sewing-machines, which no one could work, and the same number of self-acting pianos, both of which refused to play.

Passing from this room to the sleeping-chamber above, she found that it was similarly appointed. There was one bedstead that, by a very ingenious mechanism could be folded into the smallest possible compass; and there was another, that by setting a spring, could be made to turn the sleeper out on the floor at a given hour, and which, by an exhibition of its powers, had so startled Mrs. Jones that she had avoided the room after twilight ever since.

She also gave a pathetic account of her adventures with a shower-bath, which the inventor doubtless regarded as a marvel of skill, but Mrs. Jones stigmatised as "A downright onnateral thing to have in a house!"

The remainder of the furniture comprised a dressing-table that could be made to serve as a washstand, a washstand that could be converted into a dressing-table, and so on; till Eda grew confused at the multiplicity of her possessions, and the difficulty of conjecturing for what half of them really were intended.



(*Drawn by* F. BARNARD.)

"And this is Miss Granton!"—*p.* 42.

She learned afterwards that Mr. Texley had a passion for invention, and was so continually bringing home some clever patent, that his spinster sister and housekeeper, on learning that furniture must be sent to the gardener's cottage for the use of the new schoolmistress, had gladly rid the house of sundry eyesores, flattering herself that the quantity she sent would make up for the quality.

After being refreshed with a cup of tea, Eda contrived to select enough to make her rooms comfortable, and with the help of Mrs. Jones and her civil spouse, the remainder were banished to an outhouse, till Mr. Texley's pleasure could be learnt concerning them.

It was still early in the day, and so, when her labours were finished and toilette made, she set off for the Hall, to introduce herself to her employers. Mrs. Jones and the baby accompanied her through the plantations, the former looking as proud and pleased whenever Eda paused to admire a noble clump of trees or beautiful vista as if they were her own private property.

"It is a fine place, isn't it, miss? and the master's always doing something to make it handsomer still. Not but what I think I liked it best in the old squire's time—I wer' born on the estate, miss, and so wer' Dannle—for though, maybe, the work wasn't quite as plentiful, there weren't so many changes, and you knew what you had to do, and how to do it. But now, what with 'chines for this and 'chines for t'other, and new ways of setting about everything—from planting 'taters to making the butter—it's a deal harder to keep in with the master and give satisfaction than it used to be. It vexes him when he can't make his men think, as he do, that whatever's newest must be best. Dannle often says he's afeard he won't be able to stay, for he gets quite caddled with so many directions and new-fangled notions."

Eda listened in silence. She longed to know something more definite concerning the gentleman, whose ideas on education must be peculiar, and whose system she would be expected to carry out, but she did not like to question a person in his employment. That he advocated progress, and encouraged inventions, Mrs. Jones's harangue and her own experiences with the furniture had already taught her; but she was young and enthusiastic, therefore not inclined to find fault with him for such liberal tendencies; and after diverging a little from the route, that her guide might point out the newly-erected school-house, Eda bade her a smiling adieu, and pursued her walk alone.

A swing gate, fixed on such an ingenious principle that, unless acquainted with the secret, it was the work of time to unhasp it, eventually admitted her to the gardens of the Hall. The air was heavy with the perfume of the lilac and hawthorn, that were now in their glory, and for some minutes she stood on the verge of the lawn, delighted at the beauty of the scene before her.

The house was a handsome mansion in rather a composite style, the substantial Tudor windows and doors having been surmounted with pinnacles and verandahs that were not always improvements. A gentleman was pacing the terrace walk in front of it, directing the proceedings of some men who were at work with a patent mower; but his back was towards Eda, and he had moved away when she stepped into the wide porch that formed the principal entrance to the Hall. She gave her name to the man-servant who happened to be lounging there, and who, after a moment's hesitation, ushered her into a handsome drawing-room, while he went to apprise his master of her arrival.

At first Eda supposed the room to be untenanted, but a second glance showed her that a tall hard-featured elderly lady was sitting at one of the windows, embroidering by the fading light. For some time this lady worked on without taking any notice of Eda; but when a difficult stitch had been accomplished, she glanced up to point to a chair, and sharply ask why she did not seat herself. But having made this concession to politeness, she resumed her employment, and seemed to forget the presence of the young girl, who found it so depressing to sit there, with nothing to do but watch those quickly-moving fingers, that it was quite a relief when a voice and footsteps in the ante-chamber announced the approach of Mr. Texley.

CHAPTER VI.

The next minute the door swung open and admitted a very brisk smiling little gentleman, whose face would have been an extremely pleasant one but for the restless expression of his eyes, which were continually roving beyond the person he was addressing, as if in search of something beyond their ken. However, his manner was so kind, that Eda felt too grateful to find fault with any of his peculiarities.

"And this is Miss Granton," he said, as he shook hands with her; "the young lady who promises to assist my efforts to ameliorate the lot of those about me. Maria, my dear sister, this is Miss Granton."

"So I concluded, when she sat waiting for you goodness only knows how long!" was the ungracious reply of Miss Texley.

"Ah! and you have been telling her how very glad we are to see her!"

"I haven't been doing anything of the sort, Pierce," she retorted, stiffly; "for I am *not* glad to see Miss Granton here."

Mr. Texley looked embarrassed, and Eda's colour rose. What was she to understand from such strange speeches?

Perhaps Miss Texley saw that her eyes were filling with tears, for she added, in softer tones, "I have no

doubt that Miss Granton will do her best to give satisfaction, but I always have set my face against this new school, and I always shall. It is an insult to the good old rector of our parish and the managers of the excellent schools that are already established."

"My dear Maria," expostulated her brother, "if I am anxious that the people in my employ should receive higher and better teaching than they can get in the village, why should you find fault with me for such a laudable desire?"

"Do as you please," she answered, coldly, while gathering up her work. "I told you I would never set foot in your new folly, nor further it in any way, *and I never will.* Good evening, Miss Granton; I shall send you a bottle of cod-liver oil and some arrowroot; don't neglect to take both; you look very white."

Mr. Texley smiled, shook his head, as the lady disappeared, and, sitting down near Eda, became confidential.

"Ah, Miss Granton, an excellent woman, this sister of mine, though whimsical, as you perceive. But I try her temper sadly, for I am heedless and forgetful, as I have given you convincing proofs to day, haven't I? I intended to have met you at the station myself, but I was so absorbed in testing the merits of an American invention—a wonderful people, the Americans, wonderful!—that I contrived to let your arrival, my luncheon, and everything else, slip my memory. Are you interested in machinery? I should like to show you this new two-horse-power chaff-cutter of mine."

Eda glanced dubiously at the window from which the last glint of sunlight was fading. His eyes followed hers, and he nodded.

"Ah, true, there would not be light enough. Some other day, however, I shall have the pleasure of taking you through my model farm, and showing you how I have availed myself of the greatest discoveries of skill and science. Our school, Miss Granton, must be like this farm—a little, or I hope I shall soon be able to say *very much*, in advance of our neighbours."

"I believe Mr. Gale warned you that I am inexperienced in tuition," she thought it only honest to remind him.

"True; but at the same time he assured me that you are energetic, sensible, and teachable, and therefore I am satisfied. I did not want an obstinate, self-conceited young woman, so imbued with the dogmas of a past generation that she would refuse to enter into my plans, but one who will cheerfully do her best to carry them out."

Eda hinted that she should like to have some idea what these were, but a gong was sounding, and Mr. Texley said, with a smile, that much as he wished to have a longer conversation with her, he could not afford to lose his dinner as well as his luncheon.

"I have a great deal to say to you, Miss Granton," he added; "but I think it may just as well be deferred till I can meet you on the field of our new labours. At the school-house I shall be better able to explain my wishes. When do you think you will be able to commence your duties?"

Eda, who dreaded any lengthened period of inactivity, expressed her readiness to open school whenever he pleased.

"Thank you; then I will give notice to my people that you and I will be at the school-house on Monday morning, at nine o'clock precisely, to receive scholars. Your task will be a high and honourable one, Miss Granton. To instil into the virgin minds of the young the first principles of knowledge is a noble occupation! But you look tired; I will not keep you here any longer."

He followed Eda across the hall, hoping, aloud, that their new undertaking would prove profitable to themselves as well as those they proposed benefiting; and was dismissing her with a paternal blessing, when Miss Texley shrilly called to him from the staircase, "Are you sending that poor child away without the smallest refreshment, to lose herself in the plantations? If you must have a schoolmistress of your own, Pierce, you might remember that she is flesh and blood, and a stranger."

"You whimsical thing!" cried Mr. Texley, shaking his finger at her, and laughing, to cover a little annoyance. "Pray come back, Miss Granton; my sister is quite right, and I am the most inconsiderate of men."

But Eda did not feel at all inclined to encounter Miss Texley again, or to trouble any one to accompany her back to the cottage; and, assuring him that she was neither hungry or thirsty, and had taken particular notice of the route by which Mrs. Jones had brought her, she contrived to make her escape.

"He's a very well-meaning gentleman is the master," said Mrs. Jones, as she lighted Eda to bed that night, and assisted her to unpack one of her trunks. "There couldn't be a better-meaning gentleman nowheres, only he do have so many irons in the fire at once! More nor half the people is terrible set against this new school, for the children get on well enough at the old one, and who can want more? Howsoever, it's the master's whim, and they musn't go against it, unless they want to be turned off the ground. He must have his way, and it's no use to go against him."

Certainly Eda's prospects were not very encouraging; scholars who would be sent unwillingly, and the only lady from whom she might have looked for occasional help and advice plumply declaring that she would give neither! She sat for a little while after Mrs. Jones left her, giving way to an inexpressible longing for the sympathy of her lost mother. But when she knelt down, the very attitude seemed

to bring with it calm and healing, and though her tears fell fast, they were not hopeless ones. But for the parting with Mark, and her fears that he had not chosen wisely, she could have smiled at the trifling circumstances that now depressed her.

However, she was able on the morrow to write cheerfully to her brother, and send, blushing the while, the promised kind remembrances to Richie. This done, she could enjoy the change from the close London streets to the fine sweet country air. The weather was delightful, and while Mrs. Jones was busy at her work, Eda carried the baby into an arbour in the garden. This became one of her favourite retreats, for it commanded a view of the green fields beyond, and the sparkling little river that ran through them, winding and turning capriciously, or brawling round two or three tiny eyots, and then rushing on towards the water-mill of which the artist had spoken.

While Eda sat crowing softly to the sleepy infant, and inhaling the fragrance of the cowslips that the south wind bore towards her, she heard the sound of wheels, and peeping through a gap in the hedge saw Miss Texley driving herself in a pony chaise along the lane that led to the cottage. She checked her small steeds at the gate, and called loudly for Mary Jones, till the gardener's wife, wiping her hands on her apron, ran out to learn her errand.

In the hard authoritative voice that made Eda wince in her hiding-place, the lady said, as she handed out a basket, "Now, Mary Jones, remember your lodger is to swallow two doses of this oil daily; you hear? daily. And these preserved fruits are to be taken afterwards if she makes wry faces. And—don't run away—this is arrowrcot; if you don't know how to make it, come up to the Hall and my cook shall teach you; it's disgraceful for young married women to be so ignorant! If she does not soon get some colour into her cheeks I shall hold you responsible for it."

"You shall *do what*, ma'am?" asked Mrs. Jones, fearfully.

"Never mind, never mind!" said Miss Texley, with a flourish of her whip. "All you have to do is to listen to what I say, and take care of your lodger. I don't like to seesuch white-faced shadowy people about the place."

On the appointed morning Eda found herself at the school-house door, awaiting Mr. Texley's arrival, and making efforts to enter into conversation with the half-dozen or so of cottage mothers, who came straggling up with their children, in obedience to "master's" orders, and either stood stolidly staring at the new governess, or held aloof, whispering together about her.

As last a sudden hush fell upon the talkers, and Mr. Texley, brisk and smiling as usual, came in sight, swinging on his finger the ponderous door-key. He nodded to the women, and shook hands with Eda, whose heart gave a leap as she followed him into the room, where her as yet untried powers were to be put forth, and her patience, energy, and perseverance tested by *work*.

(*To be continued.*)

COMFORTABLE WORDS.—XI.

SHORT READINGS FOR THE SICK ROOM. BY THE REV. GORDON CALTHROP, M.A., VICAR OF S. AUGUSTINE'S, HIGHBURY; AND SELECT PREACHER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."—PHILIPPIANS iv. 6, 7.

IN these two verses there are three chief points or topics, which we will consider in order. There is, first, a prohibition, then a precept, and, lastly, a promise.

The prohibition is against "carefulness"—that is, over-anxiety about the future. If "carefulness" referred to painstaking and diligent performance of duty, it would certainly be commended, not blamed, in Holy Scripture. But here it is to be understood according to the ancient acceptation of the word; and so understood, it describes a condition of mind which is most adverse to spirituality. We are accustomed perhaps to think that the deadliest enemy of the Christian life is pleasure. The man whose end of existence is self-gratification, seems at the furthest possible remove from the Gospel of Christ. And yet the Saviour Himself, when speaking of the destructive influences which choke the Word and render it unfruitful, classes together "care" and "the deceitfulness of riches;" and in His solemn charge to His Disciples, given just before the close of His career, warns them against the cares of this life, as well as against the excesses into which they might possibly fall. But why should care, thus interpreted, be so mischievous? Indeed, why should it be so sinful? Anxiety as to our future is natural, probably, to us all. In the case of some it seems almost inseparable from their mental constitution. They cannot help, as it appears, distressing themselves about what is going to happen. Why, then, should our Lord and His followers express themselves so severely about it? Clearly, because the root of the feeling is distrust of God. Consider. In words most plain and positive, God has promised to protect His

people—to supply their wants, to make all things work together for their good. He has bidden us cast our care upon Him, because He careth for us. Can it, then, be a trifling matter, a venial offence, to question the sincerity of the Divine promise, and to refuse obedience to the Divine command? Surely not. In the heart of "carefulness" lies unbelief; and so far as we indulge the feeling we separate ourselves from God. We see then the reason for the Apostle's prohibition. Probably another reason might be found in the utter uselessness of this solicitude. What good did over-anxiety ever do to any one? None. But harm it can do. It distresses the mind; it disturbs the calculations; it frets the temper; in fact, it renders a man inefficient for the duties of the day, by drawing his thoughts in among the possibilities and contingencies of the morrow. Common sense, as well as religion, will teach us to avoid this disturber of our peace and destroyer of our usefulness. What we have to do is to form our plans and arrange our measures and take due precautions (for we are and must be forecasting beings; we must provide); and having thus done our best, to leave the rest, calmly and confidently, in the hands of God, accepting the result whenever it comes, and whatever it may be, as the decision and disposition of One who orders all things for the people who trust Him.

The precept is of equal extent with the prohibition. There we read, "Be careful for nothing;" here, "In everything make your requests known unto God." "In everything!" The universality of the injunction is a little startling at first. It seems to us as if some troubles and some necessities were too trifling to make the subject of a request to God. We can come before God, we think, if a great trial is impending, or a serious calamity is weighing us down; but to approach the throne of grace when we are vexed and harassed by the insignificant cares of life seems hardly compatible with the reverence due to the majesty of Jehovah. But there are the Apostle's words. He makes no exceptions. Whatever your need be—whether it concerns a matter of trifling moment or one of the greatest importance—"bring it," he says, "before God." Besides, look at the reasonableness of the precept. After all, small matters—"trifles" as we are accustomed to call them—constitute the staple of our existence—make up almost the sum-total of our daily histories. Insignificant in themselves, they are powerful in their accumulation. They are like flakes of snow in a snow-storm. The flake is a beautiful object, as it comes floating down from the sky, but it is perfectly harmless, it has no strength, no power. The child stretches out his warm palm to catch the tiny particle in its descent, and it melts and disappears ere he has time to examine it. But let these pretty, white, powerless things float down by the thousand and the ten thousand and the million during the space of a night, and the next morning the vast heart of a metropolis will have ceased to beat. Muffled in the robe of snow, the streets will be silent and deserted; their traffic suspended; locomotion brought to a standstill for the time by this puny agency. And so it is by the little duties, little pleasures, little annoyances, little trials, of our every-day life, and by the use we make of them, that our characters are being formed by a process of slow and gradual accretion, and our destiny is being decided. Nothing, then, can be trivial in the estimation of a Christian; nothing can be too insignificant to lay before God.

And then God is a *Father;* and whatever interests His children interests Him. We should be kind and considerate of course to a child under any circumstances; but childish griefs and troubles assume a very different appearance when the little one is our own. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." For these reasons, then—and probably for others,—the Apostle bids us keep the road of communication with heaven open. Let prayers go up; let praises ascend; let thanksgiving be often sent on its gracious mission.

Lastly, we have the promise—"The grace of God shall keep your heart." Observe the prohibition, obey the precept, and this shall be the result. God's peace—no fictitious or transient thing, but a real, solid gift, and one that abides—shall take possession of your inmost soul, and fence it against the intrusion of all that is prejudicial to you. It is the body that is "below par" which most readily receives infection when disease is abroad. Let vigour run in the veins and infection is repelled. So he that is filled with the fulness of the spiritual life throws off temptation more effectually than he whose graces are are at a lower ebb. Walk closely with God, and evil shall not easily reach you.

The leading idea, then, of the passage may be said to be this: that the freeness and the power of the Christian life depend upon the readiness of our communication with God. In proportion as we make God a stranger, hesitating, for whatever reason, to enter His presence, just in such proportion are we weak. We are strong when the intercourse is free and open—like that of a loving child with a loving father. We must not, indeed, expect entirely to exclude anxiety in time of trouble. With all temperaments it would be difficult, with some it would be utterly impossible—to do so. But we may, God helping us, so far obey the Apostle as not to fall into the sin of distrust; as not to destroy our comfort, or unfit ourselves for the duties of a Christian life.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 3. The Gift of the Spirit.

Chapter to be read—Acts ii.

INTRODUCTION. Ask when we first hear of the Holy Ghost in the New Testament; who baptised with water, and what did he say about Christ? (Matt. iii. 11). Did Christ baptise at all with water? (John iv. 2). No! but on day of Resurrection He breathed on apostles the Holy Ghost (John xx. 22). Show how that was a gift for themselves, their own souls, &c., convincing them of Him as divine; teaching them the Scriptures. What use did Peter make of it while waiting? What else did they want, then? Great power and great knowledge for preaching in the whole world! Not kept waiting long.

I. The Spirit Given. (Read i. 4.) (1) *The time.* On what day was it? Explain Pentecost: fifty days after what great Jewish feast? Read Lev. xxiii. 15—21 for account of Pentecost offerings called "feast of harvest," because the grain harvest complete, and "feast of weeks" because a "week of weeks" since the last feast. What was offered? the first fruit of wheat, two loaves in the Temple. Show how this time might be considered typical. Remind of parable of wheat and tares, describing people as grain; harvest of souls ripening; 3,000 about to be gathered in to the Lord (ver. 41). (2) *The manner.* In what outward sign did the Spirit descend upon Christ? (Matt. iii. 16). Of what was the dove the sign? But now the Spirit was to come as John the Baptist had prophesied. What did they *hear?* Who compared the Spirit to wind? (John iii. 8). Remind of lesson on Nicodemus to show that the Spirit resembles wind in being invisible, cleansing, &c. Is the power of the wind always the same? Sometimes can scarcely feel it—hardly a breath—sometimes strong enough to up-root trees, drive clouds, &c., so the Holy Ghost. How did it descend on Christ? now on the apostles, strong and mighty; about to do a great work; convince unbelieving Jews and heathen Gentiles. What did apostles *see?* Why this shape of tongues? Of what use is the tongue? Apostles at once filled with Spirit; did not keep powers to themselves; began at once to use them.

II. The Effect. (Read 5—13). Describe the apostles leaving the house at once; now the time come to begin work; were to preach to every creature; begin at once; lose no time; talk to different groups; explain the presence of these Jews from different nations; scattered by reason of commerce, &c.; all come now to keep the feast. How did they feel? Remind how the Galilean dialect was peculiar (compare Matt. xxvi. 73, and Mark xiv. 70), and the fishermen of Galilee unlearned; yet now these ignorant men are heard to speak, not with lisping uncertain accents like persons beginning to learn a new language, but accurately and distinctly, in not only one but many different languages. When had persons before suddenly learned strange languages? (Gen. xi. 9). Was that for a punishment or a blessing? Which was this? But the people cannot at all understand it. What do they think? Some simply amazed, others at once begin to mock.

III. Peter's Speech. (1) *Fulfilment of prophecy.* (Read 14—21). All being Jews or proselytes, *i.e.*, the Gentiles who had adopted the Jewish religion; would be acquainted with the Scriptures. So Peter at once appeals to their knowledge; apostles not drunk at third hour, *i.e.*, 9.0 A.M.; simply fulfilling old prophecy; the Spirit *is* poured out; wonders are now seen; men and women are prophesying, *i.e.*, teaching under Divine inspiration, telling all to call on the Lord and will be saved (ver. 21). But *what* Lord? Whom only did they believe in? Must show Jesus to be God, as salvation only through Him. (2) *Preaching Christ.* (Read ver. 22—36). Ask what Peter wanted to convince people of; all knew what Jesus was, viz., a Nazarene; despised race; poor man; going about preaching; wanted to show that He was the expected Messiah, Lord and Christ. How will He show this? (*a*) *His miracles* (ver. 22). (1 Cor. xv. 23). (*c*) *Fulfilment of prophecy.* (Read Ps. xvi. 8—11).

IV. The Result. (Read 37—41). Ask the effect of the sermon; describe the scene. Have, perhaps, seen a large crowd swayed by one man's voice, and excited by one feeling; so here, 3,000 at once all moved; conscience stirred; see their sins. Who was foretold as able to convince of sin? (John xvi. 9).

V. Practical Lessons. (1) *Holy Spirit convinces of sin.* Have we really felt our sins? they caused Christ's death as much as these Jews. Do we listen to His voice by conscience or resist it? Ask for grace to keep consciences tender; to hear His voice to-day. (2) *Holy Spirit reveals Saviour.* These *knew* about Christ, but did not believe the Spirit given. We heard all our lives. Do we really look to Him for pardon, and act as if always in His sight, our King and future Judge?

Questions to be answered.

1. Describe the manner in which the Holy Ghost was given.
2. Say all you can about the feast of Pentecost.
3. Show how the Spirit resembles wind.
4. Quote any prophecies fulfilled by the events of this day.
5. Give an outline of Peter's speech.
6. What two lessons may be learned?

MAY FLOWER, OR "SERVANT OF ALL."

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LITTLE BUTTERCUP," "NOTHING BUT A SONG," "HOW TO ENTER INTO REST," ETC.

CHAPTER V.

"Love—do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again."—*Luke* vi. 35.

"If we are not blessing others, we are growing selfish."

ANOTHER week, and Tom's holidays would have begun, Stephen would be home from his curacy in a large distant town, and May herself free from lessons. It was delightful to look forward to. May was in her highest spirits; everything seemed easy; everything seemed pleasant. She danced through the wood, and spent her last Wednesday half-holiday, before her regular holiday began, with Mrs. Hurst.

"Oh, Mrs. Hurst, I'm so happy, I don't know what to do!" she cried.

"Then it's well, lassie, that you've come to my wife to be taken care of," said Dr. Hurst, "or you'd certainly be in hot water before to-night."

"Doctor," said Mrs. Hurst, with a smile, "I think she's too happy to be naughty or mischievous now. You just go away, or I shall have you putting her up to something bad; and leave me to set her to work."

"There, May, you see we are to be separated like two naughty children. Well, my dear, come to my study to say good-bye before you go home;" and with that the old man nodded his kind good-bye, and left them.

It was a quiet afternoon, but a very bright one. First they trotted all round the yard, looking at the ducks and chickens, feeding and taming them; then through the kitchen garden, gay with bright old-fashioned flower borders, nestling up close against cabbages and potatoes, and sheltering under huge old pear and apple trees.

"Gather me some flowers, May," said Mrs. Hurst, "and a posy for yourself, if you like; 'tis a pity now roses are so nearly past."

"But they will come out again soon, Mrs. Hurst," answered May; "look how the buds are beginning on this one!"

Then they strolled into the field, and called Pegtop, and her calf; and on their way homeward, the gardener was summoned to give May a swing, and there Mrs. Hurst left her, to follow her in when she should feel inclined.

"It's not so long since I was swinging you a baby in my arms, Miss May," said Aliston, as she sprang into the swing.

"Indeed, it's a long time since, Aliston: fourteen long years!"

"That ain't so long to me, Miss May, when I've lived past four times fourteen years."

"Well, I like this kind of swing better than the other."

"You wouldn't have liked it then, Miss May," he said, with a chuckle, as he sent her flying through the air. How the wind tossed her hair, and blew it about all over her face, as if playing hide and seek with her sweet eyes and laughing mouth! Perhaps Aliston had some such thoughts as he invited her to come and see the cows milked, and very happily she went with him.

Later on, when she returned to Mrs. Hurst, she found her busy mending.

"I dare say you can help me a bit, May," she said.

"Oh, Mrs. Hurst, I wish I could, but I never did a stitch of mending in all my life. Sometimes if I tear my frock, I just cobble it up. Oh, it is such a cobble, too!"

"Then who does the mending at home?"

"Oh, nurse does some of it; and Phillis and Gerrie do the rest."

"I think you are a very lazy little girl."

"Oh no, Mrs. Hurst!"

"Oh *yes*, I say. It is quite time you learned to be useful, May. Here, you shall begin this afternoon. Hand me that needle-book;" and, choosing needle and cotton, the old lady went on, "You must not leave everything to the elder ones, and be a spoilt baby. Here is a sock of the Doctor's that wants mending, and you shall begin on it, and by-and-by I hope you will take all the sock-mending, and relieve Phillis."

"Oh, Mrs. Hurst, indeed I shall not!"

"Why not?"

"Why, it would take me the whole of my Saturday afternoons."

"Well, child, we will think about that another day; meanwhile, just bear my words in mind. And now, tell me, Stephen comes on Friday?"

"Yes, on Friday. Oh, we *are* so looking forward to having him home! Do you know, Mrs. Hurst, sometimes I think he's my favourite brother, and yet, I don't know really—sometimes I think it's Tom, and sometimes Jem."

"I expect they are each 'favourite' in their own way, my dear. You are very happy to have such brothers and sisters belonging to you."

"But, Mrs. Hurst—you know—they are rather tiresome too."

"Do you mean *they* are tiresome or *you* are tiresome?"

"Well, Mrs. Hurst," she answered, with a laugh, "I suppose it's a little of both. I'm always quarrelling with some of them."

"Quarrelling?"

"Yes; they do provoke me so—it's 'May here,' and 'May there,' 'May do,' and 'May don't,' all

day long; and oh, I do get so tired of it. However, I don't listen to them—I don't care about them now."

"My dear child, I am glad you have said this to me, for I fear you are very wrong indeed to speak in this way. 'It takes two to make a quarrel,' as the old saying has it, and it is nonsense for a child like you to talk of quarrelling with grown people. Your part is very simple; it is nothing but obedience and gentleness."

"Oh but, Mrs. Hurst, you don't *know* how provoking Phillis is! her temper is up in a moment, and she flies out like anything."

"My dear," said the old lady, sternly, "you have nothing to do with your sister's faults, excepting to hide them. And if Phillis was twenty times more impatient than she is, your path would still be the same. The worse people are the more it is *our* duty to be loving and good. Shall I tell you of one who put that before her all her life?"

"Yes, please."

"She was a lovely young thing, bright and sunny, the very joy of her home, and the only child, except one brother. Her father and mother died, and left her to his care, and through one trouble and another, he turned out, not as bad—for I still believe it was in a great measure owing to mistakes and misfortunes—but as unhappy a young man as could be. And she, who from her earliest days had been petted and spoiled, and ever allowed to have her own way, resisted all the attempts of her relations to part them. It may have been wrong in the world's eyes, but in the eyes of our Father in heaven, I believe it was noble and pure. She gave up her place in society, her time, pleasure, everything for this brother, and waited on him in simple love-lent duty, meeting rebuffs and misunderstandings even from him, till she won him; yes, that's it, *won* him back from all that was evil to all that was noble, and good, and godly. By-and-by, one who well deserved her asked her to be his wife, but she put aside the blessing—and what a blessing it must have seemed, after the torn life the poor lamb had led, God only knows! Howbeit, she put it aside, and devoted herself more than ever to this brother, to whom she was now so unutterably precious; and I think she never guessed she had made a noble sacrifice, but only felt her exceeding loneliness, when six months later, long after her lover had gone into a strange land, her brother was brought home dying from injuries in a train accident, and she had only time to receive him, and bless and comfort him, and hear his last words, 'Safe in Christ, through you,' before he went to the better land."

"Oh, how noble! how beautiful! How I should like to do that sort of thing, Mrs. Hurst!"

"Ah, my child, I doubt if any one *likes* doing it; no one can like suffering in itself, and she, dear soul, only took it so sweetly and patiently because Christ Jesus was so near her, and she so near Him, that she forgot it was pain."

"What became of her?" May asked, after a pause.

"She thought all was over for her, but the man who loved her, loved her enough to read her true, in spite of all that had seemed contradictory, and he came back and gave her a home, and rest, and all she needed. Do you know why I have told you this, May?"

"Not quite, Mrs. Hurst."

"Because it was your own namesake who did it—May Flower—your dear mother, my child. To you it seems some great wonderful thing to have done; to her it seemed to be the simplest, most natural duty. Though you cannot remember your mother, May, surely you have heard enough of her to long to be like her, and you *will* be, if you begin rightly—putting yourself aside in *little* things, upon every possible occasion. If you don't go seeking for pleasures for yourself, but seeking for opportunities of giving them; if you do not seek for anything, but simply, as the blessed Word of God says, '*love*, hoping for nothing again.'"

"But that seems so hard, Mrs. Hurst."

"It is not hard, my child, if you open your heart to receive Christ's love. He can and will give you all you need for yourself, and not only that, He will give you also all you need for giving away."

(*To be continued.*)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

15. No mention is made in the Sacred Narrative by any of the Evangelists of one entire week of our Lord's earthly ministry. State what memorable event immediately preceded the period alluded to.

16. The terrible consequences of rejecting the Messiah are distinctly stated by Moses. Give the passage.

17. After His transfiguration the Lord Jesus charged his disciples to "tell the vision to no man." Which two of the Evangelists record this injunction of our Lord? For what event were they to wait before divulging it?

18. Give in the words of St. Peter the reason of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 16.

1. "Thou shalt not put any in thy vessel" (Deut. xxiii. 24).

2. Once at the beginning of His ministry (John ii. 14—16), and again towards its close (Matt. xxi. 12, 13).

3. The raising of Jairus's daughter (Matt. ix. 23; Mark v. 38).

4. 2 Chron. xxiv. 20—21; Matt. xxiii. 35.

5. John i. 14.

6. See John xii. 28, 29.

7. 1 Cor. xvi. 2.

8. Lev. xii. 5.



(*Drawn by* W. SMALL.)

THE VOICE OF THE STREAM.

SWEET is your babbling voice to me,
O little woodland stream,
When 'neath this wave-reflected tree
An idle hour I dream.

Full many a tender tale it tells
Of those long-faded hours,
When as a child I roamed these dells
In quest of summer flowers;

And of those later happier times,
When in this sacred grove
Your song made music to the rhymes
In which I breathed my love.

Dear distant days! yet not more dear
Than those which now I share;
There is in every fleeting year
Far more of joy than care.

And of our joy, to me it seems
We may increase the store
By sometimes calling back in dreams
The sun-lit scenes of yore.

So babble, brooklet, as you glide,
Sing on the dear old lays;
I see reflected in your tide
The light of other days.

J. C. TILDESLEY.

THE PRECIOUSNESS OF DEATH.

BY THE REV. JAMES SPENCE, D.D., AUTHOR OF "HOURS WITH DANIEL," ETC.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."—PSALM cxvi. 15.

IT is trite to say that as soon as we begin to live we begin to die, but it is a solemn truth. This world is not our resting place. "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh." We are surrounded by death; its dark memorials are ever with us. We tread on the dust of past centuries, and are ourselves hastening to the narrow house appointed for all living. One event happeneth sooner or later to all; but how different in its character and issues to different individuals! To some it is the greatest evil; to others it is the passage to the greatest good. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." Jehovah is the Creator and the Lord of life. He can take no pleasure in death as a mere destruction or dissolution. His delight is to give life, not to take it away. The death of man was not the work of God. It is Satan that is said to have in this sense "the power of death." Is it not, then, remarkable that, in any case and under any circumstances, death should be precious in the sight of God?

But whose death? Saints alone are named; and in their case, therefore, there must be special reasons for it. "The Lord hath set apart him that is godly for Himself." The very highest dignity for man is to be a saint—separated from sin and consecrated to God. We know that the lives of saints are precious in His sight, for He gives His angels "charge over them to keep them in all their ways" and to be "ministering spirits for them who shall be heirs of salvation." Their tears are precious, for He puts them into His bottle, and writes them in His book; their prayers are precious, for in one of the visions of the Apocalypse the golden vials seen in the hands of the elders were full of odours representing the prayers of saints; all their acts of kindness, self-denial, and love, are precious, "for with sweet sacrifices God is well pleased." But here we are assured that their death is precious—not merely that they themselves are precious in dying—for in living or dying they are the Lord's—but their death itself is precious in His sight. To them, therefore, the entire aspect and character of death must be changed. How so? They live in Christ, and have a life which death cannot touch. The one decease accomplished by the Son of God on Calvary—when he died, the Just, for the unjust—has emancipated them from the power of death. In dying He made of Himself "an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." His decease was infinitely precious in the sight of the Eternal Father, and it has changed the character of death in the case of all the followers of the Lamb. "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me," said Christ, "shall never die." It is, then, through the triumph of the Cross and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus that the death of saints is precious in the sight of God. But on what grounds is it so? For manifold reasons, some of which we can see, and doubtless others to us here unknown.

1. Death is the end of all the sorrows and trials of the saints, and in this respect it is precious in the Lord's sight. Life is a probation and a discipline. "Whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." Is this chastening a pleasant thing for God? does He like this process of scourging? No; He does not delight in pain, nor in subjecting His children to suffering. Though needful for their judgment is "His strange work," it is no gratification to Him to see their tears, to witness their sorrows, to hear their sighs, to behold their disappointments, for in all their afflictions He is afflicted. It is through much tribulation—in every case through more or less—that they enter the heavenly kingdom. Our Divine Father rejoices when His discipline has accomplished its end—when "the peaceable fruits of righteousness" have been brought forth—when the life of the soul is ready to be transplanted, that it may grow and flourish in another clime. Hence the death of His children is precious in His sight. It brings the end of their probation. There is henceforth no more discipline, but rest; conflict no more, but victory; suffering no more, but glory. Then all tears are

wiped away; sorrow and sighing are ended; tribulation and toil for ever cease. Such is the interest that God has in the happiness of His people that the event pleases Him which closes the record of their trials and raises them beyond the reach of pain and sorrow for evermore.

2. The death of saints, moreover, is the final step towards their moral perfection, and on this account God regards it as precious. It is the gate through which they pass to join "the spirits of the just made perfect." The sanctification of His people is the Divine will; and with what wisdom, power, and grace has He provided for it! God seeks that they shall be changed into His own image—from glory unto glory. With wonderful care and mercy does He watch the process of transformation—sitting as a refiner sits by the fire in which metal is melted and tried. To see the lessening force of sin and the growing beauty of holiness in them is to Him a joy. It shows forth His praise and magnifies His name. Just as the sculptor looks with interest and satisfaction on his work as the rude block of marble assumes under his hand definite shape and graceful form, and rejoices in marking its progress towards a likeness which seems to want nothing but the living breath, so God regards with Divine satisfaction the growing holiness of His people. And if the process and progress are so pleasing to Him, what must the consummation be? Death is the end of all their weakness and imperfection. They die and leave behind them "the body of their humiliation," and with it they leave frailty, temptation, and sin. No more lukewarmness or unbelief or spiritual insensibility or moral infirmity for ever. In dying, they pass beyond the reach of Satan's power; they overcome the last hindrance and surmount the last barrier between them and complete moral likeness to their Lord. And as God wishes their perfection—as He provided for it, watched for it, worked for it, waited for it—we can well see how their death, which finally secures it, is precious in His sight.

3. Further, the death of God's saints is the true birth of their heavenly being; and on this ground too it is precious in His sight. It closes the earthly and begins the heavenly life. Through death, they go to be with Christ, which is far better. How much is there in the words—"Absent from the body, present with the Lord." Not more marvellous is the change in the history of a living babe when it is ushered into the world than must be the change to the Christian when he passes through death into the immediate presence of his Lord. Then his soul reaches a higher sphere of being—a higher and purer atmosphere of light and life—the end for which all the past had been a preparation and probation. What an emancipation from the bondage of the present! What an expansion from the limitations of time and sense! Here the soul is clogged, hampered, held down, largely dependent for knowledge and feeling on the senses, which may be often injured or imperfect. But hereafter that which is in part will be done away. Now we see through a glass darkly; but then we shall see face to face. It will be entrance on a new life of resplendence, perfection, and glory. Death sets the soul free—

> "Free to wing the vasty realms of being,
> Inbreathe the freest air of life divine—
> Bask in the sunshine of eternal love."

Shall we wonder, then, that the death of His saints should be precious in the sight of God? Oh no! it but fulfils His own purpose, marks the triumph of His own good, is the achievement of His own power and love. His people are called, justified, and sanctified that they may be glorified—glorified together with Christ, who died for them, and in dying became the Conqueror of death for all His followers.

4. The death of God's saints is their arrival at home: hence also its preciousness in His sight. They are His children by regeneration and adoption. He has renewed them by His spirit, and made them partakers of His own nature. "And if children, then heirs: heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." What loving father does not rejoice at the safe arrival of his children at home from the discipline and training of school or the pains and perils of travelling? Death brings the Christian home to the Father's house above, in which there are many mansions. Here, because of the entanglement of the flesh and the imperfections of this life, God cannot fully communicate with His children as He would, cannot reveal to them all the mysteries of His love or unveil to them His glory. They could not bear the revelation now, nor indeed could they appreciate it. He longs, if we may so say, to show them their inheritance—to see them in the house prepared for them, to display to them more of the riches of the universe, of which they are joint heirs with Him who is "Heir of all things." Their death is, therefore, precious in His sight, as it brings them home. What a home it will be! What relationships will be formed, renewed, and perfected there! What fellowships enjoyed! what glories seen and shared in! Home, with its rest, its solace, its society, its love and its felicity, for ever. Home, with its untiring occupation, its celestial songs, its purest pleasures, its unbounded peace, its perennial joy. The saint in dying is not the victim, but the victor of death—yea, more than conqueror, through the mighty love of Him who is "the Resurrection and the Life." May we not, then, sing as we advance in the pilgrimage of life—

> "While through the barren wilderness wearily we roam,
> How sweet to cast a look above and think we're going home

To know that there the trials of our pilgrimage shall cease
And all the waves of earthly woe be hushed to heavenly peace!
Home, sweet home!
Oh, for that land of rest above, our own eternal home!"

And if the death of saints be thus precious in the sight of God, then we may be sure that the time of it and the manner of it are in His hand and of His ordering. He knows the end from the beginning, and orders all for the best. In health and sickness, in life and death, trust in Him should be the sheet-anchor of the soul. Thus, as we advance in the pilgrimage of life, leaning on the Son of God, we may have the happy assurance at the close of every day that we are "one day's march nearer Home!"

TWO-EDGED PROVERBS.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A., AUTHOR OF "THE 'I WILLS' OF THE PSALMS," "THE FEET OF JESUS," ETC. ETC.

IV.—"BETTER TO LIVE IN HOPE THAN DIE IN DESPAIR."

IT would be a very curious sight if we could see embodied and in actual operation the various passions or feelings or principles which sway mankind. No doubt a precise metaphysician would ask us which these are—"feelings," "principles," or "passions"; and perhaps would have his dignity much scandalised if we told him we did not care in the least what he calls them. Our readers would know well enough what we mean when we tell them that jealousy and envy, and avarice and lust, and ambition, and the like, are in one department of the list; and love and patience, and humility and hope, and self-denial, and so forth, in the other. What terrible sights would the first present to us, what beautiful ones the other! then we should see the real actors on this world's stage; not only, as now, what is done, but who do it.

Amongst the most beneficent of the holy band would be "Hope"—that Hope of which the poet sings—

Auspicious Hope! in thy sweet garden grow
Wreaths for each toil, a charm for every woe,
* * * * * *
When every form of death and every woe,
Shot from malignant stars and earth below;
When Murder bared her arm, and rampant War
Yoked the red dragons in their iron car;
When Peace and Mercy, tavished from the plain,
Sprung on the viewless winds to heaven again:
All, all, forsook the friendless, guilty mind
But Hope, the charmer, lingered still behind.

Well is it for us that she did so, for a life without hope would be only a living death.

Now, all these graces which we have mentioned above are working graces. They are very beautiful and refined; and if we could see them moving about amongst us, no doubt they would be arrayed in garments of infinite purity and lustre; still, not one of them would be found above work, doing great things for one, and hand's turn for another; going here, and there, and everywhere, and doing this, and that, and anything, or everything, if only they could scatter blessings around.

One of the most working of all these graces is "Hope," and one of the most ubiquitous too, having a lodging almost everywhere where there is a human heart.

And here we find it in one of our most common proverbs, "Better live in hope, than die in despair."

In this paper let us consider "Hope," and what comes of it, Life; and Despair, and what comes of it, Death.

This proverb is not to be considered here as applying to any particular thing; every one must apply it for himself; and in doing so we shall find it to be true as regards the two branches into which all our affairs must divide themselves—our temporal and our spiritual.

Now, first of all, let us look at what it is to live in "Hope." It is to believe ourselves to be within the possibilities of success. No man will embark on a hopeless enterprise. Duty may indeed compel him to go to certain death or ruin; but instances of this kind are comparatively rare, and do not come into the ordinary affairs of daily life. To undertake anything with spirit, we must believe that at least it is possible to accomplish it. And thus it is that the most difficult enterprises are undertaken. Hope may be seen in every steamer that ploughs its way over the sea; in every bridge that spans a river; in every garden that is laid out, every house that is built: if they could talk, Hope would animate their voices, saying either, "I am here," or "I was here once." The shipwrights, the architects, the masons, the gardeners, were all hopeful; they looked forward to their work turning out profitably and well, and that made them plan it and carry it through.

Hope does not prevent obstacles opposing themselves, but it prevents men being depressed unduly by them; and so they go at their work again and again, with life and energy, and that energy carries them through. Sometimes the possibilities of success are so clouded, that if Hope did not come in, almost as a charm, men would not undertake what they do. Perhaps a man cannot give a reason always for the hope that is in him in that way, but practically it carries him on, and

eventually also overcomes difficulties. And thus it comes to pass that some of the greatest successes in life have been won—they are triumphs of Hope. A man feels "what may be, must be, and shall be," and though he be down to day and to-morrow and next day, he is buoyant, and he often rides safely over all his difficulties at last.

Hope should always be the companion of effort; the lazy and idle will only find it mock them. It is intended by the Almighty not only to work *in* us, but also *with* us. He wills us, going through this life, as well as looking forward to the next, to live in hope, and to act as living men.

Hope is intended to be a bracing power—to make men gird up their loins for action. If you have any duty to perform, let it be such, good reader, to you. Do not say "Hope privileges me to dream," but "Hope privileges me to work."

And Hope is a great supporter. When matters are going wrong, it is Hope that holds us up, and makes us look forward to their mending. It is all that many a mother has had to sustain her during the long weary years of a son's waywardness; all that many a hard worker has had to enable him to keep at his unremunerative toil—the way is long and hard, but if only he could hold up and hold on, success might crown his efforts and repay him for all at last.

Always holding out new prospects, it energizes to fresh action, it comes out as bright as the sun does from under a cloud; it rises up with ever-new morning times, even as we ourselves do after long dark nights. Hope might be almost said to be a miracle of ever-new resurrections; not only full of life itself, but life communicating to others also.

If we could see what Hope is really doing in daily life, we should behold it bearing heavy burdens; administering cheering cordials; letting in light to dark places; striking up a song and filling with melody silent and solitary abodes; setting men on enterprises of which they would otherwise have never thought; and giving the world most of the sunshine and health and music that it has.

There are many estates of life which would be very unhappy and perhaps even intolerable in themselves, were it not that Hope enters into them, and brings with it its own train of interests, its own alleviations, its own pleasures. Life is and always must be, more or less pleasant where it is. Life, though full of struggle, yet, with Hope, is infinitely better than the dull peace of despair, which is a living death.

We are often very wrong in the estimate which we make of conditions and circumstances of life as esssential to happiness. The truth is, a man for the most part carries his happiness within himself; and a hopeful man with a crust is more happy than a low-spirited man with a feast. A man with hard struggles and plenty of hope, is better off really, and happier, than one with plenty of everything else but no hope, nothing to look forward to, his present and future alike one melancholy blank. We can never tell what life really is to a man, because we cannot penetrate his mind and see what he has of a hopeful spirit.

And so in our dealings with our fellow-men, we should be careful to trench as little as possible upon hope. Something should be left, even to the worst criminals, in this way. To leave them without hope would be only to harden them more and more. We must leave every one some future, and something to be earned in that future. When the penalty of death is exacted, of course all earthly hope is ended; but short of that, it is bad policy as well as wrong in other ways, to destroy all hope. Hope is one of God's great lifters of mankind, an element almost of physical life itself; and unless we take away life, we have no right to destroy all hope.

And now, as regards the far higher matter of our spiritual hope. To live in hope, is what God designs for all his people—for all who would take hold of this great truth. How often we meet with people ready to lie down in despair as regards spiritual things. It is often Satan's plan to try and cast a man into despair. He knows well that it is death for the soul. Once down in that horrible pit, there would be no energy to stir, nothing but darkness, and sitting still till the end comes.

False hopes—which indeed should not be called hopes at all, but heart-deceivings—have ruined many; and when they come to ruin, Satan would never help a man to something on a good foundation, but would persuade him that all is lost—there remains now nothing but despair. Always remember that despair is death. The words of good old John Douname should be remembered: "As desperation is a sin in its own nature most grievous, so also is it to ourselves most pernicious; for whereas other sins make us worthy of the torments of hell and eternal condemnation, this, as it is above all the rest, entitleth us unto all the right of this hellish inheritance, so also it entereth us into the most certain and present possession thereof, even whilst we live upon the earth."

This good old divine took a strong view of the matter, but he is right—despair means death here, and death hereafter too.

Let our whole spiritual life be one of hope. Hope is one of the graces to be added to others (Rom. v. 4); it does not make ashamed (v. 5); we are said even to be saved by it; we are to abound in it; it passes beyond this life (1 Cor. xv. 19); it is laid up for us in heaven; it is bound up with the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. You have only to run your eye down the column of a Concordance, to see the preciousness and importance of it in Scripture.

In whatever aspect we view our spiritual life, it should be one of Hope. What is there whichever way we turn but Hope food. It lies all around us, as the manna did round the tents of the Israelites. The whole breath of the New Testament savours of reconciliation and love, and a beautiful future, for any one who will simply take Christ. The present position is one of acceptance, the future prospect is all bright. "Ye are washed," says St. Paul (1 Cor. vi. 2), "ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God." "There is now no condemnation," says he (Rom. viii. 1), "to them that are in Christ Jesus, for the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

And all the future that belongs to such a present is and must be bright. "Made heirs according to the hope of eternal life," as it is said in Titus iii. 7. "Begotten again to a lively hope" as St. Peter says, we have heaven, and that for ever before us—something which we describe by such words as "brightness" and "glory" and "wealth" and "joy," but which in all probability infinitely transcends anything we understand thereby.

For my own part, I see no reason why Hope, which is one of God's choicest gifts, and which has done so much for us through life, should lie down and die on the threshold of that heaven to which it was so instrumental in bringing us. Why should Hope not live in heaven as well as on earth, and be a perennial source of exhilaration to the saints, ever leading them to look to their Father for yet more and more—ever for some fresh joy to come! This Hope may, for aught we can tell, be one of the special bonds between God and us for the future; we may be ever thinking, "Our Father will show us more and more. He will give us more and more;" we could not come to the end of His good things, and we never would. It is a grand vision—an eternity exhilarated by Hope. Well might Pope say—

> "Hope humbly then, with trembling pinions soar;
> Wait the great teacher Death, and God adore.
> What future bliss He gives not thee to know,
> But gives that Hope to be thy blessing now."

Progression, so far as we can learn from science, has been the law under which our world has lived for countless ages; and, ever advancing to something higher, it has become the beautiful planet that it is. But Hope looks forward to a still greater future for it, when, cleansed by fire, it shall have surrounding it a new heaven and itself be a new earth. And as our world and ourselves have lived under this law, why may we not live under it for ever? Why should not progression be the very necessity of our spiritual being? When gratitude and praise and enjoyment sparkle in the eyes of the saints, why should not Hope also? God has inexhaustible treasures on which to draw, and He may enlarge our capacity ever more and more to receive them.

Shakespeare says—

> "True Hope is swift, and flies with swallow's wings;
> Kings it makes gods, and meaner creatures kings."

This thought contains the germ of what we have been saying just now. Hope has power to do yet more for us in whatever state we are. As it blesses us here, so it may hereafter too.

And if Hope be thus precious—if indeed it belong even to a blissful eternity itself, then how serious a matter is it that we should make sure that our present Hope is well grounded. The Hope here is connected inseparably with this Hope on which we have ventured, we trust not unreasonably, to speculate as existing hereafter. There is but one ground on which it can rest, and that is Jesus, as Himself the one all-sufficient atonement. "Christ in us," as the Apostle tells us in the Epistle to the Colossians, is "the hope of glory."

Had we no Christ, what could lie before us but despair? The blackness of darkness must brood evermore upon our souls; the heart must have remained what it is by nature—a den of everything that is unclean. But Christ has come to light up ten thousand lamps within our souls. Yes; far more than that. As one sun outshines thousands of lamps, so the Sun of Righteousness arising with healing in his wings sheds abroad beams over our souls, which leave all earth-lit hopes and lights outshone into having scarce any place at all.

Reader, has Christ come as this great light into your heart to rule the day there? Has the day-spring from on high visited you? Has a mighty Hope, the daughter of Faith, sprinkled any music from her harp-strings, murmured soft melodies, or struck louder tones of minstrelsy in your heart? There are some who are described in the Scripture as "having no hope," and being "without God in the world." You are not, I trust, amongst them; but you very possibly are living below your privileges, below the standpoint on which Hope would place you.

A full Christ leads you to a full Father; joy and peace in believing are your privileges—full peace, full hope, for Jesus leads you to the large hand and large heart of His Father.

Do not be content with little. He who aspires to much shall get much; and what will make us aspire so much as Hope? As to despair, however much it may belong to the lost and to their "dungeon horrible, on all sides round," where "hope never comes, that comes to all," with such a Christ "while there's life there's hope;" and even though it be small, still there may be in it even eternal life itself.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 4. The Early Christians.

Chapters to be read—Acts ii., iii. (parts of).

INTRODUCTION. Question the children upon the events, so far, of the day of Pentecost—the one hundred and twenty disciples in the upper room; the Holy Ghost coming—referring to former lesson. Now shall see some of the characteristics of the early Church.

I. The Ordinary Life (read chap. ii. 41—47). (1) *Baptism.* First picture the apostles baptising these three thousand persons. What a busy scene! When were crowds baptised before, and by whom? Perhaps these in the brook Cedron—not told where. What was required of the converts by John? What besides repentance now? (Compare Matt. iii. 6 with Acts viii. 37.) What form of words had Christ given them for the purpose? (Matt. xxviii. 19). Must now fully believe not only in Jesus as God, but in the Person of the Holy Ghost. Show the benefit of baptism. All admitted into same family (Gal. iii. 27), bound to same master—blessings and privileges of Christians assured to them and children (ii. 38, 39), by reason of covenant with God. (2) *Fellowship.* Remind how boys would feel who belong to same school, would learn from same books, have to obey same laws, have same privileges, &c. So these Christians (ver. 42). Who would be their teachers? and whence did the apostles derive their knowledge? Remind of qualifications for apostle (i. 21). So they all continued together, learning and praying. What book would they study, and what feast would they share? Remind of the new feast instituted, as a sign of the love Christians should have to each other. How else did they show their love? (3) *Common property.* Ask how can show love to one another. Remind of parable of sheep and goats, Dives and Lazarus, and others; also of apostles having given up all for Christ; would teach duty of giving up goods to the poor. Also remind of Christ washing disciples' feet. This love made them give up their property, and have one common purse. Let children see two things about this: it was done *voluntarily*—there was no compulsion (see Acts v. 4); and it was done *cheerfully*—just as the rule was laid down by St. Paul afterwards (2 Cor. ix. 7). Ask for instances of true love giving the best to Christ—the poor widow, her last farthing; Mary, the spices; and Joseph, his own tomb. So these went about cheerfully, and full of praise (ver. 46).

Practical. From all this may learn two lessons—(1) *Religion makes us liberal.* First comes contentment—have enough, can spare to him that needs. How much are we to love our neighbour? Then not merely give him crumbs (Luke xvi. 21), but share money with him. Who failed under this test? How did the young man go away? (Matt. xix. 22) Still, all must come from true love or charity, or else worthless (1 Cor. xiii. 3). (2) *Religion makes us cheerful.* Great mistake to suppose Christians must be gloomy: its ways those of pleasantness (Prov. iii. 17). What are causes for joy? Promise of this life. No carefulness—all things necessary promised (Matt. vi. 33). Promise of next life—pardon, peace, joy in Holy Ghost (Gal. v. 22), none of which can be taken away or lost, like earthly treasures (John xvi. 22; Matt. vi. 20).

II. Miraculous Powers. (Read chap. iii. 1—16.) Question the children on the story, and bring out the following points—(*a*) *The place.* Why did the man place himself at the gate of the Temple? What were the people going to the Temple for? What o'clock of our time? What was offered at three P.M. daily? Refer to 1 Kings xviii. 29; hence show that the apostles did not neglect the daily worship in the Temple (chap. ii. 46), any more than the new converts. (*b*) *The lame man.* Picture him lying at the entrance-gate, on his mattress, eyeing the people. Must often have seen Christ entering the Temple: perhaps had seen Him work some miracle. Why did he accost Peter and John? Probably saw kind faces, caught something of the look of Jesus (chap. iv. 13). How were his hopes raised (vs. 4, 5)? (*c*) *The miracle.* What had the apostles not got? Why not? Yet had something far better? What was that? Whence obtained? Still, though had this power, what was necessary on the man's part? (See Mark xvi. 17.) Let children observe how apostles always spoke of Jesus of Nazareth, that despised place. What did the man do at once? Could be no mistake; was no partial cure; could leap, as well as walk. What else did he do? Remind of lepers, who showed no gratitude. (*d*) *The effect.* What *could* the multitude think? Marvellous to hear ignorant men speak with other tongues. This more strange—a man lame from his birth running about. What did the apostles do? extol themselves? boast of their power? No! Simply another opportunity of upholding Jesus (ver. 13; chap. iv. 9, 10). What does this show? Whence came this humility? Had now learned of Him. His Spirit at work in their hearts (Matt. xi. 29).

Questions to be answered.

1. What was the first act of the new converts?
2. What practical proof did they give of their love?
3. Give two rules for alms-giving.
4. What two practical lessons may be learned?
5. Describe the healing of the lame man.
6. What quality did the apostles exhibit?

XUM

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER VII.

MR. TEXLEY'S first act was to lead the new schoolmistress to her desk, and open before her a book in which she was to enter the names of the scholars as they presented themselves. At his invitation the mothers entered, and listened in respectful silence while he made them a little speech, expatiating, rather more than Eda liked to hear, on the gratitude they ought to feel for the expense and trouble he had been at in building such a well-appointed and excellently arranged schoolhouse for their children, whom he enjoined them to send regularly, unless they wished to incur his serious displeasure.

Very few signs of the grateful feelings he invoked were visible on the faces of his auditors. Only one simpering woman, in ragged and tawdry finery, made any acknowledgments, and hers were couched in the following terms:—

"I'm sure, sir, it's truly thankful I am, whatever other people may be, that I'm able to take my dear childern——"

"It's Mrs. Blackman, isn't it?" asked Mr. Texley. "It was your boys whom I caught the other day breaking down one of my hedges."

"Was it now, sir!" and Mrs. Blackman tried to look astonished, but failed. "Well, now, if they aint allays in mischief; but childern will be childern; and what's a few sticks to a great gentleman like you, sir? and as I was a saying," she went on, too rapidly to permit of another interruption; "I shall be thankful to take 'em away from a school where they has to company with all sorts, and the ladies takes upon themselves to find fault with my girls for having a flower or two in their hats, poor things! and the missus took Mary Jane's beads off her neck, and wouldn't let her wear 'em in school-time. A reg'ler piece of imperence I call it! Who's she, indeed, to take so much upon herself!"

Involuntarily Eda moved a little farther away from the shrill-tongued speaker, and Mr. Texley coughed rather dubiously.

"That will do, my good woman! I really cannot stop to hear these very frivolous complaints. Miss Granton will draw up a code of rules, which you and your children will have to observe. I am pleased to find that you appreciate the advantages I am offering you. Education is an incalculable boon, and,——I think that is all, and I need not detain you any longer."

But a stout tidy matron had now edged her way into the front rank, and curtsied till she contrived to attract his attention.

"Who's this—Mrs. Brown?"

"Yes, sir, Mary Brown, as got the prize at the last cottagers' show for the cleanest house place in the village. I ha' brought my two girls, sir, as you bid me; but I'd like to know what I be to have for taking 'em away from t'other school, just as they was a doing as well there as children could do?"

"I don't understand you," said Mr Texley. "They will have superior instruction—very superior!"

Still the mother was dissatisfied, and did not hesitate to say so.

"Well, but, sir, they *was* a getting on as well as I could wish, and in the first class both of 'em; and they had as good a chance as e'er a one in the school of winning Miss Texley's prize for needlework."

"I, too, shall give rewards to stimulate our pupils to greater industry," she was assured, "and carry their education to a height at which their former teachers have never aimed!"

"May-be, sir," she answered, shortly; "and I'm sure I'd not be against their learning anything that's right and according to Scripter; but who's a going to make up to 'em for the gifts they always have at Christmas, and the chance of being helped to good places as soon as they be ready to leave school?"

"I am afraid you are inclined to be mercenary, Mrs. Brown," said the gentleman, reprovingly. "You evidently value a few pecuniary considerations more than the enlightenment of your offspring."

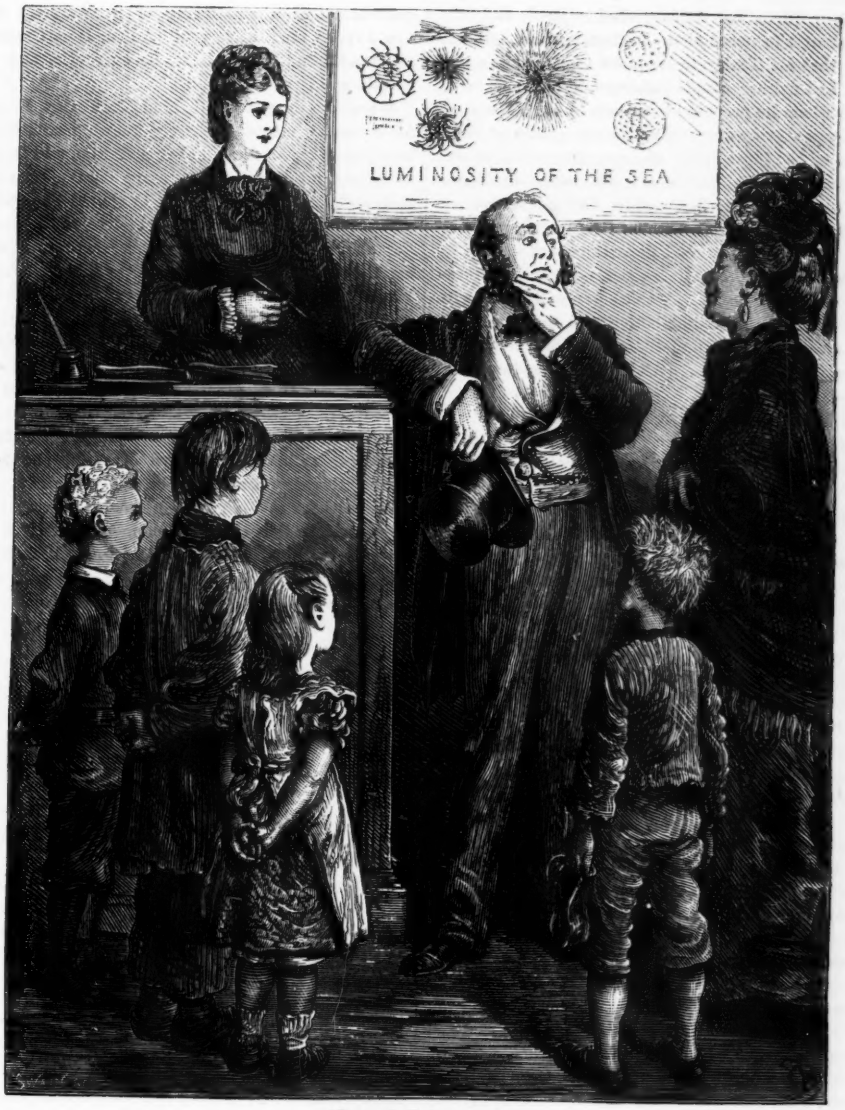
"I values the flannel petticoats they was to have, and I won't deny it," she boldly replied; "but if you means to make it up to 'em, sir, of course I haven't no more to say."

But others had; for, encouraged by her example, some of her companions began to tell, half eagerly, half sorrowfully, how hard they should find it to lose the aid of the clothing club, into which their children were allowed to pay their pence as long as they attended the village school.

Mr. Texley began to look hot and harassed.

"Dear, dear me, my good women, this is too, too much! Look at the beautiful school I have built for your children, and spared nothing to make it complete!"

"Aye, sir, it be a fine place, surely!" said Mrs. Brown, "and must have cost a power of money; but how be the poor children to come across the park to it all through the winter, when the grass is little better than a mash, if they've no shoes to their poor feet? and how be they to get shoes without the club to help 'em?"



(*Drawn by* F. BARNARD.)

"I'm sure, sir, it's truly thankful I am."—*p.* 56.

"Must I institute clubs too!" the gentleman ruefully exclaimed. "Well, well, I cannot enter on such undertakings just at present. I'll think it over, I'll think it over."

The mothers, but half-satisfied, retired, and Eda sighed as she noted their downcast faces. It was plain that Mr. Texley, in his haste to carry out a new plan, had neither counted the cost to himself, nor to those whom he proposed to benefit by it. He, however, was already overcoming his annoyance at what he called the ingratitude of those for whom he was labouring, and exultantly led Eda round the room, to point out the excellence of its arrangements.

"I assure you, my dear Miss Granton, I spent two days in the Educational department of the Kensington Museum, examining the respective merits of the forms and desks. I think you will agree with me that nothing could be better than these. And in this closet you will find the nucleus of a library for the use of the parents. All rudimentary works, as you perceive."

"But they are philosophical and scientific," she objected.

"Certainly they are; that is part of my plan. Why should it not be as easy to teach a man the component parts of a drop of water as to explain to him the process of making bread? I shall give a course of lectures in this room during the ensuing winter, for which these books, if they study them, will pave the way."

Eda echoed the *if* mentally, and then asked for alphabet cards, that she might set one of the elder girls to form a class of the younger children, who were beginning to be fidgety.

"My dear Miss Granton, pray don't commence with that old-fashioned system! Think of the time that is wasted in trying to make the poor little creatures distinguish *b* from *d*, and *n* from *u*. I am sure you will be able to devise a better method of teaching them to read than that."

"I will do my best," said Eda, dubiously.

"Thank you. Then I may leave you with your young charges? It is very gratifying to be able to feel that they are in good hands. You will convey a great deal of the information you impart in song, will you not? And if you can devote an hour daily to natural philosophy pray do so. Now what do you think you had better begin with? Shall I send you down an illustrated natural history for you to lecture upon? or would you like to take them into the woods, and inaugurate our new system by giving them lessons in botany?"

"I would rather make their acquaintance first," said Eda, timidly, "and ascertain how much they already know."

"As you please," was the polite reply. "You will find an English History and an Arithmetic in your desk. You will not require any other books. Lessons only disgust the young, and such drudgery impedes progress. Begin with practice, and they will learn the simpler rules with it. Tell them the history of their own country, and they will, at the same time, imbibe patriotism and spelling, good grammar, and a smattering of geography. And now I really must leave you. Adieu, Miss Granton; adieu children! be obedient, be energetic, and you will do wonders!"

When the door closed behind Mr. Texley, Eda sat for some few minutes scarcely knowing whether to laugh or to cry. Should she recall him, and frankly state her incompetency to carry on the school in such an extraordinary manner, or should she quietly and methodically instruct the children to the best of her ability, teaching them what she found them capable of learning, and if he complained, acknowledging her inability to do more? Perhaps this would be the wisest plan to adopt at present; and gathering them around her, Eda offered a simple prayer in language that the youngest could comprehend, and then, guided by a dim recollection of a visit to a national school, marshalled them into order. In checking the rebellious, encouraging the timid, and keeping a watchful eye over all, she found plenty to occupy her till the hour for dismissal, when she went back to the gardener's cottage, very tired, but conscious that she had done her best to fulfil her duty, in the highest sense of the word, both to the children and her employer.

CHAPTER VIII.

GROWING rosier and stronger every day, and finding real pleasure in her labours, as soon her little scholars began to love and obey their patient instructress, Eda persevered in the course she had adopted. No one came near the school for several weeks, either to advise or assist her; and, conscious of her own inexperience, she felt a little anxious when Mr. Texley popped his head in at the door one morning in the midst of the lessons.

But he had only come to superintend the fixing of a gallery, in which his audience were to be seated when he lectured; and his interest in the children was second to his desire to prevail upon Eda to give a course of lectures too. It was no use assuring him that she should not have courage to speak in public; he only pooh-poohed this objection, reminding her that ladies frequently did so now-a-days, and left her a list of subjects from which to select one for her opening essay.

Soon after this she heard that he had gone abroad to some Exposition, from which he returned with his head full of fresh ideas, and his pockets of bills for fresh purchases. By this time his interest in the school was fast disappearing. He came and questioned the children; frowned at their timid and often incorrect replies; and told Eda that either the hour had not arrived for bringing his system to perfection,

or else she had not been working as hard as he had hoped and expected to find her. He added, with a sigh, that it was dreadfully disappointing when a man was so willing to spend and be spent for the good of his fellow-creatures, to find every one more inclined to hinder than to help him.

Eda attempted to defend herself, but she could not get a hearing. Mr. Texley was quite prepared to admit that she might have had some few difficulties to contend with, but a little energy, he told her—energy of mind and a fixed purpose—would always overcome every obstacle. However, the children appeared more docile, and the parents did not complain; so he would let things go on as they were for the present.

With this doubtful assurance he left her, and in the first flush of her resentment Eda longed to be able to throw up her situation, but she dared not, for where could she go? Mark, who wrote but seldom, was still sharing Richard Atwood's lodging, and complaining bitterly of the fickleness of fortune; and though the note Richie enclosed in his friend's letter was written in a more hopeful spirit, it hinted at trials and discouragement, and ended thus:—

"How glad we ought to be that you are comfortably situated, and able to take your ease in some shady spot, while Mark and I are toiling along the hot dusty streets in search of something to do. Do you not wonder sometimes how two fellows so opposite in disposition get on together? I must confess that we do quarrel sometimes; or at least that Mark scolds and accuses me of snapping up every chance that fortune throws in our way, and I meekly remind him that he does the same in his turn."

"Of course this is only a jest!" Eda said to herself, as she read, and smiled at Richie's readiness to disparage himself.

"But such a continuous run of ill luck" [the writer went on] "would make any one out of sorts, and I console myself with the thought that if Mark grumbles occasionally, Mark's sister will try and think kindly of me—did she not promise to do so when we parted?—and I magnanimously give my testy friend full permission to seize the first chance of climbing over my shoulders, and vaulting into a better position. Till that moment arrives, he must be content to share the fortunes, or want of fortune, of my dear Eda's devoted and affectionate friend,

"RICHIE."

So Eda resolved to be patient, though she could not resist hinting to Mark her wish that he would relinquish his efforts to attain riches, and let her join him in some more reasonable plan of living. But she pleaded in vain; nor when she expressed her fears that she should not be able to retain her situation did she receive any sympathy from her brother.

"As for your joining me" [he wrote], "it is as totally out of the question as it was three months ago. Why not be more obliging to your employer? What matters if he is whimsical? If he wished the village brats to learn high Dutch and shorthand writing, what can it signify to you, as long as he pays you well for your trouble?"

Although Mark's notions of right were not Eda's, she tried to glean a lesson from them, and assured herself that she was too easily discouraged. When Mr. Texley came again, and the children, more accustomed to his short sharp queries, were better able to give him proofs that their minds were not allowed to lie fallow in his absence, he would doubtless do more justice to their young teacher.

But these hopes were not destined to be realised. When he did pay another visit to the school he could not conceal that he was growing tired of it; and Eda began to understand how it was that many new inventions which, on her first coming to Weston Hayes she had heard lauded as perfection, were already thrown aside and forgotten. Mr. Texley was unstable as water. He would spare no toil, no trouble, till the plan he had made was wrought out, or the article he craved was obtained; but, like a child with a toy, he was soon sated by possession.

During the few minutes he stayed he entertained Eda with details of the vast expenses the erection of the school had entailed upon him, and the unpleasantnesses he had been forced to endure with in consequence of his sister's determined opposition to his scheme.

"It is so horribly disheartening!" he complained. "Here am I, eager to benefit the working classes, and assist them to raise themselves, and yet I am crushed, absolutely crushed, by the want of a little human sympathy. No one appreciates my efforts. Even you, Miss Granton, are only giving me divided attention, for you are watching those two quarrelsome urchins instead of listening to me."

"I beg your pardon, sir; one of them is a new boy, and I was afraid he was fighting. With regard to the school—is not the time too short to decide how much good can be done by it?"

"You have been here some months, Miss Granton."

"Between three and four, sir, no more."

"And I do not see any results. I do not, indeed. I do not wish to hurt your feelings, but really your pupils *are* not in advance of those at the village school; they really are not!"

Eda thought in her heart that, unadvised, unassisted, as she had been, and confessedly entering upon the work without any experience, it was something to have kept pace with more practised teachers.

"You seem to overlook the fact, Miss Granton," he went on, "that I do not want a mere machine here, to do precisely what is set down for her, and nothing more; but an energetic woman, who will suggest, and devise, and second me zealously; but you do not appear to comprehend me at all, so I'll not detain you from your scholars. I suppose we must go on as we are now doing, until some better arrangement can be made; but it is really terrible to have thrown away such large sums, without obtaining any satisfactory results—any results whatever."

Eda walked home from the school that afternoon so hot and indignant, that when she encountered Miss Texley at the gate of the gardener's cottage, she would have passed on with a slight bow, if the lady

seated in the pony carriage had not put out her whip and barred the way.

"What is the matter, Miss Granton? are your pupils too much for you?"

"No, madam," she answered, briefly.

"Are you tired of keeping school?"

"No," said Eda; "but I wish I had never been persuaded to come to a place where my endeavours to do my duty are not recognised, and I am thrust into a position which I cannot fill with any credit to myself."

"In plain words, you are dissatisfied because you cannot work wonders with very raw material."

Eda shook her head. "I never expected to be able to do that. Mr. Texley complains of me because I have not attempted what I saw to be impossible."

"Then you are a more sensible girl than I imagined, and I am sorry I cannot help you. Why don't you go back to your friends? The sooner this silly scheme collapses the better for every one connected with it."

Eda's lips quivered. "You forget, ma'am, that I came here hoping to earn my living. I have no friends who are able to receive me if I throw up my situation."

Miss Texley looked grave. "What is your present trouble? Tell me; I might be able to suggest a remedy."

Eda hesitated; she did not like to expose her employer's inconsistency, and contented herself with repeating Mr. Texley's last speech, without any addition or explanation of her own.

Miss Texley looked graver still, and sat for a few minutes flicking the flies from her ponies' ears.

"What *do* you teach the children?"

At rather greater length Eda told her.

"Go on, then, as you are now doing, and recollect that while duty guides us, it does not signify much whether our motives are or are not recognised by those about us. Try to make the children good Christians, and instead of vexing yourself over fancied failures, go steadily on. One who was wiser than you and I has said that sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. If my brother should close the school something or other will turn up for you."

It was rather an indefinite promise, but Eda strove to be satisfied with it. Often and often, too, she repeated to herself Miss Texley's words about duty; and when her difficulties increased, as they did but too rapidly, all through that summer, she comforted herself with the thoughts that lady's hints had awakened.

She never saw Mr. Texley, except at church; and some of the parents of the little ones, perceiving that the master no longer cared for his new hobby, either removed their children altogether, or permitted them to attend as irregularly as they pleased; whilst others, dissatisfied to find that none of his promises were fulfilled, vented their displeasure on the young schoolmistress, and encouraged their offspring to be troublesome, and even insolent.

Still, the clouds lifted sometimes. Though Mr. Texley never came near her, his sister had always an encouraging word to say when she called at the cottage. Some few of the cottagers were really thankful for Eda's teaching; the rector never met her without pausing to speak kindly; and her humble friends the Joneses were affectionately attached to her. Mark, too, was beginning to write in a more cheerful strain, and held out hopes of a speedy reunion, though what ground he had for these hopes, or the nature of the employment he had undertaken, he did not explain; and as her strength increased, both mentally and bodily, many a vexation that had pressed upon her during the day was shaken off, as soon as evening came, in a long healthful walk, or a romp with Mary Jones's fat merry baby.

Eda was doing her best to be really content with her lot, when one of those circumstances occurred that sometimes change the whole tenor of a young life. (*To be continued.*)

OLDER.

(Husband and Wife.)

(H.) AS golden chains behung their tree
And swung, in breezes, to and fro,
There you, below the humming bee,
Were sitting in the shade to sew.

(W.) Ah! sew in white, with no black dyes
Of mourning, under weeping eyes.

(H.) With eyes that showed a glist'ning blue
As clear as succory blossoms bear,
Or as your girdle, shining new,
Or knot new-made for breast or hair.

(W.) Ay, hair, all glossy black, that all
Now withers grey in life's late fall.

(H.) Yet fall, with charms we all can feel,
Awaits the ripening time and sun,
For gifts, enhancing all our weal,
In growth of fruits by spring begun.

(W.) Begun, as once with us begun
Our life that now is far outrun.

(H.) Outrun to reach a happy stage
To which our riper mind has brought
A treasure for our wiser age,
The wisdom culled from time by thought.



(*Drawn by* J. D. WATSON.)

"Sitting in the shade to sew."

"ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."

BY THOMAS ARCHER.

BLESSING THE LITTLE CHILDREN—*(concluded)*.

THE obvious distress and suffering of those who are destitute, and whose claims are constantly before us, may lead us to forget the frequent needs of a large number of people who represent uncomplaining poverty. There is a tendency to identify general appeals to benevolence with efforts for the relief of that extreme necessity which demands immediate and almost undiscriminating aid, and requires the prompt distribution of alms or the provision of a meal, warmth, and shelter. Doubtless, the actually homeless and destitute claim our first attention—especially in the case of deserted and neglected children—and I have tried to show what is being done for those little ones, whose presence in the streets of this great wilderness of brick and stone should of itself be an appeal strong enough to move the heart of humanity in their behalf.

There is, however, another class of poverty, which makes no sign, and bears distress dumbly. There is a need, which, without being that of actual destitution, requires a constant struggle to prevent its representing the want of nearly all the luxuries, and some of those things which most of us regard as the necessaries of life.

We find this among that large section of the middle class represented by persons holding inferior clerkships, small official appointments, and situations where the salaries are only sufficient to yield a bare subsistence, and there is little or no probability of their improvement, because of the number of candidates who are eager to fill such positions, there exists a degree of distress not easily estimated, even by the appearance of those who are the sufferers. Of course relief cannot reach such people through the poor-law, or by any direct legislation. They are far above the reach of almsgiving, or even of societies for distributing bread and coals. They have a just pride in maintaining a position of independence; and though they may sometimes look with a feeling too near to envy at the more prosperous mechanic or the skilled artisan, who can earn "good wages," dress in fustian or corduroy, send his children to the Board School, and regulate working hours and weekly pay by the rules of a Trade Union, they mostly keep bravely on, hoping that as the children grow up, they may get the boys "into something," and find some friend to help them to place the girls in situations where they may partly earn their own living.

With rent and taxes often absorbing a fourth part of his entire income, with market cliques combining against him to keep up the prices of food, with dear bread, dear potatoes, with boots and shoes always wearing out, and respectability demanding cloth clothes, even though they be made of "shoddy," how is the clerk, the employé, the small tradesman, the struggling professional man, to follow the prudent counsel which wealthier people are always ready to bestow upon him—and "lay by for a rainy day?" Rainy day! why his social climate may be said to represent a continual downpour, so far as the necessity for pecuniary provision. He lives (so to speak) with an umbrella always up, and it is only a poor shift of a gingham after all. The half-crown which is in his pocket to-night is already bespoken for to-morrow's dinner. As he listens to the account of the week's marketing, and knows that his wife and children have been living for three days out of seven upon little better than bread and dripping, he feels like an ogre as he thinks of the sevenpenny plate of meat that he consumed at one o'clock, because it was only "a makeshift" at home.

How is he to pay even the smallest premium to insure his life, when he is obliged to meet even ordinary emergencies by a visit to the pawnbroker after dark?

Insure his life! Ah, the time may come when the hand of the bread-winner is still, when the little money left in the house is scarcely sufficient to pay for the "respectable funeral" which is the last effort of genteel poverty, when the red-eyed widow gathers her fatherless children about her, and wonders amidst her stupor of grief what is to become of the younger ones who yet so need her care that she will not be able to go forth to seek the means of living. To what evil influences may they be exposed while she is absent striving to earn their daily food?—the temptations of the streets for the boys; the certainty that the elder girls must either starve at home to mind the little ones, or must become drudges before they have learnt more than the mere rudiments of what they should be taught. It is then she feels that dread of degradation, which is amongst the sharpest pangs of the poverty which would fain hide itself from the world.

It may be that the children are left a parentless little flock, huddling together in the first dread and sorrow of the presence of death, and the sense of utter bereavement, and awaiting the intervention of those who are sent by the Father of the fatherless. Then, indeed, prompt and certain help is needed—help certain and permanent—and such aid can seldom be secured except by an organised in-

XUM

stitution such as those of which I have already spoken in a previous chapter.

But let us see to what that Orphan Working School, established in 1758, has developed in 1874. We have but to take a short journey to the foot of Haverstock Hill, and there, in that pleasant locality named Maitland Park, part of which is the property of the Institution, we shall see the successor of the old house in Hogsden Fields, while its plain but large and lofty committee room is the modern representative of the parlour of the George Inn, Ironmonger Lane, where plans were first laid for the maintenance of forty orphan children.

This wide and lofty building, with its handsome front entrance and its less imposing side gate in the wing, is the home for nearly three hundred boys and nearly two hundred girls, when its funds are sufficient to keep each of the long rows of neat beds in the great airy wards appropriated to a little sleeper. I mention the dormitories first, because both on the girls' and on the boys' side of the building these are illustrative of the complete orderliness and excellent management of the Institution—illustrative of what should always be the first consideration, namely, to bring comfort to the child's nature, to join to necessary discipline a sense of real freedom and happy youthful confidence without dread of repression and the constant looking for of punishment.

As to the appliances that belong to the building, they are such as might almost raise a doubt in some prejudiced minds whether we are not doing too much for children in the present day, and thinking too constantly of their comfort. But, alas! it needs many compensations to make up for the loss of parents; and in any such an Institution, where 400 children form the great family, the arrangements must be on a large scale, so that it is only a matter of experienced forethought to combine a generous liberality with the truest economy. Thus, there are baths, and long well-ordered lavatories, to each wing, even to a large plunge bath for each side; and there is a great laundry, where the girls are taught to wash, clear-starch, and iron, not in the regular patent steam-heated troughs only, but in genuine homely tubs. There is a great handsome dining-hall, with a painted ceiling, wherein the vast troop of quiet, orderly, and happy-faced children, sit down to well-cooked wholesome meals of meat and pudding. There is a great school-room, divided into class-rooms for the girls, and a noble room wherein the boys assemble to be taught, not in the narrow spirit of the first directors of the old building in the City Road, but with a full appreciation of the duty of giving these young minds and hearts full opportunity to expand. Next to the admirable evidences of *family* comfort, and bright *domestic* influences, which pervade this place, we may regard the efficient education of the children as the truest sign of its liberal and enlightened management. Not only the three R's to the extent of practised elocution, caligraphy worthy of the old minute books of the first scrivening secretaries, and the lower mathematics,—but history, geography, the elements of physical science, French, drawing, and vocal music, are among the subjects thoroughly studied. It only needs a perusal of the reports of the educational inspectors and examiners to see that the work of this great hive goes on healthily. The boys have already achieved a great position in taking Government prizes for drawing at South Kensington; and the girls are celebrated for their beautiful needlework. There is but little time to walk through all the departments of this great home—the kitchens with their spacious larders, and store-rooms, and mighty cooking apparatus; the great airy playgrounds; the large and handsome room used as a chapel (for those who do not go out to evening service), and containing its convenient reading-desk, and sweet-toned organ. Let us not forget, however, that many of the things which add so vastly to the beauty and completeness of the building and its various departments, are themselves gifts from loving and appreciative supporters of the Institution.

But we are due at that Lilliput village on the brow of Hornsey Rise—that series of cottage homes, where, on each lower and upper storey, with their exquisitely clean nursery cots and cradles, and their tiny furniture, a neat nurse is to be seen like a fairy godmother, with a family of chubby babies, or a more advanced charge of infants able to run like squirrels round the covered playground or to spend the regulation hours in that great glorious school-room, where learning is turned into recreation, and lessons are made vocal, gymnastic, zoological, picturesque, or even fictional, as the time and circumstances may dictate. "The Alexandra Orphanage for Infants" has become so well-known amidst the numerous institutions which have been established for the care of the orphans and the fatherless, that one might think it would be full of eager admirers who on visiting days go to see the two or three hundred. Why are not all the cottages full, and each little toy bedstead complete with its rosy, tiny sleeper, who, from earliest infancy to the maturer age of eight years form the assembly for which Mr. Soul has set himself to provide by public appeal?

These, then, are the two institutions to which that modest little convalescent home in Harold Street, Margate, is a worthy appanage, and one which may well find support among those whose maxim it is to do with all their might what their hands find wants doing.

MAY FLOWER, OR "SERVANT OF ALL."

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LITTLE BUTTERCUP," "NOTHING BUT A SONG," "HOW TO ENTER INTO REST," ETC.

CHAPTER VI.

"What then? for all my sins His pardoning grace,
For all my woes and wants His loving-kindness,
In darkest shades, the shining of God's face,
And Christ's own hand to lead me in my blindness."

"The end of it all is, that I know the great God loves me, and all day long I can only look straight up to His heaven, and thank Him for it."

IT was a very bright week when first all the brothers and sisters were together; there were long country rambles to be taken, long talks to be had, much both to see and to hear; but the newness once over, they dropped for the most part back into their quiet ordinary ways.

Not altogether, though, for, before ten days were gone, there were loud exclamations against holidays in general, and against Tom's and May's in particular; "Something *must* be done with those children!" was Phillis's constant remark.

"Give May lessons in the morning," suggested Stephen, "and she will enjoy her holiday the more in the afternoon."

"Not I!" said Phillis; "I assure you I have quite enough of her at her regular times; I can't be bothered with her now."

Stephen looked surprised for a moment, then answered, "Come, Phillis, we mustn't let those children get into bad ways for want of a little trouble; they have run wild for nearly a fortnight now. If you'll give May two hours every morning, I'll do the same for Tom."

Phillis laughed. "Perhaps I will by-and-by, but let me have a little more holiday first," and so the conversation ended.

It was an unfortunate day. May and Tom quarrelled all the morning—half in fun, half in earnest—and were so noisy at dinner-time, that, after being soundly rebuked by Jem, and utterly refusing to be obedient, they were turned out of the room neck and crop by Stephen.

May burst into tears, Tom into fits of laughter, first at the disaster, then at May. That Tom should turn against her was too much, especially when he had helped to cause all the trouble. She flew at him as she had not done for years, in her rage and mortification, seizing his hair in a frenzy, and screaming at the top of her voice.

"Holloa!" cried Tom, his love of fun and teasing departed, and his quick anger risen. He slipped his foot behind her's, and tripped her up, but her grasp on his hair was too tight, and they fell heavily together, to be picked up by Jem and Stephen, the two sisters standing behind in amazement.

Tom's punishment was quick and summary.

"For shame," cried Jem, "to fight with a girl!" as he dismissed him howling to his own room.

May was desired by Phillis to dispose of herself in the study.

"I shan't, you nasty, horrid, cross thing! I hate you, Phillis; you are as angry as you can be, and pretend you're not!"

"Be silent, May!" thundered Stephen. "Go to the study this moment!" and, for once frightened, she obeyed without any more words.

There, half an hour later, when he went in, Stephen found her in an agony of sobs and tears, curled in one corner of the sofa, with her face hidden.

The passion was all gone; only the remembrance of her great naughtiness was left—the remembrance of all her hopes after a better life; the fear and trouble that it was all in vain.

He left her alone for an hour or more; but there was something appealing in the sobs that still came, and the quiet that followed.

"May," said he.

"Yes," she answered.

And then he went to her.

"May, I can't think what possessed you to behave in such a way: you are worse than ever."

"Oh, Stephen, I don't mean to be, indeed I don't; only somehow I always am bad."

"I wish I could show you, May, how thoroughly in the wrong you put yourself behaving as you do. I will not speak about Tom; you know how far that was your own fault well enough, but I am more surprised than I can say at your behaviour to Phillis."

"Oh, I never shall, I never can get on with her."

"You utterly make a mistake, May. There is never a trifle brought up but you quarrel about it; and I can't see how there is to be any peace in the house. Whatever the occasion, you certainly put yourself in the wrong. You must remember that she is entitled to respect from you, at any rate in speech and conduct. The way you speak of and to her would make any one think she was a perfect shrew. I don't believe you mean it for a moment, but then, you have no business to act as you do. Talk about giving her respect, why, May, you have much more than that to give her. Even if she were as loveless as you seem to think, still, Christian love, is it allowed to exclude any?"

"Oh, Stephen, I didn't mean all that!"

"Why," he went on, in a sort of wonderment, "not care for old Phillis! I never heard of such a thing! You cared for her when she sat up with you night after night last year, and nursed you through the fever, and when she mends all your clothes, and excuses your wild ways to us boys, and looks after

you, and saves up that you may go nicely dressed and cared for to see Rosamond, and——"

"Oh, I am so sorry—I am so sorry! Please, Stephen, don't go on. I care for her with all my heart; only I *don't* know what makes me so naughty to her!"

"It's the same with us all, May; it's the little midge-bites that we can't bear. If anything big comes for us to bear for or from those we love, we lift it manfully; but it's these trifles that upset us. If we could only treat them with the slight notice they deserve, and reserve our *forces* for what is worth striving for, how different we should all be!"

"I wish I did."

"We shall never do it, May, until we leave off depending on ourselves."

"How do you mean?"

"Just this, we need to give ourselves up to Christ."

"Have you done so, Stephen?"

"I hope so. Yes, I have."

"Will you tell me how you did it?" she asked, as she crept a bit nearer, and did not miss a welcome.

"Why, it is just like this, May: God has promised us salvation, and those who have once heard His voice will never rest till they hear it always. And His salvation is this—first, that we come to Him and receive it, that is, receive the forgiveness of our sins through faith in the blood of Jesus. It is the beginning of all. Just to trust His love that has loved us so much, and to believe that He *has* cast away our sins from before His face."

"I know that; but what next?"

"Then that we surrender ourselves entirely to Him, to be governed by Him; that we give all into His hands—our pleasures, studies, hopes, fears—*all*, and *leave them* with Him; and at the same time that we receive *all* from Him."

"I don't understand that part of it."

"Receiving from Him? I think it's like this—we are accustomed to depend on ourselves, but we must give that up. We have a little love, a little patience, a little desire, a little kindness, and we want to go and trade with these, and make them more. Now, I fancy, that, instead, we ought just to recognise that there is nothing good or worth anything in us, that we must turn away as much from the good in us as from the bad in us, and depend solely on Christ. '*He* is made unto us wisdom, and sanctification, and redemption,' it says. Then let us never expect anything from ourselves; but all, and everything *from Christ, in us*, and the rest will come."

"But we must *see* if we are getting on?"

"Don't you remember how it says, in the parable of the seeds and tares, that the man went day and night to see his field, and the seed sprang up, *he knew not how?* You are always wanting to be at your seed, seeing how it is getting on; just leave it alone, and be busy only with Christ Jesus, and He will take care of the rest."

"Oh, Stephen, I wish I could do that!"

"So you can, child. Just take and use Christ Himself; don't fret and worry about what you have or have not; be busy with *Him*, all that *He* is, and the rest will come."

"I hope it will."

"I am sure it will. God is too mighty, and too tender ever to leave a soul that longs for Him unsatisfied. He has a place for you in his heart. I am sure you are *there* already, and now, live on Christ Jesus, and live for Him."

"It seems so little that I can do."

"Do it very cheerfully, and very well, then. Have you ever heard what Herbert said?—

> 'Lord, place me in Thy concert;
> Give *one* strain to my poor reed.'

And however broken or bruised you may think your reed, He will neither break nor bruise it, but will train it to harmony; and if, child, you may touch but one chord, but one note on God's great organ, don't ever descend for a moment to pipe a quarrelsome tune on a Jew's-harp. Now I must send you away."

"Oh, Stephen, do tell me have you known all this long!"

"No, not long; but I have found at last that Christ has known me all my life."

(To be continued.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

19. Where do we read of the people *for the first time* debating whether Jesus was their expected Messiah?

20. State the reason why sentence of death was passed upon Adonijah by his brother King Solomon.

21. After the Lord Jesus had fed the five thousand we are told that He "constrained His disciples to get into a ship." What may have been the reason for this?

22. The *second* prophecy of the Messiah was made to Abraham, and repeated to Isaac and to Jacob. Give chapter and verse.

23. State when for the *third time* a voice from heaven spoke to the Lord Jesus Christ.

24. What is the *first* notice we have of Silas? Who accompanied St. Paul after he separated from Barnabas?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 32.

9. See Matt. xvi. 23.

10. Four (Lev. xix. 23—25).

11. Isa. xv. 2.

12. Luke xviii. 12.

13. 1, see Gen. xii. 3; 2, Gen. xvii. 8; 3, Gen. xvii. 16.

14. St. John (vi. 12).



(*Drawn by* W. R. Buckman.)

THE OLD OAK.

O GREY-KNOTTED oak, with ribbèd trunk,
That, hollowed by time, art now a shell,
Where we in our early days have sunk,
Up-crouching within thy wooden cell;

As there for a while we lingered dry
From storm-driven rain that scudded by.

How gay is the path along thy ledge
When daisies besprinkle all the ground,

And thorns are in bloom along the hedge,
Where lately the woodpecker has found
A bower within her doorway, high
In thee, as the rook is sweeping by.

At night, on the moon-shown path below
Thy head, only men-folk take their way,
Where women, by choice, would only show
Their comelier shapes while shines the day,
And not when thy broken moon-shades lie
Where swiftly the meal-white owl sweeps by.

When flakes of grey moss that thou hast shed
In storms, are all dried by summer heat,
And foot-weary men beneath thy head
Would willingly sit to rest their feet;
Then happy, the while the sun is high,
Is he who beholds my love come by.

EDWARD TURNER, CARPENTER AND BUILDER.

BY AGNES MACDONELL, AUTHOR OF "MARTIN'S VINEYARD."

CHAPTER III.

A HOME IN THE COURT.

"Along the city's street she led the way,
As fair as country maid 'mid mounds of hay."

AND thinking of this made me look at those standing near me. We were close to the benches over which hung a banner with "St. Mary's School, Lambeth," upon it. The children must have walked a good way, and many of them looked tired and pale. I knew they could not get bite or sup till three o'clock. It must have been more of a treat to those who came to see them, and went away in their carriages to dinner, than for those poor little things, I fancy. I was thinking over this while the bishop was preaching; we could see him raise his arm every now and then, but we were too far off to catch a word where we stood. Several of the children near me had gone to sleep, with their little heads laid on their companions' shoulders. All of a sudden there was a movement among the upper row of boys—a little chap had fallen forward, and was being held from the floor by two other boys. One of the policemen who was stationed below came up, and took hold of the child, and begun to haul him by the shoulders down the narrow passage between the lines of seats.

I saw the little chap had fainted. At the same instant, a girl on the opposite side started up, and, after talking a moment or so to a teacher, began to push her way very quietly and quickly down towards us, just at the moment when the boy was brought to the barrier where we stood. I took the boy in my arms, and said to the policeman, "I'll see him to a place behind the scaffolding, and get him a sup of water."

"He'd better be took home," says he, in a whisper. "He lives somewhere in Blackfriars, they say. They're only in the road when they get this way. The young woman belongs to him; she'll take charge of him."

The girl had to cross a space of the reserved seats to reach the place where we stood. I judged by her face she was sister to the boy. I felt a pity for her; for though she was not much more than a child, she was, I saw, old enough to shrink and flush under the stare of all those people.

"What a pretty girl!" said a lady; and a young man put up his eye-glass to look at her. They were not within hearing of the sermon, and so thought, I suppose, they could treat the whole thing as a show, and make what remarks they liked. The girl glanced round a little flurried, but still with a clear brave look in her eyes. They somehow settled on me. Perhaps she read in my face the honest pity I felt for her in my heart at the moment. She spoke to me, as if in answer to my thoughts, and looked up into my face.

"Please take him to the door; he is my brother. The fresh air will bring him round."

I carried him to one of the side doors, and, as there was no other seat, laid him at the foot of one of the great pillars, with his head against my knee. Then she knelt down on the stones, and took his head on her lap, and loosened the stiff collar of his coat; and I ran for a glass of water. When I came back, I found the boy with his eyes open, but looking still very sickly and pale. He drank some of the water, and his sister looked up, and said, "He is getting better. The noise in the church frightened him, and turned him faint. They have given me leave to take him home for the day; he is a boarder at St. Mary's, but I am only a day-scholar, and I live with my aunt in Berner's Street, Blackfriars. Can you walk, Tom?" she says; "it's not far, you know, dear," then she whispered, with a little laugh, to please him—"won't we have a nice holiday together, and you shall have a bun for tea; see if you don't!"

But though he smiled, he seemed weak and tired still, and not ready to walk; and I took him up in my arms, and told her to lead the way, and that I would carry him home. So we went across the flags of the churchyard, and through the crowd of carriages, and along some narrow streets; the girl leading the way. I see her still, as she tripped along, with her white cap and apron, her smiling face turned over her shoulder to give him a kind look from time to time, and looking, I thought, as strange, with her quaint dress, in those London streets, as any bright country flower that had sprung up on the dusty pavement.

She stopped before a dingy-looking house, and opened a door that was only latched, and went in.

"Here's the place, sir," she said; "it 's up-stairs, please—we live on the third storey."

I followed her up the narrow staircase, to a room at the top of the house.

The roof slanted towards one side, and the sunshine came in through the two small windows that looked out on to the chimneys and roofs of other houses.

The room was very neat and clean, though poor-looking. The girl took the child from me, and laid him on the bed; the moment she touched him his arms were about her neck, and I saw he felt more comfortable and at home with her than he had done with me.

"Aunt is out at work just now," she said to me. "Won't she be surprised to find a new bird in the nest!" she said to the boy. "See, I'll get you a cup of tea, Tom, and you'll soon feel better; I'll have it ready in a minute." But he began to cry, and held to her in a weak way, and would not let her leave him.

"If you will tell me where the things are," I said, "and you'll trust me, I'll make the tea while you stay by him. I've often had to make my own tea," I said, "and I know well enough how to do it."

So she sat, and told me where the tea-things were, and where I should find the bread, and the knife to cut it; and, somehow, we got quite friendly over the work; and she chatted away now merrily, partly to cheer the boy, and partly with a sort of knowledge that comes early to some girls, that teaches them what other people feel, and made her wish to set me at my ease, and let me feel at home.

I must have been there over half an hour, I think, before I thought of going; and when the time came for me to go, I could not but stand a moment to watch the two—she dipping the bread into the tea, and feeding him so kindly and carefully, with her arms about him, and his head upon her breast.

I held my hand to say, "Good-bye." "I'll look in to-morrow as I pass, and see how he goes on," I said. "My name is Edward Turner; I'm a carpenter by trade. I'll make you a box," I said to the little fellow, "and bring it you one of these days; see if I don't!"

"You have been so kind to us," the girl said, with a quick bright smile, "and Tom and I are only strangers to you. My name is Barbara—Barbara Milton—we are orphans, and we live with our aunt. Tom 's not strong—never has been since he was a baby—and I was frightened very much when he fainted. It was very kind of you to bring him home!"

CHAPTER IV.

THE ORPHANS.

"Oh, shifting heart, that varies with the wind,
Stand still a moment, knowing duty now,
While I may fetter this inconstant mind,
And have my purpose bonded with a vow."

It has often puzzled me since, to find the reason of the thought that came into my mind at that moment so sudden and strong. It has always been my disposition, since I was a boy, to think a great deal about a thing before I resolved how to act about it, though, when I have considered a thing over, I usually see it all clear, and resolve, without wavering, what I shall do, and when I have once made up my mind, my judgment is not shaken.

Perhaps it was that Barbara's words about their being orphans at that moment came when my heart was softened with the sight of all those children in the church, and only sealed the feeling of pity I had had in thinking of all their helplessness and innocence. But in the moment that I stood with Barbara Milton's hand in mine, I made up my mind, like a vow to God, that I would stand between those children and the world while I drew breath. I felt it, as I say, like a vow to God, and yet I knew no reason for it; and, as I went up the street again, back to the workshop, I wondered why I had taken such a fancy to the two children, and whether I should ever see them again.

I did see them again, though I did not go there often. The few times I went to the Miltons' made me feel very friendly, almost as if I had known them all my life. Barbara's aunt made me welcome, when she found I was a quiet steady-going fellow. Sometimes I dropped in of an evening as I went home from my work, to say "How do you do?" or to leave a toy for the boy, or some such errand. I somehow never forgot the vow I made when I first saw the two children—it lay strong and sound in my heart, and grew deeper till it came to be part of my life, I think.

At the end of two years Charlie Brereton went back to Birchfield to take partnership with his uncle in the shop, but I still stayed on at Smith and Horrock's, and took the place of foreman in the first room. I had never told Charlie about my acquaintance with the Miltons. The fact was, that since he had come to London he had made many friends, and went mostly with them; and when we were together—as sometimes happened—he talked of his own affairs, and I did not say much about mine. Indeed, I think I had a sort of shrinking from telling him about Barbara, perhaps from a fear of what might come if they met—of that which did come afterwards, and which gave me the bitterest thoughts of my life.

I had uneasy thoughts sometimes, too, about his going to Birchfield, wondering how he would behave himself towards Ann; and I felt relieved when I found the letters from Robert said little about it; and then I went down to Birchfield now and again for Sunday. I heard little of his being at the cottage. He was still very friendly with Robert, and was very kind and civil to my mother and Ann. Whatever faults he might have, Charlie Brereton was not proud nor so set up with being his uncle's partner as to make him ashamed of his old friends; it was only that his London experience had filled his mind, and his thoughts were always running on new fancies.

Barbara had left school now for more than a year, and supported herself by needlework; but the boy was still in the Lambeth school. She had grown tall and womanly, but her health suffered from the confinement and late hours she kept over her sewing. I used to think of this a good deal at that time, when I fancied her cheeks looked paler than they should. I used to meet her sometimes on her way to the shop in St. Paul's Churchyard for which she worked, and sometimes, but not very often, I walked a bit of the way with her.

She had put off her white cap and tippet now, and you could see her brown hair knotted up behind; but she still wore plain dark clothes, and always looked as neat and pretty as any lady. I think she always thought of me as if I had been her uncle, or a near relation much older than herself. Sometimes, when I went there of an evening, and sat a while with her and her aunt, she threw off all shyness, and laughed, and talked, and told us about the girls in the shop, or sprang up, and, spreading out her brown dress, minced about the room, imitating the fine lady that was set over the girls in the work-room, and who was hard-hearted, for all her fine airs and soft voice.

The colour used to come to Barbara's cheeks then, and she looked as fresh as a rose. I thought a great deal about her all that time: she seemed the very joy of my life, even then. Spite of the hard work, she was growing up as pure and fresh as a flower in all the dust and smoke of London. But it often troubled me to think of her being so much with the kind of people she was thrown with at the shop where she worked; and for many months I was turning over in my mind schemes for getting her some different kind of employment. She had been taught well at St. Mary's School, and her mind had a natural quickness of its own. She did everything she turned her hand to well and easily. I used to like to watch her at her sewing, to see how she cut and smoothed her work, and how, when she had done, she gathered up the ends, and tidied all about her, leaving every place the fresher and the neater for her having been there.

One evening, about this time, as I came home from work, I took up a newspaper, and read an advertisement about a class of young women who were to be trained as telegraphers. The girls had to spend a year in the office, until they had learned the art, and were then to be promoted to small stations, or to places as under-clerks at a terminus, and receive wages. "A lady," the advertisement said, "was at the head of this office, whose chief interest was to supply new lines of industry to the better educated class of young women seeking employment in London, and who were for the most part forced, through necessity, into the already over-crowded ranks of needlewomen."

I thought this all over for a day or so, but I was very much puzzled to know what to do. I knew that Barbara's present employment was bad; the hours were long, and the wages poor, and the company of some of the other work-girls far from good; but then I knew nothing about the telegraphing work, nor anybody who could tell me about it. Still, the words of the advertisement were always running in my head, when I was at my work even, and there was something about the wording of it that made me feel respect and liking for the person that wrote it.

(*To be continued.*)

THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF THE LORD JESUS.

BY THE REV. T. M. MORRIS, IPSWICH.

I.—THE WORD OF INTERCESSION.

"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."—LUKE xxiii. 34.

WE visit Calvary—the place around which the most sacred and sublime associations gather—the place of all places which we love in memory and imagination to frequent, sanctified, as it is for ever, by the event which transpired there more than eighteen centuries ago. We visit Calvary now, not merely that we may gaze upon the uplifted cross, and behold the Divine Sufferer, but that we may listen to *the last words of Jesus*, the dying utterances of our Divine Redeemer, which we may regard as among the most significant words of Him who spake as man never spake. And surely, if the last words which have been whispered into our ears by earthly friends in the moment of death are shrined in our heart's inmost sanctuary, and held as a possession ever dear; these last words of Christ, uttered from the cross, and in the midst of inexpressible agonies endured on our account—words full of tenderness and love—surely these will be treasured as inexpressibly and everlastingly precious by us all! The longer and more devoutly we ponder these final utterances of Christ, the more does His wonderful character unfold itself to our view; the more beauty do we discern to admire; the more majesty to reverence; and the more of that deep and exhaustless love wherewith our weary souls may refresh themselves.

We have on the pages of the world's history the record of many remarkable deaths: of men who

were martyrs to some great truth, some high and noble principle, but we have no death like this. By such men in their dying moments have been uttered many memorable words, but no words like these last words of Jesus. We need not wonder that from a Roman soldier, who witnessed this scene, and listened to these words, there was extorted the confession, "Certainly this was a righteous man;" or that an infidel should have made the singular acknowledgment, "If Socrates lived and died like a philosopher, Christ lived and died like a God."

What words could more remarkably and beautifully express Christ's character than these words of merciful and High-priestly intercession, which He offered up for His murderers when first extended on the cross, or, more probably, while they were actually affixing Him to it? There He is, not only tied but nailed to the cross; lifted up a spectacle for men to mock at; the subject of bodily torture the most extreme; the object of indignity and reviling the most brutal; and His first words are not words spoken in defence of Himself or accusation of others, not words of defiance or imprecation, but He fulfils the ancient prophecy—*He makes intercession for the transgressors.* He carries out His own injunction—praying for them who were despitefully using and persecuting Him. He offers up this prayer for his murderers:—"*Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*"

As we listen to these words, our attention is arrested by *the petition presented,* and not less by *the plea by which it was sustained.*

I.

The petition presented. "*Then*"—probably while they were actually fastening Him to the cross, or lifting Him up on it—"*then,*" when His sense of the indignity offered to Him must have been most keen, and His physical agony most intense, He said, "*Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*"

A remarkable, indeed a quite unexampled prayer this, in whatever light it is regarded.

Think who were the objects of this prayer, who were interested in it! They were men who were engaged in the commission of a crime of unparalleled atrocity, who were crucifying the Son of God, the Lord of Glory, and putting Him to an open shame. A crime which, in its hideousness and atrocity, seems marked off from all others, towering darkly above them all—the world's everlasting reproach. Everything seems to conspire to aggravate and intensify this, the crowning sin of humanity; and, as now, after the lapse of ages, we read the terrible record, we wonder not that the earth should have trembled in sympathy with the Divine Sufferer, or that the heavens should have been arrayed as with sackcloth.

Think WHO was the object of this virulent animosity! The victim who suffers from all this rancour, malignity, pitiless persecution, is One of unblemished reputation, of pure and spotless life, of boundless benevolence, One who has come forth upon an errand of love and mercy. Yes, the one instance of moral perfection ever presented to the world is the one around whom, on Calvary, eighteen centuries since, there surged and roared that terrible sea of passion and sin. And it was the very moral superiority of Christ, the very purity of His principles, which awakened the animosity which there so fatally expressed itself. Had He been of the world—of kindred spirit and aim—the world would have recognised and loved its own. But because He was not of the world, but altogether nobler, truer, purer, and because that character, so noble and pure, was a standing rebuke of the world's sin, therefore the world hated Him. It has been well said, "The crucifixion of Christ was the realisation of that dark anticipation of heathenism which Plato had already expressed, where he makes Glaucus say to Socrates, that a perfectly righteous man, if he were to appear upon the earth, would certainly be loaded with chains, scourged, tortured, and, after having borne all this, crucified."

And the murderers of Christ—those for whom this prayer was offered—put no limit upon the expression of their hatred; there was no mercy mingling with their malignity; they exhausted their ingenuity in devising means of increasing suffering and deepening degradation. And yet for these men does Christ pray—not that swift and fiery vengeance might visit and consume them; not that the earth might yawn and swallow them; not that they might bear upon their brow the brand of eternal infamy, or carry about in their souls the abiding remembrance of this deed, which should be within them as the burning of an inextinguishable fire, or the gnawing of an undying worm. No! But wonder, O heavens, and be ye astonished, O earth! His prayer is—"*Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*"

As we listen to this prayer we should try and realise what is involved in this one word, *forgiveness;* the prayer is, not merely that these men, so depraved, so prejudiced, so cruel, so resolutely set on imbruing their hands in innocent blood, should not be visited with the punishment which by their sins they were invoking—that alone would have been a great boon. But Christ prays that they may be restored to a state of purity and blessedness; that they who were engaged in putting Him to death might enjoy that pardon which could only reach men through the cross; that they might, being justified by His blood, and sanctified by His spirit, sit down with Him in that kingdom the way to which He Himself was. How

can we measure the love which thus leads Christ to pray that the very men who were putting Him to a cruel and ignominious death may share all the privileges of an endless life?

What light does this prayer shed upon Christ's invariable character and purpose as the Redeemer of men!—a character and purpose of love, the expression of which cannot be hindered by any stress of outward circumstances. Hostile rejection of offered service, and malignant aspersion of character, have turned many patriots and philanthropists from the path of benevolence, and led them to retire in cynical seclusion from the world. But nothing of this kind have we in Christ, as these words of merciful intercession, uttered in the most trying circumstances, attest. Christ's character, Christ's purposes cannot alter; and it is a blessed thing for us that it is so. He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

And this prayer must not be viewed as a special, an isolated expression of Christ's love. It is in perfect harmony with the whole life of Christ. It was that men might be forgiven that Christ came into our world. This was the master-passion of His soul; on accomplishing the Divine purpose of saving man His heart was set, and He was straitened till this was accomplished. By no ingratitude, by no misrepresentation, by no persecution, can He be turned aside from His work; He can hear unmoved, save by pity, that shout, drowning every other shout, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" and extended there upon the cross, in agony which may not be described, He can utter these words of merciful intercession, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." The very malignity of men of which He is the object, the very cruelty from which He suffers, so far from turning Him aside from the work in which He had engaged, presented themselves to Him but as symptoms of that dire disease for which He was providing the remedy. Man was never more clearly seen to need a Divine Saviour than at the very time that Saviour was suffering for man's sin. There, side by side, we see the disease in all its raging and terrible malignity, and there the Divine remedy which is to work a lasting and complete cure. And shall we wonder that Christ, on the cross, prayed for the accomplishment of that which He died to render possible! The more fully we realise the significance of this prayer, the more clearly do we see how perfectly it consists with the great purpose of Christ's life, and the great desire of His heart.

When viewed in connection with the circumstances of the case, it must occur to us as singularly appropriate that such a prayer should be offered at such a time. In Christ we see not only the atoning Lamb, the all-sufficient Sacrifice, but we see One who was at once priest and victim; and so, while offering the blood of atonement, He intercedes as the great and prevalent High Priest—as though, in thus seeking the salvation and forgiveness of the greatest sinners, He would convince the world of the fact that His blood can "cleanse from all sin."

The primary reference of these words was to those who were more or less directly implicated in the death of Christ, and all those who by word or deed were adding to His sufferings; and it is pleasant to think that many of those for whom Christ prayed, did experience the blessing of forgiveness not long after. The prayer of the prevailing Intercessor was answered. Almost while He was yet speaking He was heard. One transgressor on a neighbouring cross, who had scarcely ceased from reviling Him, is led to cry for mercy, and is at once snatched as a brand from the burning. There was a Roman soldier so impressed by what he saw and heard, that he cried out, "Truly this was the Son of God!" In the minds of the people at large there seems to have been some strange revulsion of feeling, for we read that "all the people who came together smote upon their breasts and returned." And we know that within a few weeks from the period of the crucifixion more than eight thousand were converted to the faith of the Crucified One. But while this prayer had primary reference to those who were then congregated around the cross, we fail to apprehend its complete significance till we regard it as really covering the case of all who need forgiveness.

In offering this prayer, we see Christ teaching us the practical lesson of *Christian forgiveness*. Christ always teaches by example. He lived the religion which He preached. He never bade His followers do what He was unwilling or unprepared to do Himself. He goes before us in all things, leaving us an example that we should follow in His steps. The duty of forgiving our enemies, of doing good to and praying for those who despitefully use us and persecute us, is one of the distinguishing precepts of Christianity—a duty of which men never dreamed before Christ's advent, one which is perhaps the hardest of all practical duties to discharge—a duty the obligation of which men are still very unwilling to admit. Here, then, we have this distinctively Christian duty practically enforced—this principle thoroughly carried out. The precept of Christ is, "Pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you;" and here, while hanging on the cross, or even while, in the midst of a mocking multitude, He was being attached to it, we hear the Saviour lifting up His voice in prayer for His enemies, and saying, "*Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*"

It was a new thing to hear love to enemies

enjoined as a duty, and forgiveness of injury insisted on as an essential condition of Christian life. Yes, it is one of the triumphs of the cross, that mercy, however slowly, is really supplanting vindictive revenge. You may search through the entire treasury of Pagan literature, but you will find nothing which will compare with these words of our greatest poet, whose lamp, in this instance at least, was kindled at the sacred fire:—

"The quality of mercy is not strain'd;
It droppeth, as the gentle rain from heaven,
Upon the place beneath; it is twice bless'd,—
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes;
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway—
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings;
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's,
When mercy seasons justice."

This is just one of many passages in our literature which could not have been written or conceived had Christ not lived and died. Let it ever be remembered by us that it is at the cross of Christ, which affords the surest ground of our hope, that we shall be forgiven; that we have urged upon us, in the most impressive and emphatic way, the duty of *forgiveness*—of even loving our enemies, and praying for them who despitefully use us and persecute us.

II.

But we must consider not only the petition which was presented, but also the prayer by which it was sustained—"Father, forgive them; *for they know not what they do.*" The prevailing efficacy of this prayer is to be attributed to the circumstance that it was offered by Christ who had condescended to the death of the cross. It is as though he said—"I have died for them; I am now in painfulness and agony dying for them. Father, forgive them for whom I die; lay not even this sin to their charge; I die that they may be saved—that thou mightest be just and yet the justifier of all who believe in Me."

But this appeal was associated with a plea of extenuation urged in behalf of those for whom the prayer was offered, "*They know not what they do.*'

Some have attempted to explain these words by limiting their reference to the Roman soldiers, who, not knowing what they did, rendered a merely blind and mechanical obedience to military authority. The words cannot fairly be made to refer exclusively to them; and to whomsoever they may refer, they cannot be regarded as more than slightly excusing the sin which they were committing. It is not easy to determine how far those who were associated in securing Christ's death could plead ignorance. The Roman soldiers were probably most ignorant, and therefore—save as they indulged in unnecessary cruelty—most innocent. But all classes of the Jews were occupying an essentially different and worse position. Their presence at the cross was voluntary, and they themselves had brought about the consummation which they came forth to witness. Though they may not have been, and actually were not, satisfied that Jesus was the Messiah, the Lord of Glory, for had they known that, we are told, they would not have crucified Him, yet they must have known and felt that He was unjustly condemned. And knowing that the charge against Him was false and malicious, and regarding Him only as an innocent man, it is impossible too strongly to reprobate the conduct of those who were present at the cross, and who, by their presence, assisted at the crucifixion. Still, however, it remains true that they knew not that in crucifying Jesus they were crucifying the Christ of God.

"*They know not what they do.*" These words seem to shadow forth a dark possibility—though it is not affirmed, the idea cannot but occur to us—that had they known all that was involved in the crime which they were perpetrating—all about the real character of Him against whom their malignity was directed, forgiveness might have been impossible, a thing not be to be asked for. But as they knew not this—as this evil work was wrought in ignorance and unbelief—the Intercessor feels that theirs is a sin which may be prayed for, and His word is, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do: however guilty, at least they know not this, that they are crucifying Thy Son."

These words have a permanent significance; they are not to be ranked with the utterances of the illustrious dead, but regarded as the abiding words of the ever-living Saviour. Still, if we will but listen for His voice, we may hear the great Intercessor pleading, not only for His friends, but also for His enemies. He, when His bodily presence was withdrawn from this world, did not intermit His mediatorial work, He merely passed from the outer court, where the sacrifice is wont to be offered, and where He had offered sacrifice once for all, to the temple's inmost shrine, the holiest of holies, where, on the ground of that once-offered sacrifice, and arrayed in the robes of a once humiliated but now glorified human nature, He ever liveth to make intercession both for saints and sinners. Yes, from that glorious height, as once from Calvary's cross, does the Divine Saviour look down, with sad and pitiful eyes and yearning heart, upon those who, in innumerable ways, are still sinning against Him, crucifying Him afresh, putting Him to an open shame; and in their behalf does He pour forth the words of merciful intercession—"*Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*"

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER IX.

WHEN the corn had been cut and housed, the school-children received a fortnight's holiday that they might help their mothers to lease or glean the farmers' fields. Eda had long resolved to avail herself of this opportunity for paying Mark an unexpected visit, but Mr. Texley went to the seaside without remembering that her salary was in arrears, and she was forced to postpone her trip, and put up with the disappointment as patiently as she could.

However, she enjoyed the season of rest, and on more than one deliciously soft lazy day, carried her book and her work to a favourite spot on the bank of the river, about a mile from the gardener's cottage. There was no fear of being intruded upon, for though the path on this side the stream was a public one, it was too far from the village to be much used; and very few feet besides Eda's had trodden it that summer. The noble domain of the Earl of Chessington sloped down to the river on the opposite side, and she never wearied of admiring the fine clumps of trees that dotted the green sward, and were now putting on their autumn tints of orange and crimson. The deer would sometimes come to drink of the cool waters, or gambol beside them, unconscious that any one was near, for Eda had found herself a seat on the roots of an old willow that overhung the stream, where she was hidden from every eye by the long pendent boughs, and, what was of more consequence, nicely sheltered from the sun.

A bend of the stream concealed the ruined mill of which the artist who travelled with her from London had spoken, but the rush of the waters over the mill-dam was a pleasant sound on the still September air; and her book was often laid down, that she might listen, and indulge in the train of thought her pleasant solitude evoked.

Sitting there one afternoon, she saw a female figure come lightly dancing down the green slope on the opposite side of the river—a sight so unusual that Eda put aside the leaves of her bower, and leaned forward to get a better view of the stranger. A young girl with an arch, laughing face, not positively pretty, but full of mirth and *espiéglerie*, was in pursuit of a favourite dog, that had escaped from the silken leash in which she had held it; and as she bounded along the sward, the unseen observer of her graceful movements recognised in her the Earl's only daughter and heiress, the Honourable Eudora Chesney.

Eda had frequently seen this young lady at church, and sometimes been favoured with a smiling glance from her bright eyes, as she passed down the aisle, trying to accommodate her quick steps to the more sober pace of her mother, a pleasant but stately matron, to whom she did not bear the smallest resemblance. She was more like the Earl, to whom she was passionately attached. And more than once Eda had seen the father and daughter cantering through the village, or dashing across the common beyond, at full gallop, Lady Eudora leaping the ditches and hedges that came in the way so fearlessly, that she was divided betwixt admiration of her beauty and courage, and some distaste of what she considered an unfeminine proceeding.

Singing as she went, the young lady chased her canine favourite till it grew tired of the sport, and came fawning and leaping about her feet. Then she threw herself down on the grass to play with the little creature; and as she tossed off the Dolly Varden hat that had shaded her forehead, and displayed the rich clusters of her fair hair, that she wore simply tied back with a ribbon, Eda recognised the original of the sketch the artist told her he had been at so much pains to procure.

Feeling that it was scarcely right to watch the young lady any longer, Eda picked up her work, and tried to busy herself with it; but she could not resist an occasional peep at the spot, somewhat higher up the stream, where Lady Eudora was now amusing herself by flinging a stick into the water, and inciting her pet to swim out and fetch it. The dog required a great deal of coaxing and urging before he would do this, but his mistress was positive, and sent him in again and again, laughing like a gleeful child when her muslin dress was plentifully besprinkled with the drops he shook from his curly coat.

Then Eda bent her head over her work, and stitched on busily, till disturbed by a cry of distress, when, looking up, she saw the dog in the middle of the stream, yelping piteously, and making feeble efforts to regain the bank.

In great distress at her favourite's plight, Lady Eudora flew to the nearest tree, and broke off a long branch, with which she walked right into the water, extending it to the poor little creature, and encouraging him to cling to it. But every moment the current bore him further from her, and in leaning forward to urge him to fresh efforts she contrived to overbalance herself, and to Eda's horror sank beneath the water.

She rose instantly, and had sufficient presence of mind to throw back her head and put in practice a few faint recollections of a swimming lesson or two received at one of the watering-places; but the weight of her clothes impeded her, and the face that Eda had seen a few minutes earlier blooming with



(*Drawn by* F. BARNARD.)

"Inciting her pet to run out and fetch it."—*p.* 72.

health and hope, was now so white and despairing, that it was terrible to behold.

With the exception of that one cry of distress, wrung from her by the danger of the dog, she had not uttered a shriek. Perhaps she knew that it would be useless, for what help was within reach of her voice? Her father's splendid mansion was nearly a mile away from the river, the village was more than twice the distance, and not a labourer nor gardener was at work on this part of the estate.

Eda started to her feet as soon as she saw what had happened, and her first impulse was to fly towards Jones's cottage, where alone there was the smallest chance of obtaining assistance; but she had not gone half a dozen steps ere she remembered that long before she could get there and return Lady Eudora would have been borne to the mill-dam by the resistless current.

In an agony of doubt and apprehension she wrung her hands, and ran back to the tree. The hapless young lady was now within a few feet of one of the huge limbs that lay above the water; and, not daring to stay to think what had best be done, lest the opportunity for doing should be lost, Eda climbed into the willow, and crawling as near the end of the branch as she dared, stooped down to clutch the floating hair of the sinking girl as she went by.

Lady Eudora looked up, saw the face that bent towards her own, and involuntarily raised her arms, ejaculating an eager "Save me, save me!" Then there was a rush of water in her ears—a strange eddying sound—that robbed her of her senses, and for a little while she was only conscious that friendly hands had been extended towards her, and that she had failed to grasp them.

When she did overcome the faintness that oppressed her, she found that she was still under the boughs of the willow, held there by the young girl, a glimpse of whose features had aroused within her the hope of being rescued.

"Then you have saved me!" she ejaculated, hysterically. "How good of you! how shall I thank you for it?"

But Eda did not answer, for Lady Eudora's position—and her own also—was more perilous than the young lady imagined. She had succeeded in drawing the drowning girl out of the current that was hurrying her towards the mill-pool; but in doing so she had herself slipped from the branch to which she was now clinging with one hand, whilst with the other she supported her companion in danger. When Eudora was more composed, she explained this to her, and urged her to grasp the branch and try to climb on to it, hoping to be able to do the same herself; yet, simple though the feat would have been to a practised gymnast, neither of these girls could accomplish it. The branch bent lower and lower when they attempted it, but their strained arms refused to raise them, weighed down as they were with their drenched skirts, and Eudora was the first to recognise that they could not reach dry land without assistance.

"It is no use exhausting ourselves with these efforts," she said; "we must be content to wait till some one comes along the path, or till we are missed and sought for."

"That will scarcely be before nightfall," whispered Eda, uneasily recalling the fact that Mrs. Jones had gone with her husband to make some purchases at the market town, and would not return sooner.

"No one will know where to look for me," sighed Lady Eudora. "Mamma will think I have shut myself up in my room because she lectured me, and the servants never trouble themselves about my wanderings. Oh, for the sound of a footstep, that we might not feel ourselves so utterly alone and forgotten! How long shall we retain strength enough to cling here?"

"I am afraid to ask myself that question," Eda replied; "my hands feel numbed already. If we could get near the bank, perhaps the water would be shallower, and we could wade to shore. Shall we try?"

But Lady Eudora negatived this proposal. She had been here with her father fishing too often not to know that one of the deepest pools where the trout lay was under this willow, and that their only chance of safety was in the branch.

"We must wait," she cried; "surely some one will come to our aid before long! We cannot be doomed to die such a hideous death as this! I would not care so much if we could do anything towards helping ourselves," and she gazed around impatiently.

"We can pray," said Eda; "don't let us forget that we are in God's keeping."

There was a short silence, broken by the earl's daughter wishing half aloud that her last act ere she quitted the house had not been to displease her mother.

"And papa, poor papa—always so indulgent and loving—how will they tell him he has lost me! What will he do and say when he hears that I am dead—drowned in these cold treacherous waters? He will grieve dreadfully; oh, dreadfully!"

She began sobbing with such violence, that Eda put aside her own fears to cheer and soothe her.

"We must not give up hope yet. Some of the reapers or the gleaners may come this way when they leave the corn-fields.

"It is not at all likely, for there are no cottages near here. There cannot be a lonelier spot on the river than this," Eudora answered; but still she was comforted a little by the suggestion, and presently made another. "If we were to raise our voices, and call out as loudly as we could on one highly-pitched note, we might make some one hear us; the air is so still that the sound would travel far, and might attract attention."

Eda assented, and the attempt was made; but her

voice was low and hoarse with fatigue and terror; and Eudora, after one or two efforts, broke into another fit of weeping. "It is of no use; no one hears us; no one will come; and we might as well let go and drop into the stream at first as at last. It must be the end; it must; I am certain of it!"

"Hush," said Eda, "you are talking foolishly. Is not your life precious to others? for their sakes be patient and hopeful. We are not alone, nor forgotten," and her own lips moved in silent but earnest supplication; for, friendless orphan though she was, existence was almost as sweet to her as it was to the impatient heiress, who rebelled against the agony of suspense they were both enduring.

"But I cannot pray—I cannot think of what I ought to do or say;" gasped Lady Eudora, "I can think only of papa and how dreadful it is that he should be so near, and yet not know how badly I want him. Why did you stop me when I was being hurried away by the current? If you had left me alone it would have been all over by this time. Oh, papa, papa, help me, help me!"

But the shrill passionate wail elicited no reply. The Earl and Countess of Chessington were leisurely driving home at that moment from a visit to a neighbour, chatting pleasantly about the weather and the crops, and little dreaming that their only child was in such peril.

Again Eda would have spoken comfort to her companion, but she felt physically incapable. The water, always cold in this pool, where the sun never came, was gradually depriving her of all sensation. An icy chill crept higher and higher, till her lips were blue, her face white and pinched, and she began to lose all sense both of fear and pain, though her stiffened fingers mechanically retained their hold on the willow.

"Hark!" cried Eudora, whose cries had ceased at last, "What's that?"

Even Eda roused herself a little to listen. It was some one whistling a popular air, and the sound came from the direction of the park, growing fainter and fainter, however, with every moment, as if the person who whistled was walking rapidly from instead of towards the river.

"It is Mr. Allonby, and he has been sketching at the mill!" the young lady exclaimed. "Oh, to be able to make him hear us!"

She shrieked again and again, in the hope of attracting attention; then, with a burst of her former impatience, declared that it was useless—useless. "He is too far away; or if my voice has reached his ears," she went on, "he would only fancy that it was some child screaming to its companions. There is no hope—no hope!"

But even as she moaned these words some one was heard demanding, "Who called?" and a young man emerged from the shadow, of the trees and walked rapidly towards the river.

CHAPTER X.

ALWAYS impetuous—whether in her joys or sorrows—Lady Eudora Chesney passed instantly from the blankest despair to the most rapturous delight. Calling the new-comer Mr. Allonby, she entreated him to hasten to her assistance, yet in the same breath forbade him to attempt to swim the river, lest he too should get into danger. There was a bridge, she reminded him, about half a mile higher up: yet as soon as she had told him this her more selfish fears predominated, and in the most pitiful accents she prayed him not to go away, lest she should be forced to relinquish her hold before he could return.

While she was vehemently pouring forth these contradictory directions, Mr. Allonby had thrown off his coat and vest; but while stooping to take off his boots, he perceived that her ladyship was not alone, and also that her companion appeared to be the most in need of immediate assistance.

"Keep quiet, and hold on firmly," he shouted to her; "there is a skiff in the boat-house just above, I will bring it to you as quickly as I can."

Away he sped, and with the sound of his retreating footsteps Eudora's spirits again sank.

"It will take him at least a quarter of an hour to fetch the skiff," she murmured; "must I wait all that time? Oh, I cannot, I cannot! I can feel the water lapping round my knees and sucking me away. And you, my poor girl, you look as if you were dying. Ten minutes! he might be back in ten minutes, but who can wait patiently so long as that? If he does not make haste I shall lose my senses. Ah me! ah me! why did I let him go? If the skiff should not be there, or the boat-house locked, or he should let anything else delay him, what will become of us?"

In this frantic manner she continued to bewail herself, and conjure up horrors, till the steady fall of oars converted her fears once more into rejoicings. A little while, and the rower impelled the boat under the willow, and would have made Lady Eudora his first care, but her native generosity now came into play, and she insisted that Eda should be placed in safety before herself, saying, "She risked her life for mine, and she is weaker than I am."

"For which very reason," replied Mr. Allonby, in tones as decided as her own, "you will let me help you into the skiff, and then you can assist me with your friend;" and Lady Eudora yielding the point, both girls were soon extricated from their awkward and dangerous position.

Eda sank down in the bottom of the boat more dead than alive, and Mr. Allonby checked the transports of her companion by pointing to her wan features and utter exhaustion. "Your friend, Lady Eudora, must be put in to a warm bed as quickly as possible. You can row, can you not?"

"Yes; but I do not feel fit for the exertion just now," she answered, with a shiver.

"I dare say not, but it will do you good. As soon as we have crossed to the other bank, I shall leave you to pull up the stream as far as the boat-house, while I run to the house for blankets and an arm-chair. Who is this young lady? Her face is familiar to me."

"I do not know anything about her, except that she is the bravest girl in the world, and saved me from being swept into the mill-pool. Ah yes, I do know who she is! I remember now. Her name is Granton, and she is schoolmistress to the children on Mr. Texley's estate. I have often seen her at church."

Before her explanation was finished, Mr. Allonby had given her the sculls, leaped out, and was running across the park at his utmost speed. His grave glance at the half insensible Eda had made Lady Eudora anxious too, and as soon as she had reached the spot indicated, and drawn the skiff ashore, she knelt down and chafed the sufferer's cold hands.

Eda tried to thank her, and make a coherent reply to her kindly inquiries, but her mind seemed benumbed as well as her body. She felt like one in a dream while she was being carried to Chessington House—catching a glimpse, as she was borne across the hall, of Eudora clasped in the arms of her parents—undressed by careful hands, and laid in a downy bed, where, after tossing about for several hours, feverish with pain, and every limb aching intolerably, she sank into a dreamless and refreshing sleep.

It was some days before Eda lost these pains, and was able to leave her bed for the couch that was brought into the room, and placed in the sunniest window, for her use. During this period she saw no one but the servant in attendance upon her, the doctor who had been sent for as soon as she was brought to the Park, and Lady Chessington, who came two or three times every day, to bring her fruit and flowers, and sit for a few minutes beside her, talking in a soft motherly fashion, that often made Eda's heart thrill with sad memories, and her eyes fill with tears. The countess's manner was ordinarily stiff and reserved, but she was very grateful to the young girl who had done her best to preserve the life of her child—the saucy wilful daughter who vexed and thwarted her continually, but was very dear to her heart for all that—and Eda was too refined and lady-like to presume upon the increasing kindness with which she was treated.

"Eudora is very anxious to be allowed to see you, my dear," Lady Chessington said one morning, when she found her patient sitting up and looking really stronger and better; "I would not let her come to you before, as I was afraid she would talk you into a return of your feverish symptoms; but if you think a visit from her would not be too much for you——"

"I should be delighted to see her!" cried Eda, who began to find the seclusion of a sick-room monotonous—"delighted to see her before I go back to Mrs. Jones's cottage, which I think I am almost well enough to do now."

"Almost is not quite," smiled the countess; "I have written to Mr. Texley to tell him that you are with us, and that we do not intend to part with you until your doctor pronounces you thoroughly recovered."

"You are very good to me, madam, but the school ought to be re-opened this week, and I feel anxious to be there."

"Are you then so very fond of teaching A B C?" she was asked, with a smile.

"I do not like it at all," Eda frankly confessed; "but it is my duty, and I try to do it as well as I can."

"And a very oppressive duty you find it if I may judge from the gravity of the look you are putting on; am I not right, my dear?"

"Not quite, madam"—for Eda had often thought she could have been very happy at the school if she had been cheered by the satisfaction of her employer—"but I had rather not talk of this, if your ladyship will excuse me."

Still the countess seemed disposed to persevere. "I know already that Mr. Texley is not satisfied with the working of his new system," she observed, with a penetrating look that made Eda's pale cheek glow; but she bravely resisted a longing to defend herself, and was rewarded the next minute by hearing Lady Chessington say, "Perhaps you would like to know who was my informant; and when I tell you that it was Miss Texley, to whom I wrote concerning you, I suppose you can guess that I have heard a very fair statement of facts."

Eda's face cleared again, and the countess laid her hand kindly on her head. "Try and content yourself here a little longer. I do not like to form plans too hastily, and there is always a risk to be run in removing a person from the position she fills well to a more difficult or at least a more onerous one.

The countess paused, although she must have seen that Eda was perplexed, and waiting with some anxiety to hear her explain herself.

"I will send Eudora to you," was all she said; "do not let her do as I have been doing, talk to you too much. I think Morris shall bring you your lunch before you hold another reception."

It was therefore an hour or even more before Eda's solitude was enlivened by the visit of the earl's beautiful daughter, the gay bright young creature whom, ever since she had been staying at Chessington Park, she had been learning to regard as one of the happiest and most fortunate of girls. She was now about to learn how far she was correct in her conclusions.

(To be continued.)

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 5. Persecutions.

Chapter to be read—Acts iv. 1—31.

INTRODUCTION. Ask what warning Christ has given to His disciples about what they must expect from their enemies. (John xv. 19, 20; xvi. 1—4.) What miracle had two apostles worked? Did that give offence? But in whose name was the cure effected, and what had the apostles done afterwards? What other similar sermon had been preached? on what day and with what effect? Remind how it was foretold that the Gospel should be preached to the poor. (Is. lxii. 2.) They heard gladly; whence then did opposition come? We shall see.

I. The Apostles Examined. (Read ver. 1—12.) Question the children as to who disliked the preaching of the apostles, and why. (*a*) *The priests*, full of envy at any persons setting up to be teachers of the people, usurping *their* office, and especially unlearned fishermen. (*b*) *The ruler* of the Temple, afraid of a disturbance which might bring him into trouble. Where did the miracle and sermon take place? (*c*) *The Sadducees*: let the children name other occasions where their disbelief of the Resurrection comes under notice. (See Matt. xxii. 23, and Acts xxiii. 8.) These now all combined against apostles. What did they do to them? Fancy the shame of being led through the streets of the capital as prisoners! did it have the effect of stopping converts? What were the numbers now? What happened the next day? When had this Council of the Jews (or Sanhedrim) met before? Remind how Peter and John had both been present at that trial in the High Priest's house; how the remembrance of Christ's patience would inspire them with the like. Picture the meeting of the Council—the High Priest in robes of office presiding, the seventy elders sitting round in a circle, the two apostles in the midst. What were they asked? Could not dispute the fact of the miracle, only inquire into its origin. How had Peter behaved at the last trial? Who had questioned him there, and how had he answered? What caused the difference? What had been given to him which gave him boldness? (Matt. x. 19, 20.) Now notice Peter's answer. It contained (*a*) *A confession of faith.* What a contrast to his former denial of Christ! What did Christ promise to those who confessed Him before men? (Luke xii. 8.) Notice the unflinching testimony to Jesus Christ the Nazarene. (*b*) *A bold rebuke.* How would a prisoner generally feel before his judges? Why was not Peter afraid? Show how he also quotes from their own Scriptures to condemn them (ver. 11), and boldly preaches salvation through Christ alone in the very Council.

II. The Apostles Threatened. (Read 13—22). Notice the effect of bold speaking. Who had so often rebuked the rulers, scribes, &c.? So they recognise these as Jesus' disciples—animated by same spirit of boldness and patience combined. What a testimony to the apostles! Could the Council doubt the reality of the miracle? Why not? How old was the man? How long had he been lame? All this made the cure more wonderful; so they charge them not to speak or teach in this name above every other name (Phil. ii. 9, 10). How did the apostles answer? Did they consult together? take thought how to answer? Why not necessary? Could give but one answer: "Have a message to give, which must be given at all risks!"

III. The Apostles Rejoicing. (Read 13—31). Picture the apostles leaving the Council, a crowd of new converts following, holy joy and thankfulness beaming in their faces; the young John supporting the elderly Peter, their arrival at the house, the joyful meeting and congratulations, the questions and answers. What is their first impulse to do? Picture Peter leading the prayer, the rest joining, probably standing (See Luke xviii. 11, 13). Notice the prayer. It contains—(*a*) *An acknowledgement of God*, His power, His eternal will (v. 28), the truth of His Scriptures, the fulfilment of prophecy (v. 27). (*b*) *A prayer for boldness in preaching*: What might they have asked for? Knew, however, that they were not to expect freedom from persecution, must share sufferings of Christ. In whose name do they ask? (*c*) *The answer.* Remind of prophecy of immediate answer while yet speaking (Is. lxv. 24).

IV. Lessons. (1) *Boldness.* Children not likely to be in just such circumstances; still sometimes called upon to be derided for Christ, *e. g.*, when laughed at at school for reading Bible or saying prayers—see benefit of firm answer; must do right; obey God. (2). *Communion with Christ.* Whence did apostles get their boldness? Jesus the same ever. How can we be with Jesus? May "seek Him early," in prayer, in His word, in His communion feast. None who so seek sent away empty.

Questions to be answered.

1. Name places speaking of persecution for Christ's sake.
2. Who composed the Council? Say anything you can about them.
3. Describe Peter's answer to the Council.
4. What charge was given the Apostles? Did they observe it?
5. Give an account of their prayer when released.
6. What lessons may we learn?

XUM

MAY FLOWER, OR "SERVANT OF ALL."

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LITTLE BUTTERCUP," "NOTHING BUT A SONG," "HOW TO ENTER INTO REST," ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

"Nor, thankful when it pleaseth me,
As if thy blessings had spare days,
But such a heart, whose pulse shall be thy praise."

"It is ever my thought that the most God-fearing man should be the most blythe man."—MRS. R. MAITLAND.

MAY was glad to find Phillis alone, at work, and very busy. She only waited a few moments to beg her pardon, and then joined Geraldine, whom she saw in the garden.

"Gerrie, may I help with your gardening?"

"Yes, come along. Do you mind running down to the tool-shed for me? There is some matting there that I want for tying up these carnations, and my little trowel."

May ran off; the tool-house was some way from the flower-garden. She had to run through the fields down to the large kitchen-garden. She found what was needed, and returned, and the two sisters spent a busy, happy time together.

Then Gerrie's quick fingers gathered bunches of flowers, and made the whole house sweet and pretty with them.

After some time, May asked, "Where is Tom?"

"Gone out with Jem," answered Geraldine. "They have gone for some fishing, and then are going up to the Lincolns. There is some talk of Frank Lincoln and Jem going for a walking tour."

"Going for a walking tour! Where?"

"Either to Wales or Scotland. Frank is going, and Mr. Lincoln has asked Jem to join him."

"Will Jem like to go?"

"Why, yes, of course he will, it will do him so much good. It is just the kind of change he needs; I wish Stephen could go as well."

"It would be so dull without them!"

"Yes, dreadfully," answered Geraldine, cheerfully; "I don't know what we should do without them, but I wish they were both going all the same."

"You don't seem to mind much," said May, in the same disconsolate voice as before.

"Mind! Why I should be delighted if they went!"

"Oh, I meant, mind about their going away."

"Oh!——" and Gerrie laughed.

"Gerrie, I do wonder why you're never put out at anything?"

"Why, what's the good of it? It would not mend matters."

"But you're always all right. It never seems as if anything were the matter with you?"

"No more there is. Why, I've such lots to interest me—there's the garden, and my painting, and the village, and hearing from Rosamond, and plenty to do for the boys when they are at home."

"Still, things are disagreeable sometimes, Gerrie!"

"Of course they are," she answered, sunnily, "and will be to the end of the chapter. But it just depends on what we do with them whether they make us better or worse, richer or poorer."

"How do you mean?"

"Shall I tell you a story?"

"Yes, do: I should like it so much. I've not heard a story for ever so long. Come and sit down under the plane-tree, and I'll lean against you and be cosy. What will you tell about?"

They strolled across the lawn, and sat down on the bank beneath the plane-tree.

"There, that'll do," said May, when she had arranged herself in the most comfortable way she knew how. "We shall have a nice long time now before tea-time, or any of the others come back."

"Now begin; what will you tell me about?"

"About murmurs."

"Murmurs?"

"Yes; don't you know how the brook murmurs through the village! Shall I tell you how it came to murmur so happily, instead of murmuring crossly and angrily?"

"Well!"

"Far, far away in the hills—in the very heart of the hills—two little streams rise; one already large, for it springs up through the earth into a good large basin; the other, very tiny, not large enough to be called a stream, but just squeezed down through the rock, drop by drop. These drops remain on the rock below, till eight or ten of them are there, and then slowly, slowly, they trickle down one side; under a great round stone, and you can see nothing more of them for a long time.

"The stream that bubbled up out of the earth was called, 'Well-a-day.' The stream that trickled down so slowly, was called, 'Gladness.' Well-a-day bubbled up from the darkness into the light, strong, and bright, and independent. She gambolled in the basin till it could hold her no longer, and then, with a shout of delight, she tipped over and flew downwards towards the plain. I am not going to tell you about Well-a-day, but would you like to know what became of her?"

"Yes, tell me."

"Every day she went on bounding with joy, straight down through the thickness of the forest. She never met with a single obstacle, and at last she flowed into a pond, where cattle came to drink.

"But it is about Gladness that I want to tell you. Often and often, as each drop squeezed so hardly

through the earth, she looked towards Well-a-day, and her heart was full of jealousy and anger. Why was it that she had to go such a hard difficult way, while with Well-a-day all was smooth and straight?

"She was very angry about it, and did nothing but look at Well-a-day, and count up all her advantages. She would say, 'She is strong; she has a pleasant basin to sail in; she is much larger than I am. She does not have to squeeze herself to the light, but comes bubbling up as fast as possible, and then she just tips over into her course; I have to wait and collect my drops slowly, and then with difficulty we push ourselves onward.' When she came to the end of these reflections, with a hard cold thud she would splash her drops down on the rock.

"And so she went on—never bright, and never happy, and a continual murmur in her heart, which showed itself in her angry drops and splashes.

"It was a very dry summer, and it was harder than ever to squeeze through the rock; harder than ever to get any stream to trickle away.

"It was getting on towards autumn, and the night dews were beginning to fall, when one morning a little cloud, drawn up by the sun from the earth, lost its way, and found itself close beside Gladness.

"It hovered near a leafy bush, surprised and wondering.

"At last it spoke, and said, 'Little stream, why do you murmur so hardly? why are you complaining?'

"'Who are you?' said the stream, angrily.

"'They call me "Prevailing," and I am a cloudlet.'

"'That's a queer name for such a weak thing as a cloud! Why do you want to know what is the matter with me?'

"'I have just come up from the plain; all is bright and lovely there; all is beautiful through the wood; but I see, poor little stream, that something is amiss with you.'

"Then the stream, violent and angry, told of all her troubles, and ended by saying, 'Here we are, a few little drops with everything hard and difficult for us. I send some drops over the rock, but I always stay here myself, I am too unhappy to go further.'

"'And so you just stay here and complain. What do they call you?'

"'That is the worst of all,' answered the stream, in a rage, 'they call me "Gladness;" and how can I be glad!'

"'Why,' said Prevailing, 'I *thought* you were Gladness, and yet I could hardly believe it.'

"'How could you think I was Gladness? I am not glad, and I shall never be.'

"'You are not called Gladness just because you are glad yourself, but because you are to make so many others glad.'

"'I shall never do that.'

"'You, or rather your's, are doing it now. The drops that push with so much difficulty over the rock, run through the earth, and come out sparkling and bright on the other side; then they flow always onwards, eddying round big stones, stooping low beneath bushes, but always growing greater and brighter, till they flow past little cottages, and into the great ocean, where their rest is come.'

"'Is this true?' asked Gladness.

"'Quite true; but because the beginning has been hard, you have allowed other things to be hard. You have drawn away from your place, angry and foolish, and have missed the brightness in store.'

"'I was jealous of Well-a-day, for all is so easy with her.'

"'Yes, it seems so; but if she were to leave off working, as you have done, all would soon be hard for her, and you would hear an angry murmur instead of her happy pleasant one. Take what is sent you with a murmur of gladness, and you will soon find you have no time for the murmur of discontent.'

"'Oh, I am willing and anxious to go, but now I cannot! I am too far away from the other drops. I shall just have to stay here, and the sun will scorch me up.'

"'No, Gladness, you need not do that. See! I will brood over you, and come down in rain-drops, then you will reach the rock's edge, and follow your course.'

"'No, no!' cried Gladness; 'can you give up your pleasant trip to the bright skies, and expend yourself on a murmuring, discontented stream? Ah! now I know why you are called Prevailing—such a weak tiny cloud, but so strong—because you are ready to give all your store to another. No, Prevailing, you have prevailed. I shall not murmur more, but you must go free.'

"But even as she spoke, the cloudlet hung over her a moment, and then, as it had promised, gently and silently dissolved into the refreshing rain-drops; the tiny stream flowed to the edge of the rock, over it went, and was buried again in the earth. It trembled and shivered—all was dark and black.

"'But it is to make me pure and sparkling!' she remembered; and as a murmur of gladness thrilled her, she burst into the light, bright and golden. Away she hurried, and straight in her path stood up a huge boulder; the old habit of discontent seized her, but again she remembered the cloud's words, 'Take what is sent you with a murmur of gladness;' and with a happy murmur she sprang forward, eddied and rolled for a moment, and then, long before she knew it, the great dreaded boulder was far behind.

"There were some children playing on the bank, and one fell and cut his knee.

"'Come down to the dear little stream and bathe it, and it will soon be better,' said another; and the drops that had so long lain murmuring on the top of the rock, sprang up and bathed the poor hurt knee,

and heard the child say, 'Dear water—it is so cool and bright; I don't mind my knee hurting now; it is so nice in the water!'

"On the stream bounded.

"'How could I have been so wicked and foolish as to murmur at the troubles that met me at first! If I had taken each difficulty gladly, it would soon have led me to brightness.' In its joy, it leapt and bounded down the steep incline, past the little cottages. At the door sat two mothers.

"'This is about the only stream near here that has not failed this summer,' said one; 'but it was very near it a few days since.'

"'Well, I never thought it would dry up,' said the other; 'it's so bright and merry—it never seems to tire.'

"'Ah,' thought the stream, as it hurried along; 'they do not know all.'

"By-and-by it came to a bridge thrown across it; on it stood a girl, and a boy stooped down and caught the water in a little cup as it passed along, and handed it to her.

"'There, you won't be thirsty much longer; this is the best water in the country;' and he bathed his hot hands and face.

"The stream flowed on, and thought much of the gladness she gave others, and then began to find out how glad and happy she was herself! Every minute brought her nearer to the great ocean.

"Her last act before she reached the ocean, except giving drink to a poor thirsty cow, was one for the ocean himself. She found one of his shells—one of his beautiful murmuring shells—lying almost buried in the sands.

"'Why, shell!' she cried, 'why are you here?'

"'Ah,' said the shell, very sadly; 'at one time I used to murmur to the sea songs of content, but I left the sea, and let the waves take me up and up, till now I cannot get back to it. My murmurs are no songs now, but frightful groans, and sometimes I am quite dumb. Oh, that I had never left the sea!'

"'My poor shell! But I can tell you how all will be well. Your murmurs are only frightful because you murmur to yourself; you are buried in the sand, and either you murmur discontent to yourself, or, as you say, you are dumb. I am going to the sea: let me take you with me, and as soon as you begin to murmur to others, your old songs will come back.'

"'Oh, will you take me?—will you take me?'

"The stream worked till it had pushed away every grain of sand, and freed the shell, and she was the first to hear the glad murmurs again.

"Together they journeyed on.

"'I am afraid to see the ocean,' said the shell, 'after leaving him as I did.'

"'Don't be afraid,' rippled the stream, 'take all with a murmur of gladness. Why, he is coming to meet us! The great waves are rolling forward to embrace us. Don't you hear their loud murmur of welcome?'

"But before the shell could reply, they were both safe in the arms of the ocean.

"There, May, that is all. Jump up, for I must run and make tea. Tell me—do you like it?"

"Yes, very, very much, Gerrie! do you mean that I could murmur like that?" she asked, as they walked towards the house.

"Indeed you can, May; and it is much pleasanter for oneself and every one else than the other way. It is such a pity when brooks, and trees, and wood-pigeons, all murmur so gladly, that people should be the only ones to do it so disagreeably."

They stooped through the open window, under the half drawn-up venetians, and found Stephen standing before the urn.

"Come, Gerrie and make the tea; it's nearly half an hour late. Where are the others?—not home from the Lincolns?"

"Here they are!" cried May, and in they came, hot and tired, but in grand spirits. Jem and Frank were to start the following Monday for Wales. The evening passed very pleasantly, discussing plans, and making ready for the departure. It was not pleasant to lose one of their happy party, but it would not be very long before they all broke up.

They sent him off in grand spirits; not to return, in all probability, for four or five weeks.

Even May's murmur was glad and bright especially when she called out, "and I shall be the next to go! Rosamond is sure to write about my going very soon now."

(To be continued.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

25. Account for the surprise evinced by the Twelve when the death and resurrection of our Lord occurred, notwithstanding the minuteness with which He had foretold these events.

26. Which of the Evangelists has recorded the subject of conversation between our Lord, Moses, and Elijah, when Jesus was transfigured?

27. Show that St. Paul, if he did not share the gift of speaking divers languages, bestowed on the Day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 4), was nevertheless an accomplished linguist.

28. When did the Saviour leave the Temple for the *last* time? State what prophecy the Lord uttered on that occasion.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 48.

15. The transfiguration. See Matt. xvii. 1; Mark ix.; Luke ix. 28—36.

16. Deut. xviii. 15—19.

17. "Till the Son of man be risen from the dead" (Matt. xvii. 9; Mark ix. 9).

18. "Because it was not possible that He should be holden of death" (Acts ii. 24).



(*Drawn by* J. D. WATSON.)

A SEA-SIDE FABLE.

A LITTLE child had found a shell,
While skipping o'er the sea-washed sands
Which ocean, in its endless swell,
Had brought from distant lands.

He held it to his eager ear
And listened to its murmur low,
If in its music he might hear
Sounds that his soul would know.

There came strange secrets o'er the seas,
  Amid the waves' majestic roll,
And sweet unearthly melodies,
  That sank into his soul.
And visions passed before his eyes,
  Of floating islands, green and fair,
And lotus-lands 'neath sapphire skies—
  He sighed, and wished him there!

And music Earth shall never hear
  Awoke within that sounding shell,
And, floating round his willing ear,
  It bound him with its spell.
He thought of music-haunted streams,
  Where fairies bright their revels keep;
When, 'midst his fancy-woven dreams,
  He gently fell asleep.

And, as he slept, still far away
  He heard strange music sweet and clear,
As, smiling in his dreams, he lay,
  The shell beside his ear.
For Fancy, on her flashing wing,
  Took up the boy from off the sands;
And, as they sped, he heard her sing
  The songs of distant lands.

* * * * * * *

There came an aged man along,
  And, as he looked with wondering gaze,
His heart seemed stricken by some song
  Beloved in bygone days.
And 'midst his tear-dimmed gaze he fain
  Would of his years have been beguiled,
To catch again that wondrous strain
  That charmed the sleeping child.

What was there in that low sweet sound
  To waken such a smile of joy,
And consecrate the shell-strewn ground,
  Where lay the dreaming boy?
Amidst the murmur of the sea,
  He sat down sadly on the sand,
And took that soul of melody
  From out the little hand.

He placed its lips of green and gold
  Close to his ear, and listened long
To what his spirit might be told
  In its mysterious song.
It told him not in Fancy's dreams
  Of islands green in golden seas;
Nor lulled him by cool crystal streams
  With angels' melodies.

There passed, as writ upon a scroll,
  The joys his heart had known of yore,
And as they went they left his soul
  Thrice sadder than before;
And music came, like Autumn's sigh,
  Along the fading forest-aisles,
Which darkens in a cheerless sky
  Sweet Summer's thousand smiles!

No dreams of fairy realms afar
  Passed brightly o'er his saddened eyes;
His life was like the setting star
  Far down the western skies.
He left the shell beside that one
  Who caught its sweet mysterious strain;
And, gazing on the sinking sun,
  He sighed for youth again!

ALEXANDER LAMONT.

THE SHEPHERDS OF BETHLEHEM.

BY THE REV. SAMUEL COX, AUTHOR OF "A DAY WITH CHRIST," ETC., ETC.

LUKE ii. 8–20.

"THE Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost"—to seek and save those who were lost *in the crowd*, as well as those who were lost in sin; the meek, the poor, the humble—all who had the spirit of a little child, as well as those who were plunged in guilt and misery. It was right and meet, therefore, that His coming, His advent, should be first announced to the lowly shepherds of a little hamlet, to poor men whose very names are unknown to us, and were never known beyond the precincts of Bethlehem. "Wise men" were travelling from afar to worship Him; but before they arrive, the rude and humble shepherds are led to the rude and humble cradle in which He lies. "As unknown, yet well-known," might be the motto of these simple men; unknown after the flesh, yet well known in the spirit; unknown by name, yet oftener in our thoughts, and dearer to our thoughts, than most of the men whose names are most familiar in our mouths. How often, and from what early years, has our imagination depicted them as clustered together in some sheltered nook on the hill-side round the watch-fire which both tempered the cold breath of a Syrian night and scared away the "evil beasts" who might have otherwise harried the flock—keeping watch over their sheep, but perhaps watching also and longing for the morning, little dreaming that the new dawn of that new "day which the Lord hath made" was about to break upon them before the sun should top the Eastern hills. Our imagination has been so long busy with them that probably they have become idealised in our thoughts, *shepherds* rather than *men*—abstractions, ideal creatures of the brain,

rather than men of like passions with ourselves. That they were men, however, and men of like passions with us, is quite obvious even from the little we are told of them. They were impressed as we should have been impressed by what they saw and heard; they acted as we should have acted, had we been in their place. They passed through the very phases of *fear, doubt, inquiry, faith*, through which we pass when once the supernatural breaks through the veils which commonly hide it from us, and presses itself home upon our thoughts and affections.

Never was happier news brought to men than the "good tidings of great joy" which the angels brought to the shepherds of Bethlehem. Yet, as they listened to the joyful tidings, "they *feared with a great fear*." And can we wonder that their first emotion was one of terror rather than of delight? We shall not wonder if we attempt to conceive the scene, and if we remember how the sudden inburst of that which is above nature on the easy round of habit and custom always agitates the human heart. These Hebrew shepherds were engaged in their common task. They had led their sheep to a sheltered spot, where they might lie safely for the night, and find pasture in the morning. They have gathered round their fire, some sleeping perhaps, and some watching; or perhaps it is yet early in the night, and they are all talking together before they divide the watches of the night between them, or laying out their plans for the morrow, or singing their evening psalm. They had much to talk of, for Bethlehem was very full just now, and even over-full; many old friends had come back to their native village to be enrolled in the new census which Cæsar Augustus had decreed. And as they talk or sing—and shepherds have always been given to song—we may be sure that they often lift their eyes to the sky, watching the changes of the night, and gazing on the lustrous stars which shine in a Syrian heaven with a splendour unknown to us in our dull climate and misty air. And as they gaze, lo! every star bursts into a bright-winged angel, moves from its place, descends, and all the glory of heaven comes down to earth! Could anything be more startling to these simple men, or more terrifying in its very splendour? They had often heard of a "day of the Lord," in which the heavens should quake, and the earth be purified as by fire. What wonder, then, that they feared with a great fear? It must have seemed to them that the end of all things had come, that the earth, like the stars, was about to be removed out of its place!

As they gazed on the celestial portent with astonishment and affright, one of the angels detached himself from "the glory" that shone above them, drew near to them, and cried, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." As he ceased speaking, once more the glory of the Lord shone out upon the night; a new glory is added—the glory of song to the glory of splendour; the morning stars sing together, the sons of God shout for joy, as over a new-created world; "a multitude of the heavenly host," the choirs of heaven, praise God, and chant—

> "Glory to God in the highest,
> And on earth peace among men of good will."

Heaven and earth are not to be destroyed, as the shepherds feared, but reconciled and united. *He* has come whom the prophets foretold—Immanuel, God with us,—to make His tabernacle with men, to dwell with them, and be their God, and give them peace.

Their fear is supplanted by joy as they listen to these good tidings. And yet their joy is overcast with *doubt*, as the angel saw, or why should he give, why should they require, "a sign"? It seems too good to be true, that the Messiah, for whom they and their fathers had waited so long in vain, should be coming, should have come. It seems incredible that to *them*, of all men, to poor unknown shepherds keeping watch over their flock, rather than to rabbis teaching in the schools, or to priests ministering before the altar, this grace should be shown: that they, first of all men, that they alone among men, should behold the glory of the Lord, and hear the choirs of heaven; that they should be selected to see and hear what kings and prophets had desired to see, but had not seen, and to hear, but had not heard.

Happily for them, doubt spurred them on to *inquiry*. "It came to pass when the angels went away from them into heaven"—and pray observe that the tone of the Evangelist is as natural and easy when he speaks of the angels as when he speaks of the shepherds, and that heaven is as real a place to him as the village of Bethlehem—"the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this saying which has come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us." Two points rendered their inquiry a very hopeful one:—First, that they took some trouble, and ran some risk, in order to arrive at a reasonable conclusion; and, second, that they were predisposed to believe they should find what the angel had said to be true. In the flush of the great hope which his words have quickened within them, they leave their sheep untended on the hills, and hurry to the city of David.

There they find the sign—"a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger." Not a very convincing sign to a sceptic, perhaps; for a new-born babe could have been no great rarity even in little Bethlehem; and even that the babe

should be cradled in a manger was a fact easily accounted for, since, owing to the census, the solitary "inn" of the hamlet was crowded, and there was no room for the last-comers save in the stable. And yet even this sign sufficed the simple shepherds. In the new-born Babe they saw "Christ the Lord." Doubt gave place to *faith*. They worshipped Him as the Messiah, the Saviour of Israel. They "*made known* the saying which was told them concerning the Child." So strong was their faith, that they preached to others so soon as they themselves were convinced. They returned to their flock, of which peradventure the angels had taken charge while they were absent, "*glorifying and praising* God for all the things they had seen and heard," taking up and repeating, we may be sure, the chant of the heavenly host—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men of good will."

On the shepherds of Bethlehem, then, the advent of Christ produced fear; fear changed into doubt; doubt passed into inquiry; and inquiry led on to a faith that expressed itself in worship, in service, and in praise.

And in this sequence of emotions we have the proof that they were men of like passions with us; for these are the very emotions which the advent of Christ excites in us when that advent becomes to us, as it did to them, a sacred and verified reality—when to us, as to them, all the glory of God is reflected in the face of Christ.

The message of Christmas to us, and to all men, is: "Fear not, for unto you is born this day a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." But even these good tidings of great joy, when first we realise their meaning and truth, awaken a great *fear* in us. Like the shepherds, we take our life easily for the most part. We are occupied with regularly recurring tasks, with familiar duties and pleasures. We move in a round of custom which is seldom broken or disturbed, and which keeps our thoughts, our affections, our aims, well within the bounds of time and sense. If any great break or interruption occurs, we are startled and amazed. When the spiritual, the supernatural, presses in upon us, when it invades the regular course of our daily habits, we are most of all agitated and disturbed. Was it not thus with us when first of all religion became a reality to us, and the one all-important reality, instead of a mere creed, or a mere round of decorous forms? When we first recognised Christ as a Saviour, and as *our* Saviour, we also first saw, in all their heinousness, the sins from which He came to save us. When we discovered that He had come to declare the Father to us—to teach us how good He is, and that He is bent on making us good; when He taught us that all the gains and pleasures of life are as nothing when compared with life itself, and made us feel that our one great task is to lay hold on life eternal: we also felt, as never before, how evil and impure we were, how foolish and reckless we had been, what opportunities we had lost, and how difficult it would be for us, with powers so limited, time so short, so much to learn and unlearn, so much to do and undo, to rise into a settled and steadfast goodness, to incorporate the character of Christ with our own, to become perfect even as our Father in heaven is perfect.

And in us, as in the shepherds, did not this natural fear breed *doubt?* Did it not seem to us that the good tidings of great joy were too good to be true? Was it not incredible to us, at the first, that God should love men, despite their alienation from Him? and, above all, that He should love *us*, despite our manifold offences against Him; and so love us as to send His Son to declare and prove the exceeding greatness of His love? No doubt we doubted. Possibly we still doubt—doubt whether Christ can be *our* Saviour, whether He can ever wholly redeem us from our thraldom to the senses and to evil habits, from our undue and excessive devotion to the toils, cares, and successes of this present life. Or, if we trust him for ourselves, we may nevertheless doubt whether the good tidings are for "all the people;" whether He is, and will be, the Saviour of all men, and not only of those that believe. Nay, I am very sure that we do doubt; for there is nothing of which we find it so hard to persuade ourselves, even now, that Christ has come both in the flesh and in the spirit, as of the perfect redeeming goodness of God, the goodness that is over all His creatures, over all His works. Even more than for others, we doubt for ourselves, for we know more of the evil that is in us than of that which is in our neighbours. That we, who often wish we were half so simple and unworldly as the poor shepherds of Bethlehem, should ever be "like unto the angels" who sang to the shepherds, that we should even be "satisfied with the likeness" of Him whose advent the angels sang, this seems incredible to us, since the better we are, and the better the mood we are in, the more sadly we feel how far we are from all perfection.

When we are troubled by such doubts as these, they should stimulate us to *inquiry*, to experiment. Like the shepherds, we should arise and go to the city of David, and see whether these things be so or not. And it will be wise of us to simplify our quest by detaching from our thoughts all questions that are not of supreme importance, to confine ourselves to such inquiries as these:—Is not God good, and even of a perfect goodness? Are not our own best and purest affections but faint reflections of His? If *we* would do anything for the sake of those whom we love, to reclaim them when they are lost to us and to goodness,

would not *He*, who is so much better than we are, humble Himself, and take the form of man, and come and dwell among us, if He could thus redeem us unto Himself, and make us partakers of His divine nature? Do we not feel that God *must* become man, must wear our nature, speak our words, live our life, die our death—in short, pass through all our experiences, from the cradle to the grave, if He would reveal, in forms that we can apprehend, His kindness and good will towards us, if He would show us what we ought to be and help us to become what we ought to be? If He can only reach us thus, and will not hesitate at any humiliation, any suffering, by which He may reach and recover us; if we may assume that He would and did become in fashion as a man, that He might save us men; then *where* shall we look for Him? What man is there who towers high above men, the noblest and most gifted of the race, who is the fairest of the sons of men, perfect at all points, and altogether lovely? Who is it to whom even the sceptic and the disbeliever bear witness as the wisest and best of men, as the one divine Man whom the race has produced? Is it not that very Man of whom the season speaks, of whom the angels sang to the shepherds, "Unto you is born this day a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord?" Let us trust *Him*, then, and what He declares to us about Himself, about God, about ourselves. What though the miracle of the Incarnation and the miracles involved in it perplex our thoughts? If God *were* to become man, if He must needs come and dwell among us, *must* not many things have been natural to Him which are supernatural to us? What though we find on His lips words whose depths we cannot fathom, and in His words lines of thought which to us seem contradictory and irreconcilable? If the Inhabitant of Eternity came within the bounds of time, and the Infinite God became finite man, and the All-wise spake in our poor imperfect words—words that will not adequately express the half of our own thoughts and emotions—must not our words still more imperfectly express *His* thoughts? Must not many of His thoughts be too large for us to grasp and reconcile? If the Man Christ Jesus be the best man we know—the purest, the wisest, the likest God—no doubt should prevent us from making the experiment of trust in Him. At first, like the shepherds, we may come to him *by night*, in a mental obscurity which makes it hard for us to find and recognise Him. But if, like them, we are prepared to put ourselves to trouble, and to run some risk of loss; and if, above all, we love goodness and truth, and are prepossessed in their favour, we shall get peace at the last: for is not "peace" promised to "men of good will"?

They went to look for Christ, they found a little Child. We may look for the Son of God, and at first we may find only the Son of Man. But if we trust Him, and put Him to the proof, just as they came to see the Christ in the Child, so in the Son of Man we at last shall find the Son of God and the Saviour of the World.

But, finally, some of us—most of us, I trust—have passed through fear and doubt and inquiry to *faith*. For us the words of the angel to the shepherds have a sweet and familiar sound. But let us listen to them again: "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you great tidings of joy, which shall be to all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." Oh, memorable and most pleasant words! we love to hear them. But have they even yet taken their full effect upon us? We believe them; we rejoice in Christ as our Saviour, and the Saviour of all men. This gracious and hallowed season is welcome to us, not simply because it brings a brief rest from toil—a holiday in which our kinsfolk and friends gather round us—but also, and chiefly, because it commemorates the time "when the kindness and philanthropy of God our Saviour appeared unto men." But have even we nothing to learn from the shepherds, rude and simple as they were? When they had seen the Child, they *worshipped* the Christ. When they had worshipped Him, they *made known* what they had seen and heard. When they had published the good tidings abroad, they returned to their flocks, "*glorifying and praising God* for all the things they had heard and seen." Have we done as much? If we have worshipped the Saviour, have we, remembering that the good tidings are for *all* people, published the good tidings to our kinsfolk and neighbours? Have we so wholly put away fear and doubt from us that we glorify and praise God as we go about our daily work in the world?

Now and then we have, no doubt. But another Christmas has come round. Once more we are called to worship Christ, to make Him known, to praise and glorify His name. And how can we worship Him more acceptably, or more persuasively make Him known, or praise Him more welcomely than by ministering to the men for whose sake He became a man? The message of the angels guided the shepherds to but a poor abode. Are there no poor abodes to which it should lead us?—none to which we might carry some warmth of kindness and a little good cheer, because some faint echo of that angelic song is, even yet, still ringing in our hearts?

"Go eat the fat" then, if God has given you a feast of fat things for your Christmas fare; eat the fat, "and drink the sweet; but send"—send! nay, carry, "portions to those for whom nothing is prepared:" and the joy of the Lord shall be the strength and inspiration of all the joy and merriment of the time.

"ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."

BY THOMAS ARCHER.

XV.—WITH THEM THAT FAINT BY THE WAY.

THERE are perhaps few conditions demanding greater sympathy and more ready aid than that of poor women who, from temporary sickness or the weariness that comes of hope deferred, are unable to follow the employments, often precarious and yielding a bare subsistence, by which they strive to be independent of charitable assistance. It is only those who know to what extremities of need they will submit for shame of making their poverty known, and what mental suffering they will endure as they find their scanty savings dwindling day by day, and their few household goods, or even their clothing, and the little family mementoes, which they can only part with as a last resource, going piece by piece, who can fully realise all that is meant by the genteel phrase, "very reduced circumstances," as applied to women of refined feelings, and frequently of gentle nurture, who find themselves without the means of obtaining necessary food and medical aid when health and strength give way, and they can no longer work at those few callings by which they can earn enough to enable them to avoid a dreaded "application to friends." Quite lately, the subject of some kind of provision for poor governesses who are sick, or have to subsist during long holidays on the small balance of their quarterly wages, has occupied public attention, and it would be well indeed if means could be found for giving the healthy temporary employment, and the weakly a quiet home where their strength might be restored without the sacrifice of independence. There are others, however, for which such help is equally needed—the dressmaker, or the shopwoman, on whom long hours of tedious and often of exhausting toil in an unhealthy atmosphere, has begun to tell too severely; the servant of good character and respectable habits, who is not so ill as to be admitted to a hospital, and yet is breaking down in strength, and regards with dread the necessity for going into some obscure lodging, where her surplusage of wages will barely pay for rent and food during two or three weeks enforced idleness; the girl who has learnt some ill-paid business, which affords her no more than a mere contribution to the family funds, and leaves no margin for extra food or medicine, or the fresh air that is as important as either.

Any careful observer standing at the door of a general hospital, and watching the throng of out-patients waiting wearily to see the doctor, will be able to distinguish a score of cases for which a temporary rest with wholesome food and the sympathy and loving-kindness that refresh the soul would bring true healing.

No large establishment in the nature of a hospital or a refuge affords the kind of help for such distress as theirs. They cannot be dealt with as occupants of wards; for they have either recovered from the actual crisis of some serious disorder, or are pining in a depressed condition to which no definite name can be given to classify it for admission to any public establishment for the cure of disease. To many of them the idea of entering a large charitable refuge—and I know of none in London adapted to such needs as theirs—would be repulsive, as suggesting that horror with which persons of a lower grade regard the union workhouse; what they need is a temporary home, and if ever the time should come when a well-supported scheme for such a provision should be adopted, it will have to take the form of what is now known as the "cottage system." Indeed, in hospitals, as well as in other large charitable institutions, the defects of the old plan of maintaining a great number of adult persons in one vast building have been recognised. The immense ward with its long rows of beds, the divided and necessarily confusing duties of attendants, the ill-served meals at a great dinner-table where there is no possibility of escaping from a too rigid routine, the depressing, not to say degrading, influence, resulting from the loss of individuality, would make any vast institution for convalescents or invalids far less effectual in its operation. I make this reference only with regard to the probable inauguration of homes for invalid women in or near London, and because I have just visited one, which, although it is not on the cottage system, but is established in a rare old mansion of the period of Queen Anne, has yet the happy characteristic of being a family whose scanty means is largely increased by loving gifts, instead of an institution every corner of which bears a reminder that it is "supported by charity." In the pleasant airy High Street of Stoke Newington, and within a stone's throw of the famous Cedar Walk of Abney Park—that locality made famous by the prolonged visit of Dr. Watts, who went to spend a week with Sir Thomas Abney, and remained for the rest of his long blameless life the honoured guest of the family—is the house I speak of, "The Invalid Asylum for Respectable Females in London and its Vicinity," superin-

tended by a ladies' committee, and with weekly visitors, and a matron to carry on the practical work of the executive.

There is nothing remarkably picturesque, nothing very striking, about this home for thirty respectable invalid women employed in dependent situations, to whom it affords a temporary asylum, widely differing from the crowded receptacles for the sick in the metropolis. One of its peculiarities is, that the purity of the family circle is maintained, by the fact that no patient is admitted without a certificate of conduct signed by two housekeepers or by an employer, while her case is also recommended by an annual subscriber or life governor; and there is a sense of repose and quiet confidence about the inmates which is particularly suggestive of the care taken to recognise their individual claims, and the interest which is manifested in them during the time of their sojourn.

This very quietude and sense of rest, and gradual renewal of health and strength in a serene retreat is, in fact, the feature which attracts my attention. It is not too much to say that I am ready to attribute much of such influences to the fact that the institution was originally established by ladies representing the unobtrusive beneficent work of the "Society of Friends," and that the order and peace which is its delightful characteristic, may in a great measure be traced to that foundation. At any rate, these qualifications so identify it that I feel justified in regarding it to some extent as a worthy example of the method to be adopted in any institution, which, without being altogether a free "charity," takes only such a small sum from the patient or her friends as suffices to keep away the degrading feeling of pauperism, or of utter dependence on the bounty of strangers. It is true that the principal life-governorships include the privilege of sending entirely gratuitous patients, but in ordinary cases the annual subscriber of a guinea recommends the case, and when the patient is admitted, the sum of twenty shillings is received for the month's medical attendance, lodging, and full board, "including tea and sugar," for a time not exceeding one month, after which, should the case require a longer stay, the ticket must be renewed by the same or another subscriber, on the further payment of twenty shillings. If the patient be in the employment of the subscriber, the payment of this sum will suffice without the renewal ticket, an arrangement which should commend the institution to every benevolent employer of female labour.

It need hardly be said that no cases of infectious disease are admitted, and that every applicant is examined by the medical attendant. No patient is admitted who is not above ten years of age; and neither "private cookery," nor the introduction of spirituous liquors by visitors, is permitted, any more than gratuities to servants of the Institution.

It may be remarked that though 129 cases were received during the last official year—91 tickets being renewed, and 80 weekly payments being received—the very fact of contributions being made by the patients themselves, who are thus relieved from the sense of utter dependence, appears to have prevented the Institution from participating in the benefits of the "Hospital Sunday" fund. I am not sure that this is a real disadvantage however, for the Institution is after all less a hospital than a temporary home, and it appeals on behalf of a peculiar form of distress, the claims of which are of a specific and none the less of a very urgent character. But in order to realise the kind of work that is most needed, and is here being accomplished, let us pay a visit to the house itself. We have been hitherto standing on the broad flight of steps inside the tall iron gates, and have hesitated to sully their hearthstone purity, for it is Saturday, and we may well have an inconvenient sense that the short hand of the clock is already close to the dinner-time of the institution.

With a long experience of paying unexpected visits, I am prepared to encounter remonstrance, even though it only take the form of a critical glance at my boots as a means of possible maculation of the newly-cleaned hall and passages. Conscious of having judiciously employed a member of the shoe-black brigade, I can endure this scrutiny, and, with a few words of explanation, am conducted, by the matron herself, over the grand old house, whose broad staircase and elaborately carved banisters of black oak at once attest not only its antiquity but also its aristocracy. I have already said that there is nothing here on which to found a "picturesque description," and yet the air of repose, the sense of almost spotless cleanliness, the freshness of the large lofty rooms containing from three to five or six comfortable beds with their snowy counterpanes, the general order and pleasant seclusion, are remarkably suggestive of the intention of the place. Two of the patients, to whom I make my respects, are not yet sufficiently recovered to join the daily dinner-party in the neat dining-room. One of them, an elderly lady, who has only just been brought here, is slowly recovering from very severe illness, and cannot even sit up in the bed, whence she regards me with an expression which seems to intimate that she has reached a haven of rest. Her companion, a young woman—also in bed in the same room—is sitting very upright, cheerfully engaged in some problem of needlework, and responds with a hopeful smile to the declaration of the matron, that they "mean to make a woman of her if she is good."

Close to this room is the neat lavatory with its bath, supplied with hot and cold water, and on the landing I note another bath, on wheels, for use in any part of the house where it may be required. All the accessories are home-like; and in the invalid sitting-room, on an upper storey, where two convalescents, not yet able to get down-stairs, greet me from a pair of easy chairs, there is the same pervading influence which distinguishes the house from those large institutions where everything is characterised by a depressing mechanical dead level. The library—a pleasant cheerful room—is in course of re-furnishing; and I am glad to learn that THE QUIVER is amongst the favourite periodicals that find a place there, while the stock of books, either gifts or loans, are likely soon to be replenished, a matter wherein extra aid would be appreciated.

Already the cloth is laid in the dining-room, and dinner itself consists of hot meat with the usual accessories every day, except on Sundays, when there is a cold dinner, while, of course, the invalids who are ordered medical diet have fish, custards, or other delicate fare, specially provided. Each patient has a pint of ale or beer daily, and wine as a remedial stimulant, according to the doctor's orders.

There is just time before dinner is served to walk through the room into the grand old garden which extends from a pleasant sheltered lawn and flower-garden, with a glorious fig-tree in full leaf and fruit against the sunny wall, to a great kitchen-garden and orchard one, with a wealth of fruit and vegetables (and notably a venerable and prolific mulberry tree), and extending in a pleasant vista of autumn leaves. On the other side of the high wall is the Cedar Walk already mentioned; and the whole place is so still and balmy on this autumnal day, that we may go away with a very distinct appreciation of the rest and peace, which, with regular nutritious food, rest, and medicine, may bring restoration to the physical health, just as the hopeful ministrations of good and pious women who visit the home daily may bring a sense of peace and comfort to many a weary spirit and burdened heart.

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER XI.

LADY EUDORA came into the room carrying such a pile of books that her willowy figure fairly bent under them. These volumes she tossed carelessly on to the table—one falling into a dish of jelly, another knocking over a vase of autumn flowers, and two or three coming to the floor with a crash. But her equanimity was not at all disturbed by the *émeute* she had occasioned; with a gay laugh at her own awkwardness she huddled the flowers back into the vase, and seating herself on an ottoman so that she could fold her hands on the invalid's knees, began expressing her pleasure at finding her nearly convalescent.

"I have been longing and longing to see you," she went on, "for I felt sure that you must think me the most ungrateful girl in the world for letting anything keep me away; but it was mamma's doing; you must blame her, not me."

"I do not blame any one," Eda gently interposed.

"But I have, over and over again; and I should have been as obstinate in my way as mamma was in her's, if she had not declared that I should make you worse with my heedless chattering."

"Lady Chessington has been most kind, most considerate!" cried Eda, gratefully. But Eudora stared and smiled, at this little burst of feeling.

"That sounds as if you quite agree with her in thinking my absence a greater boon than my society. Never mind, don't try to explain away what you said. I know I'm too noisy to be an acquisition in a sick chamber; but I did think mamma might let me sit up with you at night. However, she would not consent, although I made papa and my cousin Eustace plead for me."

"But, my dear Lady Eudora, I have not required any one to sit up."

"All the better for me if I had been your nurse, for I don't believe I could have kept my eyes open. So you see I don't pretend that I should have made myself very useful, only that it would have been a great satisfaction to have been able to say that I was doing something for you."

"Even though it were nid-nodding in a chair, to our mutual discomfort?" asked Eda, with a smile.

"You may laugh at me as much as you like, I give you full permission," said Eudora, good-humouredly. "But just imagine what I felt when I knew that you were really ill through what you had endured for me; and that I was doing nothing, absolutely nothing, in return."

"Pray do not speak of it! I have been nursed so kindly that there was not anything left for you to do."

"Ah yes, I knew mamma and Morison would take good care of you; but you are still very pale and thin."



(*Drawn by* F. BARNARD.)

"You are still very pale and thin."—*p.* 88.

"And you, Lady Eudora—did you not feel any ill effects from being so long in the water?"

"No, indeed!" And the young lady laughingly tossed back her beautiful hair. "Nothing hurts me. I was rather hoarse for a day or two; and Eustace advised some gruel and black-currant lozenges, but my voice returned without either of his nauseous remedies. He would have demanded a physician from London, and papa would have gone off by express to fetch one, if I had told them what miserable nights I had."

"Wakeful ones, do you mean?"

"No, but disturbed with dreams in which I was continually being hurled down a hideous abyss, into which I fell with a scream that made me start up in a cold perspiration. Thank goodness, those wretched visions no longer torment me; but I shall not quickly forget how they might have been realised if it had not been for your promptitude and courage."

She raised herself to kiss Eda's cheek, and her bright eyes were moist as she went on talking: "I shall never care to go near the river again, for Fido was drowned—my faithful little doggie! And I could not go there now without being reminded that it was entirely my own fault, and that two *human* lives, as well as Fido's, might have been sacrificed through my thoughtlessness."

"Neither do I think that I shall like my seat under the willow as well as I used to do," Eda remarked, "for the roar of the mill-dam will make me shudder. And yet I could not hear it without being very thankful that both you and I were rescued from such a sudden and watery death."

"Don't speak of it! I have had similar thoughts, in the wakeful hours to which I was just now alluding; and though I tried to forget them in repeating nonsense-verses, or humming the prettiest songs I knew, I could not help picturing to myself all kinds of sickening details—such as dragging the river for our corpses, and breaking the news to our friends. By-the-bye, Miss Granton, *yours* live in London, do they not?"

"My brother does; I have no other near relations."

"And no very particular friend who is nearer and dearer still?" inquired Eudora, saucily.

Eda felt the blood rush into the cheeks that the moment before had been so white, and involuntarily began asking herself if Richard Atwood would have been amongst the few who would have grieved for her. The many solitary hours she had spent since leaving London had been employed but too often in recalling his handsome face and the tenderness of his adieus to enable her to answer Eudora's question in the negative with a clear conscience; therefore she did not answer it at all; and the young lady, feeling that she had overstepped the bounds of propriety, jumped up, saying, "Aren't you very tired of being shut up here? I should be, for I hate staying long in one room; it suffocates me! When mamma does pin me down to study for a whole morning, I am always obliged to make an excuse for going away to find something, that I may run up and down stairs, or rush round the garden, to work off my restlessness."

"Then I am sure you must be getting very tired of staying here."

"Indeed I am not! You are a nice little girl, Eda—I may call you Eda, mayn't I?—and I can see that I shall get on very well with you, for you are not so prim and fussy as mamma. Oh, you need not look so grave; I'm not going to say anything rude; but it's a known fact that mamma and I worry each other dreadfully; although she is the best mother in the world."

"The best mother in the world, and yet you have just confessed to worrying her dreadfully! You did not mean this, did you?" asked Eda, smiling a little, yet with a look in her eyes that made Eudora qualify her hasty speech.

"Not precisely; I think I told you that we worry each other. However, my cousin Eustace says the fault is all mine; and as he is one of those clever men who are always right, it's no use contradicting him. But this isn't what I came to say. Are you fond of reading? I thought you were, and so I told mamma I would bring you some books, if I only knew what you liked. Every one suggested two or three different ones, so I brought them all, and some art journals, in case you should prefer looking at pictures to poring over drier matter."

"Do you read much, Lady Eudora?" Eda inquired, as she turned over the engravings.

"Only when the fit takes me, which is but seldom. I like riding, walking, gardening, fishing—in fact, anything better than in-door occupations. I have been so surfeited with governesses and lessons, English exercises, French themes, Italian and German translations, and so on, that I seldom care to open a volume now, for fear I should come on one of my old impositions. You see," she explained, "papa accepted some colonial appointment when I was a child, and as mamma went with him I was left in the care of an aunt to be educated, and the dear old thing thought she should not be doing her duty if she did not make a very accomplished young lady of me. But the forcing process was a failure, for I hadn't brains enough to blossom into a blue-stocking. Mamma regrets it, but I don't; while papa often wishes I had been his son and heir, instead of his daughter and heiress; and so do I, most heartily."

Her face had flushed a little, and her lip quivered as she spoke, although her tone and manner were more reckless than was consistent with good feeling. Eda remembered now to have heard some one say that Lady Eudora Chessington was a charming girl, but inclined to be *fast*—preferring a ride to the meet, or a romp with her dogs, to more feminine pursuits; and it was easy to comprehend how much the

countess, who was fastidiously precise, and detested any approach to loudness or vulgarity, must feel annoyed to find her only daughter so different to herself.

And yet there was something very winning and lovable about Eudora; and Eda listened to her lively speeches with pleasure. To her, so long deprived of any society, the quaint fresh remarks of the young lady were quite exhilarating; and if Eudora's auditor could not always agree with her in her opinions, it was pleasant to find that she bore contradiction good-temperedly, and was prompt to acknowledge herself in the wrong.

"I hope I have not tired you with my chattering," she said at last, as she rose from her lowly position; "mamma bade me only stay one hour, and, I declare, I have been here two!"

"I am very sorry," said Eda, with such earnestness, that she was laughingly asked why.

"Have you been wishing me gone while I was flattering myself that we were equally comfortable?"

"Wishing you gone! No; but sorry that I should have been the cause of your disobeying Lady Chessington."

"Is that all?" cried Eudora, carelessly; "I'm afraid mamma's accustomed to worse acts of rebellion than this one, which was quite unpremeditated. However, I'll go, for fear you should have a headache. But first tell me if there is anything I can do for you."

"Yes, dear Lady Eudora," Eda replied, with some fear of giving offence by her candour, "there is one thing you can do, which will relieve and oblige me very much."

"What is it? I shall be glad to do it, whatever it is."

"Only to go and explain to the countess that neither of us have intentionally disregarded her injunction."

Eudora bit her lip, and was silent a while. "She will not blame *you*, Miss Granton."

"I suppose not," Eda replied; "indeed, I was not thinking of myself."

"Then pray don't make yourself uneasy about me," retorted Eudora, pettishly; "I am used to being lectured, and I hate saying I am sorry—especially when it isn't true. It's hypocritical; and I am no hypocrite!"

Eda did not speak; she felt that she had been over-bold already; but she did not remove her sad serious gaze from the downcast face of the young lady, who stood plucking to pieces the China asters that lay on the table.

"Every one seems to forget that I am no longer a child, who mustn't do this nor that," she said, presently; "it's only papa who treats me like a rational creature. I hope you are not going to enrol yourself in the ranks of my tormentors, Miss Granton."

Eda opened her eyes at the idea. "I did not mean to offend you, Lady Eudora."

"I am not *offended*, but——" and then she paused.

"But you thought I presumed on your good-nature, when I hinted that nothing would please me better than to see you brave enough to acknowledge a fault."

"It cannot be called a fault if you are none the worse for my long stay," she quickly retorted; "it was simply an act of forgetfulness. If I had recollected mamma's injunction, I dare say I should have obeyed it. It's just because I have been pestered all my life by these petty restrictions, that I detest—yes, it's a strong word, but it's the right one—I detest almost everything I ought to love and respect."

Eda felt how wrong this was, but did not know how far she was justified in expressing her sentiments. Lady Eudora was very frank, but she was also very touchy, and perhaps the best course was to be mute.

"Well, good-bye, Miss Granton," her ladyship said, in more peaceable tones. "Now I am beginning to make myself disagreeable, I suppose I had better run away; but I shall come and see you to-morrow, if I may. You'll not shut the door against me, if I promise not to be so snappish any more, will you?"

Eda assured her, with truth, that she should be extremely glad of another visit; and Eudora tripped to the door, but only to stand there a little while, considering, and then came back and looked steadily into the eyes of the surprised Eda, while she put the following question:—"Has mamma been talking to you about my shortcomings? Did she ask you to try and teach me the fifth commandment? You shake your head; but are you sure—*quite sure?*"

"Dear Lady Eudora, is not this an absurd supposition? You forget that until these last few days I have been a stranger to the countess. Is it at all likely that she would talk to me about you? I have not heard her mention your name until this morning."

"Then what made you set my duties before me so gravely? an innate love of playing the teacher? or a consciousness that in no other manner could you make yourself so acceptable to mamma?"

Eda coloured, and looked distressed.

"What did I say to make you think that I wished to do either? Perhaps I spoke too hastily; but it is not very long since I lost *my own* dear mother, and knowing how bitterly I have grieved over every word or action of mine that may have vexed her, I could not resist pressing you to make amends for yours."

"But you have made so much of a trifle," Eudora complained, with a half laugh. "If you knew how often I give mamma much greater cause to find fault with me!"

"Then I had rather not know," said Eda, gently.

"But still you think I ought to humble myself, although I really have *not* been in the wrong this time."

"Dear Lady Eudora, if you are satisfied with yourself, what can *my* opinion signify?"

Eudora gave herself a shake, and patted the floor with her foot.

"Don't provoke me by taking that tone, but say just what you think. Do you hear? Speak, little preacher, or——" and she menaced Eda with a cushion she had snatched up—"speak, or be extinguished for ever!"

"Must I risk your displeasure again? Then I will frankly tell you that I think the best mother in the world merits at least the civility of an explanation and apology when her wishes have been set at nought."

Lady Eudora would hear no more.

"Quarter! quarter! I yield! I own myself convinced; but don't begin to triumph till I have had time to get out of hearing."

And with a merry, but half-defiant look, she ran away.

CHAPTER XII.

Eda never knew whether her impetuous ladyship put her good resolutions into practice, for she looked so fatigued when the countess saw her in the evening, that all visitors were prohibited till she was stronger; and when Eudora did come again, she made no allusion to what had passed at their former interview. It was her birthday, she said, and the earl had presented her with a beautiful Skye terrier, to take the place of her drowned pet.

"Papa meant it kindly; but I had such a choking in my voice I could scarcely thank him. I do not like replacing dead favourites; and I feel horribly guilty about my poor Fido."

"What name shall you give this little creature?" Eda demanded, as she caressed it.

"He answers already to that of Nip, and is a thoroughly well-educated animal. Shall I put him through his accomplishments before he goes into banishment? Mamma will not have any dogs in the house, so I must ask the coachman to take charge of mine."

But the countess came in before the accomplished dog could go through his performances, and his young mistress snatched him up, and sat alternately playing with and teasing him, while her mother talked to Eda. Lady Chessington tried to turn a deaf ear to the growling and barking with which Nip testified his displeasure whenever his ears were meddled with; but when he retaliated by seizing Eudora's sleeve, and shaking it till the lace was rent and hanging in tatters, she lost patience.

"Pray send that tiresome little animal away, child!" she exclaimed; "his noise distracts me!"

"Nip shall be quieter, mamma. It was my fault he made such a noise," Eudora answered, cuddling him up in her arms, and laughing at his struggles to escape.

"Oblige me by sending or taking the dog away!" Lady Chessington reiterated; and her daughter rose to obey, but it was with a sullen look and a rude speech.

"You always take an antipathy to any creature I like, mamma."

Lady Chessington's brows contracted, but she answered, with composure, "You bring a sweeping charge against me, my dear. I think Nip a very pretty little fellow; but I certainly do not like to see a young lady immoderately fond of dogs and horses."

Lady Eudora winced a little, and walked to a window, where she stood drumming on a window-pane, till she abruptly asked, "Are you going to stay with Miss Granton for an hour or so? Then you will not want me; and I suppose there can be no objection to my riding with papa to see Colonel Sorbett's new mare?"

"If your papa very much wishes it, Eudora, I suppose I must consent;" and the anxious mother sighed. "If *he* wishes it!"

But with all her faults Eudora was truthful, and promptly replied, "I do not know that papa wishes it, mamma, but *I* do;" and Lady Chessington divined that the too-indulgent father had been teased into compliance.

"Then I would rather—much rather—you did not go, my love. You have not opened your piano since Miss Granton has been here; and I never see you studying now!"

"I detest studying!" was the mutinous answer; "and the last time I attempted to play my cousin Eustace took upon himself to find fault with me. I will never touch the piano again while he is here!"

"Do not exaggerate, my dear child; Mr. St. Orme is an excellent musician himself, and thought he was doing you a kindness in pointing out the way the passage you had been slurring should be played. But if you cannot appreciate Eustace's endeavours to set you right, you can avoid him by fetching your books and spending your morning here with Miss Granton."

Eda looked her pleasure at the prospect, but the earl's petted daughter would not see it, and irritably declared that she would rather have a good gallop over the common with papa and the dogs than stay at home to be snubbed by any one.

"Perhaps so; but *I* do not approve of these wild rides across country;" her mother told her, "neither do I like you to visit at a house where there is no lady to receive you."

"The colonel is a very old friend, and I should be with papa," was the defiant answer, "if *he* is satisfied——"

"But he is not," the countess interposed; "he yields against his better judgment, because he does not like to deny you anything."

"And I love him for it dearly—yes, dearly!" cried Eudora, with such vehemence that Lady Chessington grew pale with emotion, and Eda, who had been on thorns during the whole of the colloquy, could not resist giving the refractory daughter a look of appeal and entreaty. Was it possible that she did not know the pain she was inflicting on her mother by these rude and cruel speeches?

Eudora reddened, and hung her head; but she was so accustomed to have her own way, that she felt more angry at Lady Chessington's objections than ashamed of her own behaviour. Still, she could not help recalling what Eda had said on the previous day respecting her own mother; and when the countess—still too much moved to do more than nod a farewell to her guest—quitted the room, she stepped forward, as if half inclined to follow, and entreat her forgiveness, but checked the good impulse, and stood there, silent and sullen.

A servant came to the door the next minute, to say that the earl wished to know if Lady Eudora was ready; and Eda involuntarily clasped her hands, and leaned forward, in her eagerness to know what she would do. Would her self-will win the day, or her better feelings prevail?

There was a pause, and then the young lady carelessly said, "Tell papa, with my love, that I shall not be able to ride with him this morning."

Eda heard this message given, and she bent over the work that had been lying on her lap; but ere long it was snatched out of her hand by Eudora herself.

"Why, you silly little thing, you are crying—actually crying! Is it in pity for mamma, or are these tears for me?"

"I know I am very weak and foolish," Eda faltered, "but—but I could not help crying for joy, when I saw you gain a victory over yourself." And she put her arms round Eudora, and kissed the cheek that still glowed with angry feelings.

Not another word was spoken; but Eudora slid down on the floor beside her new friend, and hid her face on her lap. Her tears were not as easily evoked as Eda's; but there was a softened light in her eyes when, after a lengthy interval, she looked up and said, "Kiss me again, Eda; I would be like you if I could!"

Neither of the girls knew that the door had been softly opened, and that Lady Chessington had looked in upon them, as one knelt humiliated and penitent, and the lips of the other moved in fervent prayer that this repentance might be lasting.

(To be continued.)

MY ROSES.

A ROSE is my darling—a baby rose—
A little pink bud that gaily grows,
'Mid glistening leaves on parent tree,
And I know my rose lives just for me.

My rose it blossomed one cold spring morn,
Or ever the hawthorn-tips were born,
Or ever amid the hedgerows green
The first pale primrose was to be seen.

The days were cold and the air was chill,
The white snow covered the distant hill,
And the garden lay deserted, bare,
No flower would venture to blossom there.

And I was alone with sad sad heart,
Fresh from the place where the angels part
The dead and living, and take away
The flowers that may live some future day.

And the rose-tree saw me pass in gloom
Down the rose path to the little tomb,
By the church beyond, where lay at rest
The Rose of all roses I loved best.

Or ever the birds began to sing
My Rose was nipped by the early spring;
Chilled by the breath of the new-born year,
It dare not bloom in my garden drear.

No power on earth could its young life save,
So I laid the rose-leaves in the grave;
But my Rose, I know, by God was given,
And it blossoms now for me in heaven.

And here on earth, though the air is keen,
This parent tree has my sorrow seen,
Has seen me walking alone, alone,
My own little Rose for ever gone.

And so it has faced the early spring,
(Sheltered perhaps by some angel's wing),
With a bud upon its tender breast,
Like the little Rose I loved the best.

And truly I love this baby rose,
This little pink bud that gaily grows
'Mid glistening leaves on parent tree,
For I know it has blossomed alone for me!

And God through my tears says words of love
"This rose for earth, and thine own above
For the Rose of Sharon cares to give,
Both roses that wither and those that live."

H. G.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 6. Ananias and Sapphira.

Chapters to be read—Acts iv., v. (parts of)

INTRODUCTION. Have so far heard of the apostles and early Christians as a kind of happy family, 5,000 in number, all filled with same spirit, holding same doctrine, continuing in same fellowship; some having undergone persecution; all full of joy in believing. Ask what effect the persecution had: united more than ever together, made bold to preach the Word. New troubles begin from within the Church.

I. A Common Purse. (Read iv. 32—37.) Ask what our Lord required of those who followed Him (Matt. xvi. 24), meaning the cross of trouble, persecution, &c. Which apostles had already had to bear this? What else did He require? Remind of the young man who wished to be a disciple; what kept him back? (Matt. xix. 22.) What, therefore, would the disciples require of the converts? but in what spirit were these gifts to be made? (2 Cor. ix. 7.) What had the apostles themselves given up? What did Matthew leave, and Peter, and Andrew, and the sons of Zebedee? (Matt. iv. 20, 22.) So now the converts follow these examples. Show the children how everything comes from God—health, good, supplies, &c. (James i. 17); and from the parable of the sheep and the goats, and talents (Matt. xxv.), that these gifts are loans to be used for God in feeding the hungry, &c. Now picture the Christians selling their lands, houses, property, &c.; hastening with joy to the apostles; pouring out the money; buying necessaries; feeding the poor; delighted to do something to imitate Christ.

Practical Lessons. What does all this teach us? (1) *Religion claims all that we have.* To whom do we belong? (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.) Therefore all that we have is God's, to be used for Him; not now required to give up all for Him; still, the spirit of the requirements the same; to be ready to part with them; consider as God's and not ours; to ask with Saul, "what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts ix. 6.) (2) *The offerings must be voluntary.* Contrast the requirements of the Jewish law—giving always one-tenth—with the Christian requirement (2 Cor. ix. 7). No one was compelled to sell his lands, but all caught the infection of giving. Ask the children what they give, and how they give.

II. A Vain Offering. (Read ver. 1—11.) The Christian religion now become popular; apostles thought a great deal of, probably commended highly, those who sold their possessions to give to the poor, perhaps praised them too much. Two persons thought they would get credit too with them; who were they? Still liked their money much; how could they manage? Surely need not sell all or give up all; but then would lose some credit, so agree to keep back part and give rest, *as if* all. Picture Ananias coming in with his money, expecting commendation; Peter's indignant words; Ananias' consternation at being found out; his sudden death, and burial. Then the wife coming in, being questioned, answering as agreed upon; her equally sudden death, the quick burial; the news spreading; the effect on all the Church. Notice the following points:—(*a*) *The lie was planned,* not a hasty one on spur of the moment, but deliberately designed to get credit for liberality, hence so much the worse. (*b*) *The lie was against God.* Let children notice the proof of the divinity of the Holy Ghost from verses 3, 4, called a lie against God and Holy Ghost. (*c*) *The lie was punished.* Remind how God is called the God of truth (John xiv. 6) and of the punishment assigned to liars (Rev. xxi. 8). (*d*) *The effect on the Church.* How was it discovered? Probably by direct revelation to Peter, who also was the means of their punishment. Hence would magnify apostles, and also strike awe into the Christians; would deter others from same sin; would test the genuineness of those who gave money.

Practical Lessons. Let children see—(1) *The sinfulness of a lie.* Ask what a lie is, and show how it extends to conduct as well as words, and that half the truth is as much a lie as a direct lie. Bring home to the children the sin of deceit in copying at school, spending money not entirely theirs, deceiving as to amount of work done, &c. Remind of the (2) *Omniscience of God.* Can often deceive master, teacher, companions, but never God. What does He look at? Ask, then, for honest and guileless heart, for Holy Spirit to teach perfect truth in inward parts (Ps. li. 6), so as to fit for heaven, into which no lie may enter.

Questions to be answered.

1. How were the poor maintained?
2. Show the nature of the requirements of religion as regards giving to God.
3. Who fell into sin as regards their gifts, and how?
4. How was the sin detected?
5. What was the punishment?
6. What lessons may we learn from the story?

MAY FLOWER, OR "SERVANT OF ALL."

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LITTLE BUTTERCUP," "NOTHING BUT A SONG," "HOW TO ENTER INTO REST," ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.

"But how to perform that which is good, I find not."—*Rom.* vii. 18.

"If *Christ* be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."—*Rom.* viii. 10.

IT had been an unfortunate morning, and things had gone wrong more than once with May. It was one of those days, when, as she said to herself, "Do what you would, things went all crooked."

The first part of the afternoon she spent working with her sisters, sorely disliking it; but the morning had made her gentle, and she tried, though only in a half-hearted sort of way, to put her own will aside, and to do "what she ought to do."

At last she was free; and away she rushed to her own room, and by-and-by sprang down-stairs with bounding jumps, making the whole house resound; whereupon, first Stephen, and then Phillis, appeared from different rooms with a rebuke.

She stopped the words that came jumping to her mouth, for she did not want to be kept in, and only fidgeted till she had permission to go on.

At the garden-door she met Geraldine.

"Oh, Gerrie! you are not going to spend the afternoon with Mrs. Hurst?"

"Yes; were you going? Well, come along with me."

But May knew that Geraldine would enjoy a quiet time with their old friend; "two was company, three none," in this case. Should she give up and wait, or should she please herself and go?

"Well, what is it?" asked Gerrie, smiling. "You may really come, May Flower, so don't look so grave about it."

"Well, Gerrie, I think I won't come now; I think I will come down by-and-by."

"Will you? No, don't; I know you want to come; and you have been working quite hard this afternoon. Come along, darling, and we will have a capital time."

But Gerrie's free giving up of what May knew must have been her plan—namely, a long quiet *tête-à-tête* with Mrs. Hurst—was infectious. May began to laugh, and finally, Geraldine went alone, with a promise from her, that she would follow at five o'clock.

She spent the time idling about, doing nothing, and just worrying herself and the household with demands about what the time was—whether it was not going very slowly, whether it always went as slowly, or only to-day—till Tom came in and claimed her for a scramble.

It would have been most natural to her to send him off sharply; but, in spite of her idleness, the giving up to Gerrie had nerved her somewhat.

"Tom, do go without me," she said; "for it's only a quarter to five, and I want to go down to the rectory at five; Mrs. Hurst and Gerrie expect me."

"I dare say! Why, you can see them any day; you just come."

"*No*," May said, perfectly decidedly.

"Well, come for a quarter of an hour, then; you can do that."

So they went off, down the long garden, and over the field, till they came to the kitchen-garden, where was the old tool-shed. Tom found the key, unlocked the door, and going in, began examining all the contents, appealing every second moment to May. He wanted to make a seat for the garden, would this do, did she think? would that? How broad must the seat be? Should the legs be very short? Which was most comfortable?

May fidgeted. Tom could do that just as well without her, she thought, and she wanted to go. The small stock of patience with which she had started from the house was entirely exhausted.

"Oh, Tom, that'll *do!*" she said, sharply.

But Tom went on all the same as if she had never spoken.

"There, that'll do!" she said again. "What's the good of turning over all those old things? I wish you'd be quick!"

There was something in the pettish pleading voice that roused the mischief in Tom. He looked up, comprehending for the first time that, as he would express it, "May was in a taking."

She looked so pretty standing there, with heightened colour, twisting first on one foot and then on the other, drumming with her fingers on the hard wall, and in spite of her impatience, still waiting for him, that he laughed at her.

"I'll wait no longer, Tom!" she cried, springing to the door; but he was before her, and reached it first, and locked it.

"Won't you wait?" he asked.

"Tom! you horrid, unkind, wretched boy, let me go! I *will* go, Tom!" and she stamped her foot again and again in a frenzy of passion and rage, as he danced round her at arm's length, and then swung himself up the rafters far beyond her reach in the high pointed roof, and after many exertions, squeezed out of the tiny window at the top.

"Tom! Tom!" she shrieked.

"All right," he said, popping his head in again for a last glance. "Don't wait any longer, now;" and in another moment she heard him scramble

down the sloping roof, drop on the ground, and run off.

"Tom!" she screamed at the top of her voice, battering the door with feet and fists; but Tom was far away.

It was long before she in the least collected herself; but at last she stopped beating and calling, and listened.

"Surely he would come back;" but she listened in vain. Then other thoughts came, and the tears gathered in her large eyes, and began to fall fast.

Was this the day she had begun by wishing and trying so hard to be good?—it had been worse than any other almost; for it was long since she had given way to such a burst of passion as this, and yet she was sure she had tried, at any rate she was sure she had meant to try; but oh! why had she failed so dreadfully? If only she had been a little more patient, it would never have happened, that was quite plain; if only she had not fidgeted and got angry, or even at the very last had laughed, she was sure Tom would have come back. But none of this was so bad as the thought that, while in heart she had meant to be a good servant of, and for the Lord Jesus, she had so utterly failed outwardly. The tears fell thick as she leaned against the wooden door. How had it been? she tried to think; and then the words that Stephen had once spoken, and which were always presenting themselves to her, came again into her thoughts, about trading with the little goodness that she seemed to have of her own, instead of recognising that there was *nothing* good in herself, and that she must leave that alone, and just take and use Christ Himself; that He would give her His patience, His gentleness, His love, His goodness. She remembered he had told her not to think so much of how she had to work and plod to get on, but to think how *He* was with her to work it for her and in her. Yes, she had forgotten that, and, trying to stand, had fallen.

Many other thoughts came to her; but, though it had been outwardly such an unsuccessful day, she did not feel daunted. She began to long and hope for the next day, that *outwardly* she might show how earnestly she wanted to become like the Lord Jesus, and to put away all that was displeasing to Him.

The church clock had long since struck six in the distance. She could not understand being left there so long. Presently, seven tolled out. She knew they would be at tea now; were they leaving her there on purpose? When Tom had said what a passion she was in, had they said she should remain there as a punishment?

The time passed away very slowly; it had become quite dark in the tool-house before now, and she knew it must be getting quite dark out of doors.

She was getting very hungry and cold; never, in all her life, had she had such a punishment as this, and never had she taken any so humbly.

Eight struck—half-past eight.

Then a dreadful fear seized her. "Could they be going to leave her here all night?" She sprang from the floor in a frenzy of terror as the thought struck her.

"O God! O God!" she cried, "don't—don't let them do it!"

And even as she said the words, the thought of Stephen being at home quieted her. However naughty she had been, and however severely they might punish her, she was quite sure he would never leave her there alone all night, away from everybody.

The slow minutes passed away. Then nine struck; and she covered her face with her hands, crouching up and shivering, but always repeating, "Stephen never would; no, he never would."

(To be continued.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

29. "If we believe not, yet He (Jesus) abideth faithful" (2 Tim. ii. 13). Mention an instance from St. Matthew's Gospel of the fulfilment of this promise before the Saviour's ascension.

30. In how many of our Lord's parables is any *name* given to the persons mentioned?

31. "We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar," said our Lord's enemies (Luke xxiii. 2). Prove the falsity of this charge.

32. Quote a verse from the prophecy of Ezekiel to show that Damascus was an important commercial city.

33. St. James says (ii. 19.), "The devils also believe." Give instances proving their belief in the divinity of the Lord Jesus.

34. "Whatsoever hath a blemish," said Moses, "that shall ye not offer." Was there any exception to this rule?

35. Which is the most ancient *war* on record in Holy Scripture?

36. We read in John xix. 17; "And Jesus *bearing His cross* went forth," &c. Find the antitype.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 64.

19. Matt. xii. 23.

20. See 1 Kings ii. 13—25.

21. St. John (vi. 15.) tells us that Jesus "perceived that they would come and take Him by force, to make Him a king."

22. Gen. xxii. 18; xxi. 12; xxvi. 4; xxviii. 14.

23. See John xii. 28. The first was at His baptism (Matt. iii. 17); the next on the mount (Matt. xvii. 5).

24. Acts xv. 22, 40.



(*Drawn by* CHARLES GREEN.)

CRAZY KATE.

BY MRS. G. LINNÆUS BANKS.

EVER she wanders along the shore,
Alike in the glow and shine,
Alike when the awful waters roar,
And sprinkle her with their brine;
Watching each tiny speck of a sail,
As men look out for a star,
Wistful eyes and monotonous wail
Asking the distance afar,
"When will he come back o'er the sea?
When, oh when will our meeting be?"

Her hair was brown, and her young eye clear,
  Her raiment was neat and trim,
When the first faint shadowings of fear
  Brought her here to look for him,
When the crested waves ran swift and high,
  And their white foam lipped her feet,
And thunder-peals from an angry sky
  Were rocking her boulder-seat,
As she cried for him across the sea,
"When, oh when will our meeting be?"

Her locks are grey, and her eye is dim,
  Her dress is as worn as she,
Yet still she looks and watches for him
  To come back over the sea.
Heeding no winds that flutter her rags,
  No sun that scorches her brow,
Pacing the sands or climbing the crags,
  Peering for pennant and prow;
Ever that wail is sent o'er the sea,
"When, oh when will our meeting be?"

The very sea-birds skimming the wave,
  Hearing the piteous cry,
Have borne its echoes unto a grave
  That lies 'neath an arctic sky;
Yet answer none have they brought again,
  In all of the thirty years
She has watched with crazy heart and brain,
  And eyes that have burnt up tears.
But soon *she* will sail for the crystal sea,
And then, oh then will their meeting be!

EDWARD TURNER, CARPENTER AND BUILDER.

BY AGNES MACDONELL, AUTHOR OF "MARTIN'S VINEYARD."

CHAPTER V.

MISS VERNON.

"Then followed counsel, comfort, and the words
Which make a man feel strong in speaking truth."

ONE evening, after my work was done, I went up to the address given in the advertisement, thinking I would look at the place and see what it was like. I found the office was in one of the older squares, between the City and the West End. It was a quiet-looking house, with a plate on the door stating the hours of business. I walked once or twice up and down before the house, noticing all this, and then went home again, resolved that I would make the application for work.

The next Saturday afternoon I went to the office in Macgregor Square. An elderly man was sitting at a desk, he asked my errand, and then told me I must wait a few minutes, for Miss Vernon was engaged at the moment. So I stood waiting, hearing nothing but the scratching of the clerk's pen as he went on writing. In a while the door of an inner room opened, and some one came out. The clerk looked up over his spectacles, and waved his pen to bid me go in; the door shut behind me. A lady in a black dress, with a gold chain about her neck, was sitting at the table. I told her as clearly and simply as I could the errand I came on. She asked me the age of the young woman, whether she could read and write, and said it was not usual to receive applications from any but the girls themselves; but that as all I had stated about the girl was satisfactory, she was willing to enter her name at once.

"But," she said, "I must tell you that I have to refuse many applicants, from no fault of their own, but because they are incapable of taking the instruction here through want of previous education. For the first six months each girl must be provided for; for there is no payment made by us till a certain facility and trustworthiness is secured in the operators. Some of the girls who are homeless," the lady went on, "I take under my own care, and provide them with board and lodging, and devote the evenings to teaching them myself; but for these, ten pounds must be paid, and a less sum is paid for those who do not lodge in the house, but simply take their meals here." I told her that the young woman I spoke of would most likely be of this class, and that I was ready to pay for her entrance.

As I stood before the lady when she was entering the name and age of Barbara in a book, and arranging the time for seeing her, she said, "Your sister is very young."

I said, "She is not my sister, ma'am; she is no relation to me; but I have known her and her brother a good while, and they are orphans."

The lady looked up, and waited a moment. I can see her now as she leaned on the table, and her beautiful quiet eyes on me, as if she would read my mind.

"I do not wish to inquire into your affairs," she said, "which are sacred to yourself; but I think I can trust you to understand what I am going to say. Remember that any tie which gives you an influence and power over another, perhaps the strongest and firmest that life can give, is a great responsibility—a great trust to be used as something that God has given us. Remember—I cannot help saying this to you—remember to use the power you have nobly and generously."

These words went into my heart, and though I never thought the man or woman lived that could have made me speak about my own secret thoughts of Barbara, I felt as if this woman had called like an angel on my

heart, like the very voice of God. The words came clear and straight to my tongue, and I told her that I did understand her, and that my great hope was to help Barbara and her brother, and to stand between them and trouble to the end. I told her how I had resolved this the day I found them poor orphans, almost alone in the world. I made her understand how like a child the girl was still, and how little she thought of me, and this being so, I could not ask her to be my wife, though that was all my hope for the future, when the time to ask her should come. "And having this hope," I said, "I would not have her know that I had had a hand in this business, or that my bit of money had helped her to the new work. It would be a sort of fetter to her mind," I said, "and I care for her too well to wish to overweigh her judgment by the least thing."

The lady stood up; and after a moment or two she said, holding out her hand, "I will keep your secret till, with God's blessing, it need be no longer a secret. Send Barbara to me in the morning."

So Barbara went to the office in Macgregor Square, and this was the beginning of a happy life to her. Miss Vernon was very kind; she seemed to know the heart of every one about her, and she gave help and counsel to each one as they needed. She was very good to Barbara. I used to think there was something about Barbara that would win love from any one, and that Miss Vernon felt her pretty bright ways and the innocent gay spirit that lay under them, too. Barbara, too, was an orphan, and perhaps that made her specially kind; at any rate, she lent her books, and took her once or twice into the country with her alone, to spend the day out in the fields, and talked to her more beautifully and wisely than any written book; but never by word or sign, I found, did she reveal what I had told her that first day when I saw her at the office.

CHAPTER VI.

PATIENT LOVE.

"Forget not yet the tried intent
Of such a truth as I have meant,
My great travail so gladly spent,
Forget not yet!"

SIR T. WYAT.

I THINK Barbara had been about six months at the office in Macgregor Square when her aunt died. I had not seen her for a good while, for during those six months I had gone little near her, knowing she was safe and happy, and that I was little use to her. But when her aunt died, and she was left, I felt as if my time perhaps had come again, and I could help her.

I went down to Berners Street the evening of the day her aunt was buried. The streets were just beginning to be lighted, and it was a wet and murky night, such as we have in November. I was thinking of the future as I walked down, and trying to find out what was best to do for Barbara and her brother now. Tom had still nearly a year longer to stay at the Lambeth school, and during that time I could look out for work for him. Barbara was now without a home, and my heart yearned with a patient hope that I might take her to my own. I had been that morning to see Miss Vernon, but I had only said to her, that if she thought it the best thing for Barbara to enter the house in Macgregor Square as a boarder for the next three or six months, I was ready to pay the few pounds that were required for that purpose, and would make the payments in instalments. Miss Vernon said she was quite sure this was the best thing to be done, and asked me if I would let Barbara know that I had a hand in her going to the Home; but I said, No, if she pleased, I would rather not—not at least till I had seen Barbara myself.

I could see a faint light burning in the window of the room, as I looked up from the street; I knew Miss Vernon had been with her during the day, and I thought it likely that some of the neighbours might be there then. I knocked twice before I heard her voice say, "Come in." When I opened the door she was standing in the middle of the room, a candle with a long wick was burning on the table; the boy lay asleep on the bed. I think she had been beside him, and the two young things had been crying together till he fell asleep.

She looked very pale, and her eyes were red with crying. She set me a chair near the fire, and sat down herself. I don't know what I said to comfort her. I could not say much. I only wanted her to feel a little, from what I said, that she could turn to me whenever things went ill with her, or trouble was upon her; and I tried to say it so that she might feel I made no claim upon her, and expected no reward, for as she talked, I saw that she was calm, and settled in her purpose to go on with the work with Miss Vernon, and that, besides her sorrow, was the only thought on her mind. So I sat quiet, with my hand over my eyes, while she told me how Miss Vernon had been with her and arranged for her to board in the Home at Macgregor Square.

"I can't earn enough yet to pay the terms, I know," she said; "but Miss Vernon says she has a certain fund, left with her expressly for a case like mine, which will cover the expenses of my board and lodging. I never heard of this fund before," said Barbara, going on, "and I cannot help thinking that it springs from her in some way. Oh, how good she is! But when I asked her she said, 'Oh no!' and then she spoke so beautifully about Christian acts of love and kindness, which sometimes it was only worldly pride and hardness to refuse. But do you think it could be owing to her, after all, and that she withheld what she had done from me out of kindness?"

"Well," I said, "it's hard to tell, of course; but

she told you very plain that it wasn't she as supplied the money, you see."

I felt almost ashamed to meet Barbara's clear eyes, knowing she was deceived; and I think, too, if she had asked one more question, or looked as if she guessed the truth, I should have told her all; but her next words showed that she had no thought of me in the matter.

"My heart is full of love and gratitude to Miss Vernon," she said; "and I could not bear to owe so much to any one else in the world."

"Of course, my dear," I said, "it's quite right to accept a kindness when it's kindly meant; and Miss Vernon would never advise you to do anything that wasn't wise and straightforward for a young woman to do."

Then we talked about her poor aunt, and the tears kept rising to her eyes as she spoke. She seemed weak and excited both. "You're weak and tired," I said. "Have you had anything to eat?"

"Oh yes," she said, "the woman from below came up and brought me some tea a while ago; but Tom was so tired, I got him to go to bed after he had had his, and I forgot mine."

I got up and fetched the neglected cup of tea and piece of bread-and-butter, and stood beside her as she drank, and ate a morsel. She seemed better for the nourishment. The clock of St. Paul's struck eight. I counted the strokes as I stood there, and then I knew I must go. I had been there more than an hour.

"The woman from next door will be coming in directly," I said, "and I must go now. Good-night!"

"Good night!" she said, and then quickly she took my hand in both of hers, and said, "You are very kind! oh very, very kind! I shall never forget how kind you have been to us!"

"It's all the happiness I have," I said, "to help you. There's nothing in the world I would not do for you." And she smiled, with the tears upon her face; and so we parted.

About the end of March I got a letter from Barbara, saying that she was going to a situation in the country, as telegrapher at the Airley junction, on the South Weald line of railway. I felt almost stunned when I read this letter, for the Airley station was the nearest station to Birchfield, and within a stone's throw of my mother's cottage on the common. I wondered whether Miss Vernon had known of this; and after a while I was sure she had, for when I saw Barbara, a few days later, she told me how, the week before, Miss Vernon had taken herself and three other girls into the country for the day. She told me they had been to a wood near Airley Common, and there Miss Vernon had left them for a time, while she went to make a call somewhere in the neighbourhood. "And think," said Barbara, "it was to inquire about a lodging for me in a cottage near the Airley station, and who should be living in the cottage but your mother! She had thought of all that, and how much happier I should feel with people I should know about."

It did my heart good to see her bright and smiling, and clapping her hands, as she said how pleasant it would be to live with my mother, and I thought of the Sundays I would spend at home; and all the future began to brighten before me.

"It will be so nice that you are still in London," she said, as we parted, "for Tom's sake. I couldn't bear to leave him only I know you will be here, and you will go and see him, won't you, sometimes?"

CHAPTER VII.

RISING JEALOUSY.

"Oh, if thou knew'st how thou thyself dost harm,
And dost prejudge thy bliss, and spoil my rest!"
Earl of Sterline.

I PROMISED to go and see Tom as often as I could, and to take word of him down to her at Birchfield when I went home for my four days' holiday at Easter, which was near at hand then. But I thought when I said "good-bye" to her, and saw how the tears started to her eyes, and how troubled her heart was to leave Tom alone in London, and to part from Miss Vernon and her old life, I made up my mind that if I could any way get the people of the school to let him go, I would take the boy down with me to spend a couple of days with his sister. And so I did.

It was a soft spring afternoon, I remember, as I walked up the fields from the station, with the lad by my side. The sky was clearing after a shower, and a robin was singing in the hedge. All looked so familiar, so like the old days, and yet there was a change over everything. I was trying, as I walked along, to make my old life and my new life join hands as it were, for Barbara belonged now to both. The roses on the house side had grown since last summer, and there were tall lilac trees just bursting into bloom by the garden gate.

Barbara was standing on the walk, with a shawl and bonnet in her hand, as if she had just come in from walking. She looked up, and then ran forward with a cry of joy, and threw her arms round the boy, falling on her knees to look into his face, and then shut her eyes and laid her head upon his shoulder, and kept on saying, softly, how she loved him, and how good he was—how good. Then she held up her hand to me, still kneeling, with tears floating over her eyes, and the kindest smile on her face. And we went into the house together, where my mother was sitting knitting at the window, waiting for me. What a happy evening that was! I remember every incident of it, how it seemed like a dream to see my sister and Barbara sitting together whispering over their work, and Barbara's pretty ways to my mother, threading her needle and looking so at home and, as it seemed to me, like a daughter to her. Tom sat

watching Robert cutting ornamental flower-sticks for his sweet-peas and carnations, for he had got a place as a gardener at a gentleman's place near. Now nothing would suit little Tom but he must be a gardener too, and come and be under-gardener to Robert, as soon as ever he left school. Ann was the only quiet one, and I fancied she looked paler than she used, and graver than girls of her age; but then I knew she was very serious and religious in her feelings, and that, I thought, might be the reason.

It was a very happy evening; and as I look back I feel again the old glow of happiness that was over it, and which made it seem like an hour of sunshine before the clouds gathered and darkened over days of gloom.

They had a great many questions to ask me about my London work, and then Robert told me the news of the village, and one thing and another that he knew I should like to hear.

"You'll have to go down to the shop and see Mr. Brereton, Ned," says he, "he'll be glad to see you, and show you some of the alterations there."

"Charlie will be here, I expect, to-morrow," says my mother; "he is mostly here on Sundays."

"Charlie won't tell Ned much about the workshop, mother," said Robert, smiling; "it's not his way, you know."

"How is he going on?" I asked.

"Oh, very well," said Robert; "he works very well when he gives his mind to it, but he is so fond of amusing himself. I don't think he ever will do much on the steady line. He hasn't judgment enough for a working man; he ought to have been born a gentleman, ought Charlie. He isn't a bit proud though," said Robert, going on. "Why, another fellow, you know, that had come to be partner in a business like Brereton's, wouldn't come visiting his old friends as regular as Charlie does, you see."

"Yes," says my mother, "and he's very easy with his money too. What do you think, Ned! He comes up the other evening and finds Barbara watering the flowers I have there in the window, and wants her to give him a sprig of one of them, and somehow or other he upsets a pot of geranium; and then nothing would suit him but he must bring some fine greenhouse flower in its place. There it is, that great scarlet thing, with a name as long as my finger. Ann, just fetch the flower-pot for Ned to see. It's a fine handsome thing, no doubt, but it shades the light sadly."

"Never mind, Ann," I said; "I'll take the candle and look at it myself," and I went to the window. My heart stopped beating with a sudden angry feeling, for on the stick the Latin name was scratched through with a pencil, and underneath was written "Barbara Milton."

It was the first sharp pang of jealousy, such as I had to bear for many a day afterwards.

It is no use to tell of those days that followed; they were honey and gall to me. Once, for half an hour perhaps on Sunday, I talked with Barbara of the days in London, and her aunt, and Miss Vernon, and I could see how faithful a memory she kept, and for many an hour that night I went over again the happiness of those few minutes.

But all this vanished like a vapour, or seemed to turn and mock me like a cruel face, when Charlie Brereton came, and I heard him laugh and talk to Barbara more familiarly than I could do, who had known her so much longer. For now I saw plainly how that he had every quality to charm a woman that I had not. He just stretched out his arm and took what I could only wait for. And yet I felt my life was bound to Barbara's by a stronger tie than even happiness can give, and that while I lived it never could be broken. It is no use, as I said, to go over those four days—which have only left a clear place in my memory, worn bare with bitter thoughts, like the patches on the common where it has been seared with fire—and I must go on with my story to the end.

(To be continued.)

CHRISTIAN GRACES.

BY THE REV. G. A. CHADWICK, M.A., RECTOR OF ARMAGH.

HUMILITY.

"Be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace unto the humble."—1 PET. v. 5.

THESE words set humility very high among the Christian graces, so high as to make one suspect that she herself, like those who learn of her, has long been quietly sitting down in a lower place than she deserves. There are many virtues that men admire, even when they neglect them. False men admire truth; intemperate men admire self-control; covetous men admire generosity; spiteful men admire meekness. All this proves that when people turn away from humility with a sort of lofty scorn, that is not *merely* because they are fallen creatures. They are fallen from other virtues besides this—from others which they reverence, as well as from this which they despise. One does not like to be called "an *humble* person:" one delights in hearing it said that his position is "a *proud* one;" and we almost expect

a man to whom we look up to bear himself *proudly* in trouble or before his enemies.

Now, there are two reasons for this contempt into which humility has fallen. One is, that it can very easily be confounded with a despicable vice, and it has come in for part of the hatred that vice deserves. The other is, that pride can easily be confused with an excellent virtue, and people assume pride in order to get credit for what it looks like.

Who needs to be told what the vice is that mocks humility? Who has not heard people protest they can only do very badly what they know they do particularly well, to be praised; refuse a place of honour, to be pressed into it; call themselves humble and obscure individuals, to fix people's eyes on their importance? The most intolerable self-conceit of all is that which is constantly thrusting its lowliness upon our admiration, and calling on us to burn incense to a shrine where the veil of modesty is dropped over the brazen face of self-conceit. One longs to take these disguised boasters at their word, by consigning them to the obscurity they claim, putting another in the place they shrink from, and admitting, what is often true enough, the extreme badness of their work. Genuine humility is dishonoured by this wretched counterfeit; and men think it well to push and scramble for the foremost place, chiefly because it is even more straightforward and more manly to push and scramble, than to crawl there by low intrigue and falsehood.

Therefore, our first lesson in this virtue may well be this—to see that our humility is genuine, and shrink in abhorrence from saying lowly words to men, which we do *not* say as readily in our secret confessions to our God; and even if the words be honestly felt, we need not say them for the sake of saying them. If a man were thoroughly humble, he would never talk about it; he would never know it; he would rather suspect himself of being proud; and he would much rather take a place of honour quietly, than make a noise first and be forced there afterwards. Beyond doubt, there are hundreds of truly lowly men, whose great modesty has never once been noticed, except by God.

And then again, pride has been confused with something that is a duty to yourself and to society. It is not well to be constantly standing on your rights, and bridling up, if any one, in the push and hurry of affairs, or in ignorance and forgetfulness, sets an unconscious foot upon your side of the line; but it *is* well to prevent deliberate and wanton trespass. To stand rigidly on your rights is one thing; to let every wilful intruder trample them down is quite another. If you do this you encourage him to trample next upon your neighbours; you set an example that could not be widely followed without overturning society, and putting the world at the mercy of every insolent intruder. Just as one applauds the patriot who resists an usurper, or the citizen who prosecutes an impostor, so do we admire that cool dignified self-assertion from which impertinence recoils abashed. But people do not see how such a bearing may be worn as a breastplate by modesty herself. They think, most falsely, that humility is a matter of mere outward conduct, while it is really a state of mind, of temper, and of heart. One may feel himself most unworthy of an office or a rank, and yet he may be stern and terrible towards those who would refuse to give it due respect. "It is not *myself*, it is the position; the proper regard for exalted station; the homage due to those who bear great responsibility and do high service—it is these that are attacked in me, and these I will vehemently and resolutely defend." Is there any vanity in this?

And one more such assertion must be made. It is not pride in any man to know what he can do best, and honestly to enjoy the doing of it. The sense of pleasure in good sound work, the feeling of its value, even the sober, moderate enjoyment of that praise which follows it, is a right reward for its performance. If only that man were modest who habitually underrates himself, then modesty would be grounded in a mistake, and you would upset that great fundamental law of things, that whatever is true is good, what is false and erring is in just the same proportion bad.

What then is the true meaning of humility? It is the taking, not a false view, but the true view of our works and ourselves; knowing, indeed, what we *can* do, but also remembering all that we cannot. It is such an estimate of ourselves as does not forget our neighbours, and their gifts, abilities, claims, graces; and it is an estimate whose result is sobered down by the solemn question, "What have I that I have not received."

Now, I say that no man ever duly examined, not only a few showy things that may lift up his heart, but all that is within him and around, without learning a lesson of self-abasement.

There is something that you can do, or have already done well, and your pride begins to stir. But stay a moment. Think how much better it might have been done if the most had been made of your early opportunities; reflect whether many of those over whom your vanity now exalts itself would not, with your training and your chances, have greatly outshone your bright achievement; look how much more patience, and labour, and skill than ever you could boast have been poured out upon some far humbler object that you despise—upon the pattern of your coat; upon the baking of your bread—and the hues of your boasting will begin to fade. Then think, "A man has countless

gifts and qualities, and if I am strong in one, how weak I am in others! Perhaps I have *learned* much, but what about thinking? I have *thought* much, but what about feeling? I have *felt* much, but what about action?" And then, once more, remember tongues shall cease; knowledge shall vanish away. Would an army rejoice in its flags and guns if it knew that at nightfall they would be surrendered to the foe? And shall we pride ourselves on what is to be for ever yielded when the night cometh?

Oh, that men were wise! that they would consider how all passes except the soul, and ask, before they boasted, what about the priceless deathless tenant in this frail tent the flesh? How can I be proud of a momentary wealth, when the soul is poor and naked? proud of a decaying fairness, when it is covered with wounds and bruises? proud of health, when it is dead? proud of wisdom, when my madness has killed it? O God, put out the torchlight that flares here upon the glitter of a mock jewel, and there upon the flush of tawdry paint, and bring up the clear and searching and exposing light of a conscience which the Holy Spirit has illuminated! Show us the reality of things! Teach the stiff neck to bend, and the proud tongue to stammer; and make us willing to stoop, that we may enter by a lowly door into the fold where humble and helpless creatures are safe in their Shepherd's helping!

God resisteth the proud. Awful, but most righteous truth! He *resists them, because they resist Him.* Every chance and change, every shower that foils their pleasure, every illness that drains their strength, every danger that shakes their valour, every failure that mocks their efforts, is God's labour to convince them of their weakness—and all these they thwart. *He resists them, because they give Him the lie.*

Everything about them bears His call to abase themselves. Not only the majesty of ocean and mountain, not only the sober splendour of night and the dazzling blaze of noon, but every inimitable blade of grass, every inexplicable breeze that bloweth where it listeth, every child's question that sages cannot answer, all of these speak to us of our smallness, our weakness, and our ignorance.

And His Gospel, with its picture of One who had to die an evil and shameful death to gain us leave to live; and Christ Himself with his pleadings, His warnings, His words of encouragement to all the lowly, and rebuke to all the proud—these are flatly and knowingly contradicted by every lofty look, by every boastful thought. *He resists them, because they rob Him.* Suppose every claim of the ambitious and braggart heart were true; what then? To whose glory should the claim be made? Look at the marsh when the tide is out; how flat, and grey, and tame it is! And shall it boast when the blue wave tosses and sings above it, as if the colour, the movement, and the music were its own? And now look at the maniac, the idiot, the felon, or the crowned murderer, who, perhaps, at this hour, may drench a continent in blood. I tell you it is only the covering tide of the goodness and bounty of your God that saves you from being such as they. As justly would the swamp deny to the deep seas the honour of their sparkling waters, as you or I claim any merit for ourselves, and not for the deeper, broader, brighter ocean of the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. No wonder He resists the proud pauper, the boaster who lives on God's forbearance, and yet snatches at God's honours for his own. But this *is* wonderful—that He gives, without merit or labour, without plea for the past or strength for the present or prospect for the future, He giveth grace unto the humble. And yet, if you think of it, you will find this the mainspring of all His Gospel scheme; this is the ground-plan of Christ's redemption—grace for the humble.

What is the first step towards knowing God, or rather, being known of Him? It is that step of abhorrent recoil from self which the soul takes when God shows us what we are—how our time has been wasted, our powers perverted, our Father despised, our flesh pampered, our spirit starved, and our whole being led captive by the devil at his will. Christ is so lowly, that our first step towards him is a downward step; so that already, at the very outset, the Lord causeth the arrogancy of the proud to cease. And what is the next step towards salvation? It is that which brings us within sight of matchless abasement, willingly endured by matchless rank, and worth, and dignity. Behold our Lord lifted up to draw all men unto Him, but not high and lifted up, as in prophetic vision; He is raised aloft to be a show and a derision, and a sign spoken against! Behold the meek, the lowly of heart, led to the slaughter like a lamb, and silent as a sheep before the shearers. See Him give to the nail to pierce that hand which wielded the sword of heaven, and the feet which trod down rebellious angels and archangels in the winepress of the wrath of God. Hear Him pardon one and pray for all, when it needed but the saying of a strong stern self-asserting word to scatter like an evil dream the world which these murderers had polluted, and to leave the Eternal and Almighty Son alone with his co-equal Father! Yes, stand upon that awful slope, and look and listen, and in the light of that dear and sacred countenance, more marred than that of any man, yet fairer than the children of men—say, then, what do you think of self-assertion, and parade, and boasting.

And yet, answer not till another word is spoken. You, proud and haughty man, whose tongue has no tremor, and whose heart has no qualm — your vileness was measured by those pains and sorrows. He was put to death for your sins, and it is from the altar of sacrifice, as Ezekiel in vision saw, that the river of healing rolls.

When we come to Him without a plea but our wretchedness, and receive wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption at His hand, without money or price, then we know the meaning of Paul's question, "Where is boasting, then? It is excluded."

But that is not all. The grace of every holy thought, of every temptation vanquished, of every sacrifice wrought—all, from the first breath of spiritual life to the crowning hour when the sting of death is broken—all, all is given to the humility which utterly distrusts itself, and therefore clings to the Saviour and His work, and His very present help, as a child in danger clasps the hand of a strong and trusted friend.

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER XIII.

MR. TEXLEY returned from Worthing a day or two after the scene we have just described, and came to Chessington Park to see Eda. He expressed himself much pleased to find her recovering so rapidly, but when she told him she hoped to resume her duties at the school very shortly, he began to look embarrassed.

"The school—ah, yes, the school. It is very kind of you to be so anxious about it—very kind; but I have been thinking, my dear Miss Granton, that until the Parliamentary scheme of education has been fairly tested, I had better let my own remain in abeyance."

"Then you do not intend to re-open the school?" Eda observed, with a sinking heart.

"Well, no; I think not—at all events, I am not inclined to do so just at present. In fact, I require the building for other purposes," and he launched into a description of an elaborate plan he had devised of rearing silkworms, on a scale large enough to give employment to an immense number of people.

Eda endeavoured to be polite, and listen with some appearance of interest; but she was thinking all the while of her own blighted prospects; and after he had gone, she sat turning over her last quarter's salary, which he had put into her hand, feeling as indignant as she was grieved at this summary dismissal.

She was still musing sorrowfully over the dilemma in which that gentleman's want of stability had placed her, when the countess came in.

"It is such a warm morning, my dear, that if you are not afraid to trust yourself with Eudora, she might drive you round the park in my pony phæton. What do you say; will you go?"

Eda drew her hand across her eyes. Ah, it was so pleasant here! But she must be resolute, and face the world again; and so she steadied her voice to reply: "If Lady Eudora will drive me back to Weston Hayes, I shall prefer it. Mr. Texley tells me that he shall not require my services any longer, and I must go to London at once, and consult my brother about getting something else to do."

The countess did not seem surprised at the announcement. "There is no hurry," she said, kindly. "You have scarcely regained your strength yet, and we are very glad to have you here."

Eda cast another lingering gaze around, and then frankly said she thought it would be better for her to go at once. Lady Chessington sat down opposite her. "You say this because you think it your duty to go. But if I could arrange for you to remain with us, would you like to do so?"

The joyful "Oh, madam!" was sufficient reply.

"Whether you do or do not leave us, we shall never forget that we are indebted to you for the life of our only child. But it is not for that reason I ask you if you will stay at Chessington. It is because I think —*I hope*—you have influence with my daughter, and would use it for her good."

Eda looked doubtful. Just at present Lady Eudora seemed pleased to come in and out of the room and chat, whenever she was in the humour, which was often, and always treated her with much kindness and confidence; but it would be no easy task to retain the good will of a wayward girl who rebelled against parental control, and could only be governed by appeals to her feelings.

"I see—you are afraid that I should expect too much," observed the countess, who had been closely studying Eda's features, "and perhaps blame you for some of Eudora's shortcomings; but you mistake me. I believe Miss Texley is right when she says that you are well-principled and—religious. I should be very glad for my daughter to have the example of your consistent conduct always before her eyes. I have great faith in example, Miss Granton; and as you are about her own age, and she likes you, the companionship may be beneficial to both. You shall



(*Drawn by* F. Barnard.)

"I do not choose to tell you all my secrets, sir."—*p.* 103.

share the lessons Eudora still takes, and I shall insist that she studies with you for a certain time daily, so that you may have opportunities of improving yourself while you are with us."

"I should like it very, very much!" Eda now replied, unhesitatingly; for she could not be insensible to the advantages of such an arrangement. "Mamma always regretted that her illness interfered with the education she intended to give me. But what will Lady Eudora say? I fear that I am not sufficiently advanced to be of much service to her, even if she were willing to accept my instructions."

"We will not ask you to assume so responsible an office as governess to Eudora has always proved," the countess answered, rather sadly; "it would be placing you in an awkward position, and would certainly defeat my object. But the little she knows has been learned so carelessly and superficially, that I think you will find her far behind you in all useful acquirements. This is why we wish you to urge and invite her to take a greater interest in them. If she sees *you* steadily striving to advance yourself, we have a hope that she too may become more studious and feminine."

"I am glad you are to stay with us!" Eudora said, when Eda had gratefully accepted the post of useful companion to the young lady—"very glad; but don't try your hand at converting me into a good little body like yourself. Mamma has tried and failed, and I'd rather not undergo the process again."

"Don't be alarmed!" was the smiling reply; "I have not sufficient faith in my abilities to attempt such a task. Besides, I'm not quite sure that I should like your ladyship to be precisely as myself. *You* possess qualities of which I could not make much use, while my homely tastes and fancies would not sit very well on Lord Chessington's daughter."

Eudora shrugged her shoulders. "You dive more deeply into the marrow of the matter than I do. However, you must not forget my warning. I like you very much; but you are not to preach at me every time I think my way the best, and follow it."

"I will remember to guard my tongue."

"And your eyes too," Eudora told her. "I don't like to be subdued by a look; it provokes me dreadfully; and you have an exasperating way of wincing and colouring if I speak a little—ever so little—rudely to mamma, even when you ought to know that I don't mean anything by it."

"You are schooling me rather sharply. Will you not make one concession in return for the many you demand?" asked Eda, still smiling.

"No, no—not one; for you are shrewd enough to bind me down by some promise I should have a trouble in fulfilling. If you live with me, you must put up with me *as I am!*"

"Then your ladyship must be equally forbearing,' said Eda, gently but firmly. "I cannot change my nature nor my habits of thought; neither would I wish to do so. I will not intrude them upon you, if I can help it; but it will be easier for you than for me to do away with my tendency to look sad and sorry when you vex the countess."

"By behaving better, I suppose! Are you offended with me, Miss Granton, that you administer such a sharp reproof?"

"I was not pretending to reprove; only to remind your ladyship that you must allow me a little latitude as well as yourself."

"As you please!" said Eudora, carelessly. "I think we have had enough of this subject, and so I'll thank you not to force it upon me again. I came to tell you that if you feel well enough, mamma would like you to come down-stairs this evening. She wishes to introduce you to papa and my cousin."

Eda began to feel excited and nervous at the prospect of the introduction.

"If Lady Chessington wishes it, of course I must obey, but I shall be glad when the ordeal is over."

Eudora laughed. "Why, you're not afraid of papa, surely! He is a tall, imposing-looking old gentleman with a deep gruffy voice; but he's the easiest, kindest old dear that ever lived! He's not half as terrible as my cousin Eustace, though *he* is very mild and gentlemanly, and never uses slang, nor smokes horrible cigars, nor gets quarrelsome after dinner, as I have seen men who give themselves greater airs. But then you cannot help knowing that all the while he is saying such civil things he is gauging you mentally, and that you cannot speak a word awry, or commit a foolish action, but he detects it, and despises you for it."

"I do not suppose Mr. St. Orme will trouble himself much about such an insignificant person as I am!" Eda replied, less moved by this description than she would have been if the young lady had not taken an aggrieved tone, as if prompted by resentment for some offence Mr. St. Orme had given her.

"But he will trouble himself about you, for you are to be my companion, and he professes so much cousinly affection for your humble servant, that he will want to satisfy himself whether you are all mamma and Miss Texley represent you."

"I should like to see Miss Texley, and thank her for speaking of me so kindly," said Eda, with grateful warmth.

"Pouf! she would only read you a lecture for wasting her time. Why did you interrupt me? I was telling you about my cousin Eustace."

"But you spoke as if you found the subject a disagreeable one," Eda reminded her.

"So it is. I do not mean that Eustace is personally a disagreeable fellow, quite the contrary; but it's just because he is always in the right that I don't like him; at least, not as much as I might but for that provoking fact. It is a pity," she added, stooping to pat the Maltese kitten that had established itself

on Eda's footstool—"a great pity, because when papa dies, Eustace will have the title, and I the estates. By the way, you are not to enter into any compact with mamma respecting this wonderful cousin of mine. I'll not have his praises sung in my ears, nor his good qualities rehearsed at every opportunity. I would not marry him if I loved him, just because I can see that every one is so eager for me to do do so. Well?" she queried, raising her hot face, when she found that Eda made no comment upon her speech; "why do you not say what you think? I shall not quarrel with you for it."

But Eda would not be drawn into discussing so delicate a matter. "I am afraid I have not been listening very attentively. I am troubled about my dress. What ought I to wear this evening?"

"Pink gauze and spangles, of course!" laughed Eudora. "Oh, you goose! what could look nicer than the black merino you are now wearing?"

With her customary consideration, Lady Chessington came up-stairs herself to fetch Eda, glanced approvingly at her simple toilet, and had established her in a corner of her own sofa when the gentlemen joined them. The ordeal was not such a trying one, after all, as she had expected it to be. Mr. St. Orme, a quiet intellectual-looking young man, merely bowed, and went to a distant table to finish a design he was drawing for the countess's worsted-work; and the earl, after shaking her hand warmly, and telling her he should never forget what she had done for his dear little girl, buried himself in a newspaper, and bade Eudora give him some music.

She went to the piano, carelessly dashed off a hunting song and a march, then jumped up again, and ran off to frisk on the lawn in the moonlight with a couple of huge hounds, whose rough gambols would have frightened many girls of her age.

"Dear Eustace, will you ask Eudora to come in?" the countess said, anxiously. "She will wet her feet, and catch a violent cold."

Mr. St. Orme rose, and left the room, but returned presently without the truant; and Lady Chessington, after struggling a while with her maternal fears, appealed to the earl. "Pray call Eudora in, John; there is a heavy dew to-night!"

"Nonsense, dear! it will not hurt her," he said, without looking up from his paper.

"But if I wish it?"

"Why, then, send Eustace to fetch her."

"He has been, and she refuses to come," said the mother, her voice quivering with indignation.

"Oh well, don't be cross with her, mamma; she means no harm; her high spirits carry her away," the earl remarked, as he rose to open a glass door, and insist upon the young lady's return.

"You are abominably disobedient, Eudora!" he exclaimed, as she came in, shaking the drops from her tangled tresses, and clasping her hands so coaxingly round his arm, that he relaxed into a fond smile. "Why will you do such mad things? I'm quite ashamed of you!"

"Oh, but it was so lovely out there in the moonlight!" she answered, enthusiastically, "and dear old Ponto had been tied up all day. It was quite a charity to give him a run. Now wasn't it, papa?"

"Talking of dogs," the earl observed, "Colonel Sorbett wants to buy Ponto, and I have half promised to let him go. We have more dogs about the place than we know what to do with."

The father and daughter were instantly deep in an argument on the subject, and Eudora's prank was forgotten, till Lady Chessington interposed, to bid her go and take off her wet shoes.

"I don't think they are wet, mamma; but," she added, the next moment, "to oblige you, I'll put on another pair."

"Ah yes, always do as your mother tells you, my dear child," said the earl; and then he resumed his article in the newspaper, satisfied that he had done his duty, and quite oblivious of the disobedience he had left unrebuked, or rather rebuked in such a manner that utter silence would have been preferable. Lady Chessington heaved a bitter sigh; but no one seemed to divine what she must feel when her authority was thus set at nought except Mr. St. Orme. He came to where she was sitting, ostensibly to show her how much progress he had made, but really to draw her into a pleasant chat, in which Eda was courteously included.

Eudora, who was always restless, presently flitted towards them, but on finding that the subject under discussion was a serious one, she seized the first opportunity to challenge Mr. St. Orme to a game at chess. But she overrated her power; he could not forget that not an hour since she had wilfully resisted his entreaties, and, with a cold politeness that made Eudora's eyes emit angry flashes, he declined. He was just going to the library, he added, to fetch a review in which there was an article Lady Chessington would like to hear, because it bore upon what she had just been saying.

"It would only bore me to hear it," said Eudora, pettishly, "so I'll go and rouse papa from his nap. I dare say he will be civil enough to play at bésique or backgammon with me. It was much pleasanter out on the lawn than it is here."

As no one made any reply to this rude speech, she walked away, and avoided her mother's corner for the remainder of the evening.

CHAPTER XIV.

"You have not told me what you think of my cousin Eustace," Lady Eudora observed, on the following morning, as she was assisting Eda to select some books for their studies, and decide how much time should be given to each.

"I have not seen enough of Mr. St. Orme to

venture an opinion; but I thought him very different to what you had led me to expect."

"Because he was tolerably civil to you? How could he be less? You are a stranger. But you must have seen how ungracious he was to me when I invited him to a game at chess."

Eudora appeared to have quite forgotten her treatment of her much-enduring cousin when he carried to her the countess's message, and added his own urgent entreaties that she would obey it; but Eda, who had been on thorns during the scene, could not be equally oblivious.

"Mamma is very fond of him," said Eudora.

"I dare say. His manner to Lady Chessington is very nice."

"And mine is not, eh?"

"I was not instituting any comparison," Eda assured her, with truth, for her thoughts had flown to her own mother and Mark.

"But that is what your observation implied," Lady Eudora persisted. "Come, be brave, Miss Granton, and say yes."

But Eda would not do this. She did not see any reason why she should be drawn into saying things that gave offence, because Lady Eudora's conscience pricked her so continually.

"I thought you always spoke the truth," she was tauntingly told.

"And so I hope I do; but your ladyship should not insist upon knowing what I think on subjects that do not concern me."

"Why, little honesty, why?"

"Because you know that I *cannot* say I think you behave well to the countess."

Eudora eagerly defended herself.

"Pray, was there any harm in my being on the lawn last night? Was it *unladylike* or *unfeminine*, as mamma is so fond of calling everything I do?"

"I am not here to be the judge of your actions," Eda reminded her. "Shall we read together?"

"I should have come in-doors directly," Eudora went on, "if Eustace had not been sent to enforce the command; but I do not choose to be dictated to by him."

"Which of these French dictionaries do you use?" she was asked.

"Either—both—I don't care. Do talk to me, Eda, and never mind offending me. If you would only enter into my difficulties a little, you would see that I am not always to blame. The root of the evil is that mamma and I have not a thought nor feeling in common, and therefore it is impossible for us to get on together. You see, she made my going out last night—though I did it without a thought of its being wrong—a crime, a positive crime!"

"For shame, Lady Eudora! how can you say so? The only feeling your mother expressed was anxiety lest you should catch cold through your imprudence."

"But I never do catch cold."

"I beg your pardon; it is not half an hour since you complained that your throat felt sore."

"Then I *am* in the wrong for once; but in general it is as I said—mamma and I can never see things in the same light."

"And you consider that Lady Chessington ought to set aside her opinions in deference to those of her daughter," observed Eda, with good-humoured sarcasm.

"No, I do not; but still I maintain that I have assigned the true reason of our quarrels; can you say that I have not?"

"Yes, Lady Eudora. You bid me be frank, and so I will plainly tell you that I fear your own selfishness is the real cause of all your troubles."

"This is the first time I have ever been called selfish," said Eudora, haughtily; and there was a long silence, during which Eda, distressed at having given offence by her plain dealing, was debating whether she ought to have said so much.

"What influence can I ever hope to have with this young girl," she asked herself, "if I begin by blurting out things which displease her? Yet she bids me be frank, and insists upon hearing the truth from my lips. If I were to stoop to side with her, or even prevaricate, I should despise myself."

"Shall we not begin reading, Lady Eudora?" she said, presently; and, receiving no answer, she read alone the first page of the book they had selected.

"I do not understand this sentence," she observed, presently; "it is an idiom, and puzzles one."

"Does it? Let me see what I can make of it!"

Lady Eudora was interested at last! Whenever there was a difficulty to surmount she could generally arouse herself to do battle with it; and already Eda's offences were forgotten.

"We must ask Eustace, he is an excellent French scholar, he will tell us," she said, after puzzling over the page for some time; and a servant was despatched to the library to request Mr. St. Orme to come to the pretty sunny apartment Lady Chessington had set apart for the fair students.

He came directly, his dark and rather impassive face softening into smiles when Eudora jumped up to induct him into her own chair, and paid him the unusual compliment of listening to his explanations, continuing the lesson till Lord Chessington sent for his daughter to write some notes for him.

"Do you like your new friend?" Mr. St. Orme asked his cousin, as they quitted the room together.

"Yes, but it is against my will," was the laughing response. "She makes me look into myself, and I do not like it."

"*Pourquoi?*" Mr. St. Orme demanded; but Eudora put her finger on her lip.

"I do not choose to tell you all my secrets, sir. Have you forgiven me for being so rude to you last night, when you brought me mamma's message?"

"Certainly," he answered, with an amused yet tender smile. "It would be the height of folly to brood over the caprices of a spoiled child."

"Don't snub me just as I am really sorry for my naughtiness," she said, with a look that completed her victory.

"Prove it by walking with me this afternoon as far as the rectory, will you, dear coz?"

"No," said Eudora, her mood suddenly changing. "As mamma would not let me ride with papa yesterday, I will not walk with you to-day."

"Very well, little whimsical, then I will walk alone," he answered, and kissing his hand to her, with a smile, he went away; but when Eudora could no longer see his face, it became heavily shadowed, for he loved her dearly. Why was he obliged to feel that, even if she would consent to fulfil the wishes of her parents and become his wife, he could not hope to be happy with her? It is true that she often evinced the most passionate regret for her faults, and would plead for forgiveness with such coaxing words and caresses, that those who loved her found it difficult to refuse her anything; but unfortunately her repentance was never lasting. How could it be, when, as Eda had truly averred, *self*—her own will, her own wishes—were the dominant chords of a heart as yet untuned to better things?

(*To be continued.*)

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 7. The First Martyr.

Chapters to be read—Acts vi., vii., (parts of).

INTRODUCTION. Ask what was the special work of the apostles, and what special gifts were given for this work; but what other work had now devolved upon them? Show how the care of so many converts would press unduly upon them, and take up too much time. They sent out as missionaries for something better than merely distributing food. Besides, difficulties had arisen: some began to join their number for what they could get; some began to complain that they did not get enough—what could the apostles do?

I. Stephen chosen. (Read vi. 1—8). Question on the appointment of the seven. From xxi. 8 show that being called "evangelists," their work was not merely to see after the poor, but also to teach and preach. Show the same fact from Stephen's preaching (ver. 14), and Philip's mission work in Samaria (ix. 29). Still their primary work to "serve tables," *i.e.*, receive money, distribute food, keep accounts, &c. What sort of men would be selected? Why honest? Also must be full of wisdom from above, so as to decide such disputes as had arisen. Remind of Solomon, who asked for and received special wisdom for his work (1 Kings iii. 12). Notice the election. Seven, the perfect number, chosen by the Christians generally, brought to the apostles; special prayer offered up, an ordination by laying on of hands (v. 6). Now see Stephen's identity: for what was he specially noted? (ver. 5, 8) and what was the result of his faith? So that faith was not only required in the person healed, but in the performer of the miracle. But great success in God's work is sure to meet with opposition.

II. Stephen accused. (Read vi. 9—15.) How did the Scribes often treat Christ? Did they succeed in "catching Him in His talk?" Whence had He His wisdom? The same now descended on Stephen: how can they then catch him? Only by false witnesses. What shall they accuse him of? The Jews all devotedly attached to the Temple and laws of Moses; a cry raised against that sure to be caught up. So the Council (Sanhedrim) again assembled, and Stephen brought in as prisoner. Is he afraid or nervous? What was promised to be given in the same hour? (Matt. x. 19.) How did his face look?

III. Stephen's defence. It will not be well to attempt to read the whole of Stephen's speech. Let the children clearly understand the charge: that he had spoken blasphemous words against (*a*) the Temple, (*b*) the law—viz., that Jesus was going to destroy the Temple, and change the laws of Moses. How will he defend himself? Tell the children how fond the Jews were of hearing the story of their past history. So he began with that to show how their forefathers worshipped God long before the building of the Temple and the giving of the law. Question as follows:—Who was the father of the Jewish race? How did he worship God? What special revelations did he have? To whom else did God appear? How often to Jacob? What three promises as to the land, the seed, and the Messiah, were made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Who was raised up afterwards as the great deliverer? Where did God appear to Him? How did He reveal Himself? (ver. 32). What had he to do on the Mount Sinai? Why put off his shoes? What made it holy ground? When did the Israelites worship God? What became of the Tabernacle in their wanderings? Who was the great Jewish king? What did he desire to do? Why was not David allowed to build a temple? Who did build it? Yet, even then, what had Isaiah said about God's temple? (ver. 49), &c., &c. Then point out the lessons from all this. (1) That the patriarchs lived in full communion with God 450 years before the law was given on Mount Sinai, therefore, the laws or customs of Moses (*i.e.*, the law of ceremonies), could not be

universally binding. (2) That as the Temple was not built till Solomon's reign, it could not be so absolutely necessary. Remind what Christ had said of the nature of spiritual worship (John iv. 24), and that though He allows a house of prayer, He looks at the worship rather than the place.

IV. Stephen's end. (Read 56—60). Point out how the Council evidently became impatient. So he rebuked them boldly for the murder of Christ, like the prophets before him. Contrast their fury, gnashing of teeth, &c., though his judges, with the calmness and dignity of the prisoner. What peace had he in his heart? What special vision was vouchsafed him? His full faith enabled him to see the heavens opened. Now picture the scene of his death: the members of the council frantic with rage, stopping their ears so as not to hear his words, shouting out so as to drown his voice, carrying him along headlong down the slope of the city through the gate, the crowd rushing after them, catching the excitement; the Christians (although 5,000) powerless; at last the place of execution reached, the witnesses, laying aside their clothes, casting the first stones (John viii. 7), the others joining in; Stephen calm and composed, first commending his own soul, and then praying for theirs, till he falls asleep; devout men carry his body to be buried (viii. 2), and angels carry his soul to glory.

V. The Lessons. His life and death show the beauty of (1) *personal holiness.* Why was he specially chosen? What kind of witnesses were they compelled to bring against him? Let children ask themselves if their lives are like his—no outward sins to be taken hold of. Remind of Daniel—people who wished him harm could only find his religious zeal to bring against him. (2) *Faith.* Show how his implicit faith entered into his whole life; could do wonders, speak wisely, endure boldly, because he had implicit confidence in God. How was this faith rewarded? May be ours, too, if sought for. Should put up prayer, "help Thou mine unbelief!" (3) *Forgiveness.* Like his master, prayed for murderers. Children find it hard to forgive little wrongs, but must forgive or will not be forgiven. Remind of parable of unmerciful servant, and of Lord's Prayer. If like Stephen, may, like him, receive crown of glory. (James i. 12.)

Questions to be answered.

1. Why were the seven evangelists chosen?
2. Show from lives of Stephen and Philip what their work was.
3. What charge was made against Stephen?
4. How did he answer the charge?
5. What two lessons may be learned from his defence?
6. What are the lessons of his life?

MAY FLOWER, or "SERVANT OF ALL."

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LITTLE BUTTERCUP," "NOTHING BUT A SONG," "HOW TO ENTER INTO REST," ETC.

CHAPTER IX.

"Forgiving one another, as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you."—Eph. iv. 28.

"Charity never faileth."—1 Cor. xiii. 8.

AND how had it fared with those at home? Geraldine expected May to join her in vain.

At last, when she did not come, she told Mrs. Hurst what had happened.

"I know she gave up coming to let me enjoy a nice quiet time all by myself with you. Won't you and Dr. Hurst come and have tea with us?—it will be such a nice surprise for her!"

"To be sure we will! I am so glad to see little May Flower growing gentle and patient. We must do all we can to help her, Gerrie; it's a sore fight for that wayward little heart sometimes, but I believe it is set so true that it will come forth a fine polished shaft. Go to the study, dear, and tell the Doctor what you have just told me, for he is busy, and nothing else will bring him; but that will, for he's a shepherd that sets great store by the lambs of his flock."

Geraldine soon returned with the Doctor, and the three strolled up the little wood

There was a joyous welcome for kind Dr. and Mrs. Hurst; and then Geraldine asked, "Where's May?"

"May?" said Phillis, "we thought she was with you."

"Oh, it's all right," added Stephen; "I saw her go off with Tom, and afterwards met the young Lincolns looking for him, and wanting him for tea and supper, so they are sure to have taken her with them."

"I am disappointed," said the Doctor, gravely. "I came on purpose to have tea with the May Flower, and now you tell me she's out."

"Will you go home again, Dr. Hurst?" asked Gerrie, saucily.

"No, Geraldine, for I see I must remain to keep you in order."

"And to cheer us up a bit, Doctor," said Stephen. "We have dwindled down to nothing, it seems, now Jem is away, and the two children out."

And so they spent a very happy evening together, not so much as dreaming of the little prisoner close at hand.

It was long past ten before they began to think of the absentees.

"How late the children are!" said Phillis, "nothing can have happened, can it, Stephen?"

"Oh dear no, they are all right with the Lincolns. Ah, here they are!" and footsteps came running to the door.

"I only hear one!" said Geraldine, nervously, and the next instant Tom bounded into the room.

"Such a jolly time we've had!" he exclaimed.

"But where 's the May Flower?" asked Phillis.

Tom stopped short, dazed and bewildered; then pressed his hands to his forehead.

"May? May?" he repeated.

"Yes, May; where is she?" Stephen demanded, sharply.

"Oh, my word! what shall I do?"

"Speak this moment, Tom!" he commanded.

"I locked her in the tool-house at the bottom of the fields, and forgot all about her." He fumbled in his pockets. "Here's the key."

There was a moment of intense silence. Their mother's and father's most precious legacy to them—their little white May Flower—shut up in that gloomy place all these hours alone, and away from every one!

Tom was the first to speak. "Oh, Stephen—Phillis—Dr. Hurst—I didn't mean it!"

Stephen seized the key, and they started up together.

"Don't all come," he said decidedly; "it may frighten her worse."

Frighten her worse! the words were dreadful, for they remembered too well May's terror of the dark; her dread and fear of being where no one could get to her.

"Oh, do let me come!" Tom groaned.

"Let him go with you, Stephen," pleaded Gerrie, he can come back quickly to us. Stephen was already off, with Tom at his heels, the old Doctor following fast.

What a weird eerie place it looked! They trod lightly as they neared it, and before putting the key in the lock, Stephen called to her—

"May, May!" No answer, and he tore the door open. The starlight let him distinguish a heap on the ground, and he knelt down over it.

"May, May—here's Stephen."

"Oh May!" cried Tom; and then she shivered and spoke—

"Oh Stephen, Stephen!"

"Here I am, darling!" and presently she knew she was gathered up and safe in his arms.

"Run on, Tom, and tell them it's mostly all right, and let them get a warm bath for her."

"Oh, Stephen, I knew you'd come; I knew you would! why were you so long?" and her wild clinging told him how fearfully he had been expected and longed for.

"My poor little May Flower, we none of us knew where you were, or we would never have been so cruel!" and comforting and soothing the trembling child, very much as her mother might have done, he carried her home, and gave her into the safe care of Phillis and Mrs. Hurst.

Tom, having entreated Geraldine not to leave him, sat in a wretched state of misery.

"Now Tom, how did this happen?" asked Stephen, in a severe voice.

"Stephen," said Geraldine, "he is dreadfully sorry and troubled."

"So he ought to be," answered the brother in a voice that struck terror into Tom's heart.

"He has told me how it happened," Geraldine went on, and then she gave a short sketch of what had taken place.

"I cannot say what I think of such utter carelessness and selfishness," said Stephen, indignantly; "to shut a tender girl like that up for hours alone, without food, and in cold and darkness, just because you had chosen to exert yourself to put her in a passion; she might have screamed there for ever, and never have been heard—and very probably did."

"Can I go to bed?" asked Tom.

"Of course you can," and he followed him out of the room.

Geraldine trembled and sorrowed.

"My dear," said Dr. Hurst to Geraldine, "you must be content to leave Tom to his brothers. I fear he has not been going on altogether well lately, and it may be just as well to let him know it. If I'd a boy of my own, I'd trust him to Stephen sooner than to any one. He's most like your father of any of you, and not so unlike your mother."

"It seems so hard to do without them sometimes," she said.

"Surely it must, my child; so hard that it is no wonder He says, 'as one whom his *mother* comforteth so will I comfort you.' But you must not, and I know you do not, grudge them their happiness. It would have been very woeful for one to have long outlived the other, though either of them would have been content to do it for their children's sake, if it had been God's will."

Stephen returned as he said the last words; and Gerrie, whose heart stood strongly to forgiving and comforting those who were penitent and sorrowful, spoke again.

"Have you forgiven him, Stephen?"

"Nothing of the sort, Geraldine."

"If I may say so, my dear fellow," said Dr. Hurst, "don't be too hard on him now."

"Why, of course, Dr. Hurst, you may say anything to any of us; but Tom must learn some way or other that this sort of thing cannot be allowed. Why, anything might have happened to a nervous child like May."

"Indeed, I grant it is serious," continued the Doctor; "but I think he has learnt the lesson pretty severely this time. His cheeks were white enough to tell that tale."

"Am I hard on him, Gerrie?"

"I suppose it is right to be hard," she said; "but I do think, Stephen, that now kindness and forgiveness will make him take it more truly to heart, than if we treat him as if he were in disgrace."

Phillis came down to say that, beyond the fright and a slight cold, May was all right. Mrs. Hurst was saying her adieux to May Flower and Tom, and begged the Doctor would be ready when she came down. Geraldine went to fetch his coat, and he followed her into the hall.

"Don't let your sunny face grow long, my dear," he said; "depend on it it will be all right, and Tom will be much the better for this. I think you are a little apt, all of you, to think Stephen a bit hard; but I fancy you're mostly wrong there; and, Gerrie, I don't mind telling you, for it will make you all the better to him; but I know right well, there is not one of you—not even you, my child—who misses your dear mother as he does."

Then Mrs. Hurst came down, and they went. The others said "Good-night," glad to get to their beds; but Stephen went off to Tom.

"Tom, old fellow," he said, sitting down on his bed; "I'm afraid lest I've been a bit hard on you. I've done things just as careless and wrong, and worse; don't fret about it now. May seems all right, and we have too many failings ourselves to be hard on each other."

Then the sorrow had its course, and Tom protested against having meant to hurt, or frighten, or really annoy May; to all of which the elder brother assented. Then came a little talk about May, her brightness and sweetness, her tiresome, naughty, teasing ways; and then Lawrence gave him an idea of some of the talks he had had with her; and at last left him to fall asleep, with the thought of their May Flower's value, and some idea of what a noble thing it must be to be a Christian, such as it was the dear wish of her wild eager little heart to be!

(To be continued.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

37. That the Saviour's own kinsmen would disbelieve in Him was distinctly foretold in the Psalms. Quote the exact words of the prophecy, and give an instance of its fulfilment.

38. By how many of the sacred writers is the Lord Jesus Christ designated a "*Mediator?*"

39. Indicate any point of resemblance between the charge brought against our Lord and that against St. Stephen.

40. "Take heed," said our Lord (St. Mark viii. 15), "beware of the leaven of *Herod*." How frequently are the Herodians mentioned in the Gospels?

41. Quote the exact words of the *oldest* letter recorded in Holy Scripture.

42. Find the earliest mention of the city of Damascus—and state where it is referred to for the last time in Scripture.

43. Give a complete list from the Old Testament of those who were raised from the dead.

44. Before how many tribunals was the Saviour brought after His apprehension?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 80.

25. Luke ix. 45.

26. St. Luke (ix. 31) says they "spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem."

27. "I thank my God, I speak with tongues *more than ye all*" (1 Cor. xiv. 18).

28. Mark xiii. 1; Luke xxi. 5, 6. He foretold the destruction of the Temple.

PEACE.

BY THE REV. M. G. WATKINS, M.A.

NOT where a mighty senate sways
With august laws a conquered land;
Not when the sea, 'neath soft grey haze,
With kisses soothes a much-vexed strand—

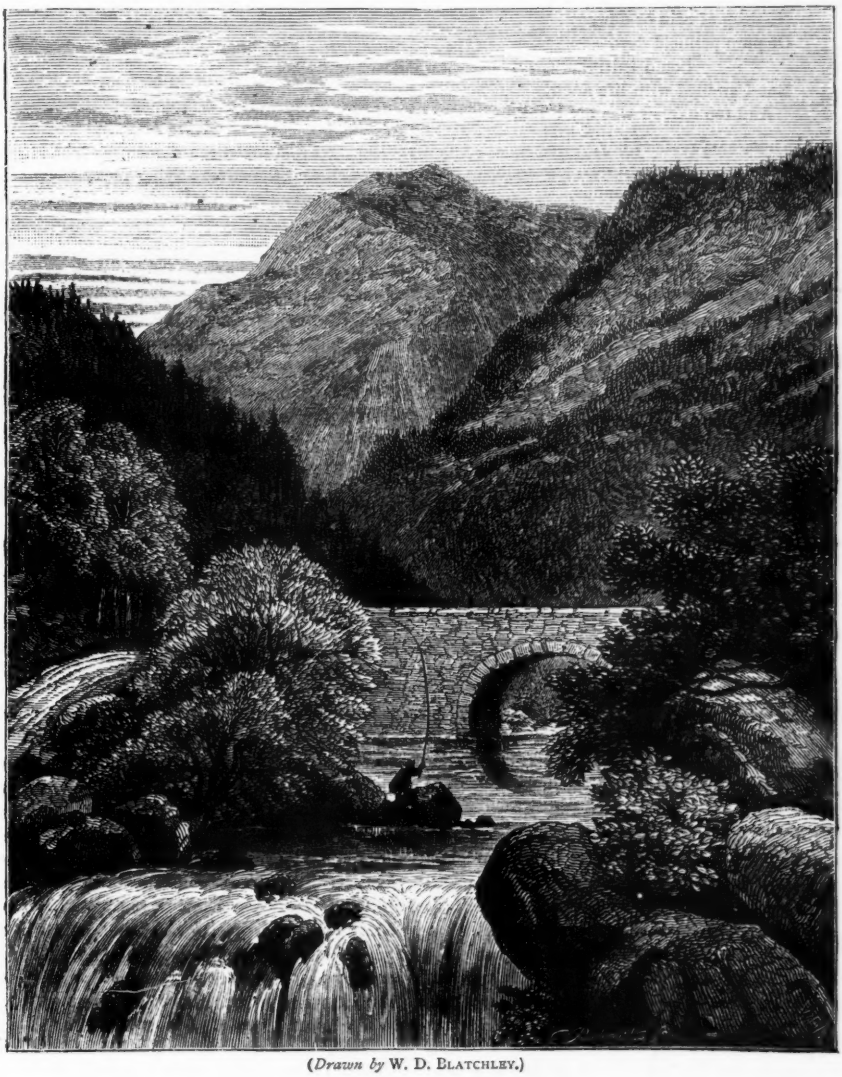
Not there doth Peace, exalted high,
Breathe her best blessings on the earth;
Nor where the summer twilights die,
Nor spring cheers all with sudden mirth.

But seek with me my rustic home,
Close bosomed in the heath-pink hills;
There large-eyed Peace oft loves to come,
And every house with plenty fills.

There rests she, in some yellow field
Tufted with wheat-sheaves; or she strays
Where orchards mellow fruitage yield,
Or by the river's devious ways.

And oft around the farms her feet
Roam, while above the pigeons flit,
And swallows dart; and children meet
To play, while dames, regarding, knit.

'Tis there Peace waves her olive wand,
Throned on a breadth of sunlit plain;
Gives blessings with ungrudging hand,
And brings the Golden Age again.



(*Drawn by* W. D. Blatchley.)

THE MOUNTAIN STREAM.

BY MRS. G. LINNÆUS BANKS.

AMONG the giant hills,
The cloud-veiled grand old hills,
I was born;
And the mist with tiny rills
Softly fed me night and morn.

The spirits of the snow,
The soft delicious snow,
O'er my head
Shook their pinions to and fro,
Till their plumage filled my bed.

I grew, as grows a child,
A laughing, lisping child,
At the breast;
And my mountain-mother smiled
As her granite lips caressed.

No drop of rain or dew,
Of pure pellucid dew,
Could I drink,
But I swelled with life anew,
And too narrow was my brink.

Then, as a restless boy,
A brawling wayward boy,
Out of bounds,
On I leapt with noisy joy,
Fleet as stag outstripping hounds.

Headlong o'er stone and rock,
O'er rough and craggy rock,
Plunging deep,
Till I staggered with the shock,
And in spray was forced to weep.

Then, mad, and stung with shame,
Hiding in glens for shame,
Sullen, dark,
Till I flashed to light again
Fresh and gleeful as a lark.

'Mid pealing heather bells,
Sweet, chiming, purple bells,
Did I mate,
And my wedded bosom swells
As I onward roll elate.

Now see me in my prime,
My full developed prime,
Sweep along,
Though monotonous as Time,
Yet sonorous as song.

A noble mountain stream,
A torrent of a stream,
Giving back
From my sheen the sunset beam,
And the silvery flying rack.

The solitary hills,
My old ancestral hills,
Sigh for me;
Yet though ev'ry ripple thrills,
With fondest memory,

My stream will see its nest,
Its hoary mountain nest,
Nevermore;
For ambition fills my breast,
And I seek a wider shore.

I quit the shade of pines,
Dark, moaning, perfumed pines;
Fleet and fast
Through the world my course inclines
And I seek the Sea at last.

THE OPENING OF THE GATES.

BY THE REV. J. SPENCE, D.D., AUTHOR OF "HOURS WITH DANIEL."

"Jesus said unto her, I am the Resurrection, and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die."—ST. JOHN xi. 25, 26.

HOW often, in circumstances of solemnity and sadness, do these words fall on our ears! In the cemetery or the churchyard, whither we go, following the remains of some loved object to their last resting-place, these sentences are uttered or read to cheer the mourners, and to lift the thoughts from the gloom of the grave to the glory of the future. Wondrous words in a world of separation, sorrow, and death, well calculated to soothe the soul in the midst of the deepest grief! They were spoken to a sorrowing sister, who mourned the loss of an only brother. They were spoken by One who Himself was a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief, who was poor and despised amongst men, and who shortly after died. They were uttered in a world where all men die; where the living tread on the dust of their fathers; where death, with gloomy pomp and resistless sway, sweeps generation after generation into the tomb. In the face of the universal dominion of mortality, and in the very presence of the grave, Jesus Christ proclaimed, "I am the Resurrection and the Life." The very idea, to say nothing of the reality of such a thing, was in the highest degree sublime; as far above all that mere men had conceived, as heaven transcends the earth. While philosophy was speculating, and reason was groping in the dark, and men's minds were occupied with the question of the soul's immortality and wondering whether there was any light for man in the terrible darkness of the future, One in human form appeared, who declared, with the authority of God, "I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Here was more than positive doctrine; more, if possible, even than the certainty of Divine utterance: the very Conqueror of Death had come! Without hesitation or reserve Christ proclaimed Himself the Lord of Life for evermore.

I. Our Lord's words, "*I am the Resurrection and the Life*," were in answer to Martha, one of the sisters of Bethany. Jesus had said to her, "Thy

brother shall rise again;" to which she responded, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." She knew as a matter of ordinary belief that, after a long series of events, when the end of the world came, and the day of judgment arrived, her brother Lazarus would arise at the general resurrection of the dead. But to her remark the Saviour replied, "I am the Resurrection and the Life," thus claiming the resurrection of the body as a thing entirely within the sphere of His power and operation; that at His own pleasure He could give or restore life at any time; that His power to impart it or restore it was not limited to special times and seasons; and that all life in time and eternity was connected with Him, and depended on Him. The redemption of the body is one of the results of Christ's mediation and sacrifice—one of the achievements of His glorious mission—one of the triumphs of His incarnation and resurrection. The remains which we commit to the dust will be reanimated in undying form; the sea will give up its dead; and all, small and great, that have ever lived, will receive an incorruptible body, and stand before God. Curious questions regarding the nature of this body have often been asked; but the inquiry is only speculative, and can receive here no clear and definite answer. It is enough for us to know that what is sown in dishonour will be raised in glory, what is sown in weakness will be raised in power, what is sown a natural body will be raised a spiritual body; that the present corruptible body must put on incorruption, and that this mortal tabernacle must put on immortality. The forms which we have looked upon with love become changed in death, and must be buried out of our sight, to be sown in corruption amid the putrescence and gloom of the grave; but they will be raised again, and reappear, to be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body.

Another truth implied here is that the resurrection is altogether and entirely in the power of Christ. It will not in any sense be the mere work or development of Nature, but entirely supernatural, the direct act of Him who is the Master and the Lord of Nature. The whole power to accomplish it is in Christ, and that, too, not by delegation from another, but in virtue of His own supremacy in the universe, and from His position as Mediator. The Eternal Word "without whom was not anything made that was made," He, and "not a succession of physical causes and effects produced all life at the beginning; and He, and no operation of material forces or natural laws, will reanimate the dead at the Resurrection." In Him, independently of time, are the whole truth, reality, and power of the resurrection.

Further, it is here taught that this resurrection-power is in Christ in virtue of the fact that He is the life. "In Him was life;" and He is the Resurrection, because He is the Life. All life for the creature is in Him, emanates from Him, and depends on Him: hence death cannot cope with His power. It is but a part of His arrangement, to accomplish His will and execute His purpose. As all life has its source in Him, so, of course, He can continue it, suspend it, or restore it, at His pleasure. He is the Fountain and centre of life, and must be the cause and principle of all resurrection. The resurrection is life in conflict with death; and the victory is declared in the power and exhibited in the person of the Lord Jesus. He came to give life to men, and "He that hath the Son of God hath life," now and for evermore.

II. Based on the assertion respecting Himself, our Lord says, "*He that believeth in Me, though he were dead* [though he have died], *yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.*" Those words are for us and for the children of men in all time. Our Lord speaks both of natural death and of spiritual life. In the words *live* and *die*, as understood merely of natural life and death, there is a seeming paradox. "The believer in Me, though he should have died naturally, shall live, while the living man who really believes in Me shall never really die: belief in Me shall ensure life after death, against death and in the very midst of it." The meaning of the Saviour's words is that in reality there is no such thing as death to the believer in Christ Jesus. And this fact is stated in two forms: first, that the believer, though he die in the body, yet for all that shall live; secondly, that the true life of the believer is continuous and eternal, not subject to anything that can rightly be called death. "The former statement is meant to meet the case of the departed, as dead in the body; the latter to meet our own case, as living both in the body and the spirit." In the same way, and with the same import, the Saviour had previously said, "If a man keep My saying, he shall never see death" (John viii. 51). The first statement is that the believer, though he must die in the body, and though he should have already died naturally, shall live again. This is simply the announcement of a resurrection, and of a blessed resurrection to all who sleep in Jesus. Our relatives, our friends, our companions, pass away out of our sight from the land of the living; with much grief and many tears, with hearts oppressed and hopes darkened, we follow their remains to their resting-place in the narrow house appointed for all living. But we sorrow not as those without hope. As disciples of Christ Jesus, the Conqueror of the grave, death is to them but as a sleep, and they will awake and arise at the last great day with their bodies fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body; for Christ himself arose, the first-fruits of them that

sleep; so they that are Christ's will arise at His coming. The bodies of those loved ones which you have followed to the grave, the forms which you decorate and care for now as the earthly tabernacles of your spirits, will moulder into dust and disappear. But that very dust is precious in the sight of God, and at the Resurrection a spiritual body will arise, possessing a specific and individual identity, not an identity of particles and organisation—"for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven"—but such an identity as will show that the new body belongs to the man, the parent, the brother, the child, the friend, or whoever he may be, and not to another. And for all that we now know the germ of this future spiritual body may belong in some way to the body which dies, just as the seed corn has in itself the germ of a coming harvest.

But the Saviour goes beyond this statement, and says that the man who lives now and believes in Him, the man who lives by the faith of Christ, will never die. Death, as it is ordinarily understood, contemplated, or feared, will not be death to him. This is for our encouragement and hope. No man who lives by faith in the Son of God, no man whose life Christ is, shall ever "taste of death" (John viii. 52). Death to the natural man has a sting, and over him the grave has a victory; but to the Christian death has no sting, and over him the grave has no victory. God makes him the conqueror, through Jesus Christ the Lord. It is true that he must die, and descend into the tomb, like other men; but in his case the aspect and character of death are altogether changed. Death cannot claim him as its victim, and is only the messenger of his Lord, to convey him to a land of unspeakably higher life and greater glory. When the bell of the prison-house strikes the fatal hour, the officers of justice enter the cell of the condemned prisoner, to bring him forth to execution. His life has been forfeited, law claims him, and he ascends the scaffold, the victim of justice, to expiate to society his crimes by his death. So men, in their unregenerate state, under condemnation, die. But to the Christian it is not thus: to him "there is no condemnation." Neither death nor law can claim him, for he belongs to Christ, and "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." "All things," says the Apostle, "are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's" (1 Cor. iii. 22, 23). The believer in Jesus, then, does not belong to death: he cannot be its victim. On the contrary, death belongs to him, and is one of the processes necessary to his perfection. It comes not to claim him, but as a friendly messenger, to introduce him to a higher life, and to bring him to a purer and more resplendent home—the inheritance of the saints in light.

What is death, as ordinarily contemplated by men—death to the natural, unregenerate man? Mark the contrast, and you will see with what force of truth the Saviour says, "He that liveth and believeth in Me shall never die."

1. Death to man naturally is a cessation of this present state of existence, the life to which men fondly cling, and in which they would fain continue; but to the Christian it brings an increase of his true life. Men seek no higher life than the present sensuous and material existence, and death, when it comes, closes this for ever. But the man who believes in Christ Jesus, and abides in Him, has a higher life—the divine life—in his soul. All life has the capability and property in the living thing of sustaining relations to other objects. This is of the very essence of life. The plant has relations to the soil, the sunshine and the showers of heaven. When these are severed, it dies. The animal has relations to others of its species, and to the food which sustains it from day to day. So man has these physical and sensible relations in this world; but his true life is spiritual, having its highest relations to God and to eternity. Yet, alas! in human degeneracy these are not duly recognised. While intellectually, and, in some sense, morally alive, men are spiritually dead, and the reign of spiritual death is co-extensive with the reign of sin. The life in man which depends on the visible and the material ends by death; but the true life of manhood, in its relation to God, death cannot touch. It is divine. This new and better life the Christian reaches and realises through faith in the Incarnate Son of God by the power of His Spirit. He possesses it now, as the true life of his being; and death, when it comes, brings no cessation of it, no interruption to it, even for a moment. On the contrary, it leads to a wonderful increase of life, and actually gives our being a glorious expansion. How many things hinder, hamper, and depress that life in this world! The entanglements of the flesh, the pains and propensities of this "vile body," the temptations and weaknesses incident to the present state of being, often act as clogs and hindrances to the higher life of manhood; but death to the Christian is emancipation from all these, so that his life rises with a celestial elasticity, to soar and exercise itself amid realities unknown before, or only dimly seen by faith. Hence the Christian does not die: death is no penal visitation to him; it does not end or interrupt his true life, but is the way to its increase and expansion.

2. Death to men naturally is an end of activity and labour; to the Christian it issues in an increase

of activity, and leads to a higher sphere of service. The man who in commerce, or business, or daily round of toil lives to himself, has his course of activity ended at death, it closes all his effort, and interrupts all his labour. Death changes his countenance, stops his energy, paralyses his powers, and sends him away. He may have been buying and selling and getting gain, all for himself and without any thought of God, but the end of this comes when he dies. To the Christian, however, who has not lived to himself, but to his Lord, who has found in daily duty and in secular toil the discharge of a spiritual obligation and the rendering of a spiritual service, death is no interruption of his activity, no cessation of his service. His powers in this world have their highest exercise in doing the will of God and seeking His glory, and death but issues in an increase of activity, and leads him to a grander and wider field of service. More harmoniously, more fully, more felicitously, will all the powers of the redeemed soul engage in the service of Christ among the spirits of the just made perfect. The same song will be sung, the same service will continue, the same powers will be exercised for ever. Death to the Christian will be neither end nor interruption of activity. 'Tis true he returns not again to his counting-house; he is seen no more in the place of merchandise; his home, his study, his books shall not know him any more; but the powers with which he served God in these spheres on earth are only emancipated, purified, elevated by death, and his energy is expanded and increased for a service which will be as a rest and a reward for ever. Hence the believer in Jesus does not die, does not find in death any end of his activity for his Lord.

3. Death is to man naturally an interruption of friendship; to the Christian it is a closer union with the highest Friend, a more intimate realisation of that friendship which is the charm of life. Death bursts the bonds and cuts the ties of all mere human friendships. "Yours till death" is not an unfrequent mode of expressing attachments here, tacitly acknowledging that beyond this world they do not go. Friendship may watch at the bedside of the dying, affection may soothe the last hours of earthly life, it may shed tears over the grave of the departed, and mourn the ruthless power which respected not its bonds and vows; but death absolutely ends many of the friendships of this life, and interrupts them all. We cannot follow our friends, even in thought or imagination, into the unseen state; but death is no interruption to the highest friendships of the soul, only a closer, dearer, purer realisation of them. At home in the body here we are absent from the Lord; absent from the body we are present with the Lord. Death only brings the soul into closer fellowship with his Divine Friend—brings him to be with Christ, which is far better, and introduces him to other friendships in the general assembly and church of the firstborn. With Christ, beholding Him, made like Him, in the innumerable company of angels, the fellowship of prophets, apostles, martyrs, to these holy friendships death is the way; so that the Christian's highest bonds of affection and interest suffer no interruption when he falls asleep in Jesus. He does not die.

4. Finally, death to men in their natural state is separation from their sources of enjoyment; to the Christian it brings an inconceivable accession of enjoyment. Where the treasure is, there will the heart be also. If here the affections are set on Mammon, on worldly property, or pleasure; if with eager grasp and strongest love the soul clings to the things of this life in any form as its highest ambition and pursuit, death will bring separation from them for ever, and the soul, stripped of its pleasures and joys, will pass into the unseen to encounter unaided the realities of eternity. But by the believer here the highest joys are found in the love of Christ, in communion with God, in fellowship with saints, in the beauties of holiness, and in devotion and service to his Saviour and Lord. To these death is no interruption; from these it cannot separate the soul. In the unseen state to which death introduces the Christian, the love of Christ will be paramount, the beauties of holiness triumphant, communion with God perfect, and His service an untiring devotion and delight. Hence, for the Christian "to die is gain;" he passes into higher ranges of blessedness; he will find all his means and sources of enjoyment continued, augmented, purified, whether they be intellectual, social, or spiritual; and he will rise to inherit, in all its wealth and freshness, the joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. Yes, "to die is gain." To pass away from toil and sorrow, from suffering, imperfection, and tears, to the land of celestial song, untiring service, and everlasting joy, to be for ever with the Lord, this is not, in the ordinary human sense, to die. Death is but the gateway of life, the entrance on a state of perfection, resplendence, and glory inconceivable now. It takes from the Christian no energy, no activity, no prospect, no joy, no holy acquisition; but, on the contrary, introduces him, emancipated from the burdens of imperfection and sin, into a mansion in the Father's house above, amid the effulgence of ineffable light and eternal glory. He passes away from earth, but his noblest life continues, and rises to blossom and bear fruit in the paradise of God. He does not "taste death;" in his case it is "swallowed up in victory." Thus do all who have right to the tree of life "enter in through the gates into the city."

"ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."

BY THOMAS ARCHER.

"IN THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH."

THERE are some of whom we might be ready to say, They dwell in that valley, that the shadow of death lies darkling before them, constantly enwrapping them, enshrouding them in gloom. We are accustomed to think so of persons suffering from what we call incurable diseases, some of which are painful, occasionally agonising, others susceptible of relief from the suffering that attends them.

We are so apt to forget that we are every one of us incurable. Though we may not at present be aware of the nature of the disease that will bear us further and further into that valley, where the wings of the great angel, so seeming dark as to overshadow all things, may yet be revealed to us as glowing with the brightness of the light which yet our unaccustomed eyes cannot behold, we are none the less certain to succumb to it. It may be that some of us will live to be conscious of no other than the most fatal of all diseases—because no mortal cure has been or ever will be found for it—incurable old age. There have been those who lived long enough to look calmly at the slowly lengthening shadow in the valley, and almost to wonder if Death had forgotten and were departing from them, leaving only the black trail behind; but the time at last came, perhaps when they had learnt to see more than shadow, to catch the glint of the heavenly glory beyond.

It is a happy thought that many a poor afflicted child of God has seen this too, and continues to see it daily, although, like St. Paul, they also die daily. It is comforting to believe that many who know what their disease is—who are pronounced to be "hopelessly incurable" in a rather different sense to that in which we may all be declared to be hopelessly incurable also—do not dwell perpetually in the Valley of the Shadow. Christ has come to them and taken them out of it, that even in this life, where He is they may be also, secure in the love of the Father, having already, if one may so speak, overcome death through Him who is the Resurrection and the Life. The great, the essential difference between these sufferers and the rest of mankind is that they are almost always conscious of the disease which is incurable because of its accompanying pain, and that they are disqualified for many of the ordinary uses, and also most of the ordinary enjoyments of life. Perhaps the chief poignant sense of their condition is that they are no longer capable of fulfilling the ordinary duties of life either. They must be dependent always; and to many souls the suspicion that they may live only to be a burden on others, to take instead of giving, to lean upon instead of supporting, is itself almost intolerable, until they learn to look higher, and acknowledge that not only all the things of the world, but we ourselves, they and theirs, belong to God, and that life and death, height and depth, principalities and powers, are but His creatures, incapable of separating us from His love. The same reflection, coupled with that of our own incurability and our own constant liability to be stricken down with hopeless and painful malady, should surely lead us to recognise the duty of helping some among the thousands who have not only lost health, but with it the means of maintaining life, and, more sadly still, the hope of restoration to former strength, or even temporary recovery.

I have already spoken of the work done by convalescent homes and hospitals; but there are those who, being sick unto death, yet do not soon die—those who must be discharged from hospitals uncured, in order to make room for the curable, and who, unable to work, unaccustomed to beg, and almost ready to meet death itself rather than sink into sordid abject pauperism, know not whither to turn in their dire necessity. It was to aid these that an appeal was written twenty years ago, asking for funds to establish an institution for the reception of those suffering from hopeless disease. It is to see what has been the result of that appeal that I visit the Royal Hospital for Incurables at Putney Heath to-day.

It was in 1854 that Doctor Andrew Reed—to whose indicating hand we are indebted for the installation of many of our noblest charities—made an urgent appeal on behalf of those who, being discharged as incurable from various hospitals, were left helpless, and often destitute, since, amidst all the institutions which beneficence had founded, there were none to which they could prefer a claim.

Let us see what has been done in twenty years to alleviate what might seem to be almost hopeless suffering.

Let us, coming face to face with the mystery of pain, and looking as it were from afar on that dark shadow which yet always lies so near to every one of us, note how in the heart of the mystery there is hidden a joyful hope for humanity, how in the very shadow of death there is a light that never yet has shone on land or sea.

It is a still autumnal day, and as we turn up the wooded lane on the left of the hill leading from the Putney Railway Station to Wimbledon, a tender gleam in the grey clouds betokens coming rainfall. A light hanging drift descends upon the distant hills, and breaks into pale vaporous shapes amidst the wooded slopes and valleys. The yellow leaves that strew the ground lie motionless, as though they waited for their late companions to fall gently from the branches overhead and join their silent company.

Coming into a broader roadway, and passing through the gate of a lodge, we come almost suddenly upon a glorious sloping lawn, adorned with goodly trees, worthy of the great building—meant for a ducal residence, and now put to nobler uses—which, for all its stately look, has about it a home-likeness that is full of promise. Even the matchless landscape lying around it—the expanse of wood and dale, the soft slopes of Surrey hills, the deep-embowered glades where the bronze-and-gold of moving tree-tops takes a changeful sheen from slowly-drifting clouds, or reflects strange gleams of colour from the glistening silver of the rain—will not hold us from the nearer glow of windows bright with flowers, which give a festal look to the place, although it is so quiet that we stand and imagine for a moment what it is that we have come to see. For this great mansion, with its long rows of windows, and wide-spreading wings, is the home of a hundred and fifty-four men and women, some of whom have been suddenly stricken down, and others have slowly fallen day by day into a condition of incurable disease, and, in many cases, also into a condition of utter bodily helplessness. They, and the attendants whose constant kindly services are essential for their relief, constitute the family of what is known, plainly enough, as "The Royal Hospital for Incurables." There are no distinctions among its members, though in their previous lives they have belonged to various grades—no distinctions, at least, except those which arise from personal qualifications.

The claim for election to the benefits of the charity is the necessity which is implied in the name of the institution itself; and once within its sheltering walls the patients, whose failing eyes brighten, and whose wan cheeks flush with every loving mention of it as their home, are all alike sharers in its benefits.

Not only the 154 at present within its walls, however, but 327 of those who, having family and friends with whom to dwell, receive pensions of £20 a year each, and so cease to be a heavy burden to others.

Do you think at first sight, and from the external appearance of the building, that charity here has gone beyond precedent in providing such a place—a palatial pile standing amidst scenery that one might well come far to see? Remember what is the need of those who have to be lifted out of the dark hopeless depths of what is almost despair, of those who, finding themselves banished from hospital wards, unable to earn their bread, feeling themselves a burden upon those for whom they would almost consent to die rather than live upon their poverty, of those who, in the midst of hourly pain, have the mental anguish of knowing that the long calendar of darkening days may find them utterly dependent on the toil of those most dear to them, and whose few expedients can bring little ease, and will not serve to hide the ever-present sense of disappointment and distress.

Think how much wealth is wasted daily in the world, and what a small part of it suffices to lighten by every available means the burden of such lives as these; the sorrow of those who, in the dreadful deprivation of what to us seems almost all that makes life dear, have no resource between that provided for them in such a place as this and the infirmary-ward of a workhouse, amidst sordid surroundings and the hard mechanical unfeeling officialism, which in such cases is little more than organised neglect.

There are people who would reduce all charitable institutions—yes, even such as this, of which living personal interest, and the care that comes of more than merely casual benevolence, are the very foundation and corner-stone—to a dead level of official rule, in which benevolence should be represented by a mechanical department, and the sentiment of charity by a self-elected board of control, dealing with public subscriptions as though they were a poor-rate, and recognising neither individual interest nor the right of contributors to give it expression. Such a system would lack the very qualification most needed here, and to be found only in that voluntary personal interest that brings to the recipients of bounty more than the mere bounty itself, the heart-throb of sympathy, the feeling that the gift means more than the cold official recognition of a national duty, that it is the expression of loving-kindness ever active and living; and so making for the helpless, the destitute, and the dying, not a mere asylum, but a home.

(*To be concluded.*)

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER XV.

LADY CHESSINGTON was satisfied with the results of her experiment, when she found that, after a few weeks passed in the society of Eda, her daughter became less hoydenish in her habits, more respectful to her, and more considerate to every one about her. Had Eudora been asked whether this was in any way owing to the quiet thoughtful girl with whom so much of her time was spent, she would have ridiculed the idea, and declared that it was she who influenced Eda; for the latter had one of those temperaments that are rarely disturbed by trifles, and it was no trouble to her to submit to the often capricious and always imperious behests of the young lady. They walked, rode, or studied, when and where Eudora pleased, for it cost Eda no effort to give up her own wishes; only, when the question came, "Is it right or wrong?" she was firm as a rock; and, not a little to her surprise and vexation, the earl's daughter found that it was she who must yield, or go her way alone.

In a long affectionate letter to Mark, his sister related her change of abode, and the circumstances that had led to it. The answer was as warm and sympathising as Mark's letters ever were, but Eda laid it down with a disappointed look, for it contained nothing from Richie, whose congratulations she had been counting upon. It was rare that he forgot her now. Indeed, Mark was apt to grumble, when Richie, finding him occupied in writing to his sister, would start out to buy some trifle—a sachet, an ornamental card, or a photograph of some illustrious personage—that he insisted on enclosing in the letter. Trifles all, costing Richie far less than the cigars and new gloves on which he expended a larger amount of his earnings than he could well afford, but they fed the flame of the liking with which he had contrived to inspire Eda; and all the romance of her nature centred round the handsome youth, whom—unpleasant remembrance that would force itself upon her—Mrs. Granton had distrusted as much as it was in her gentle nature to distrust any one.

Eda was engaged in her own room one afternoon, availing herself of the absence of Lady Eudora, who had gone with her parents to pay some calls, to alter one of her dresses, when the countess's maid knocked at the door to tell her that a gentleman from London was asking to see Miss Granton on business.

"My brother! It must be my brother!" she joyfully exclaimed, as she started from her chair to run to him; but Morison shook her head dissentingly.

"Lor' no, miss! it can't be, for this person is grey-haired, and looks quite aged."

On hearing this the affectionate sister was filled with alarm. Surely something must have befallen Mark, and this stranger had come to the Park to acquaint her with it! The thought was such an agitating one, that she was pale and trembling when she entered the library, where he awaited her.

Morison had correctly described his appearance. She found herself confronted by a gentlemanly man, whose stooping shoulders, grey locks, and coloured spectacles, gave him quite a venerable aspect. He extended his hand, but she did not take it, for she was trying to decide what it was about him that seemed so familiar, although she could be positive that she had never seen him before.

"Don't you know me, Eda? Don't you really know me?" he asked, and she started violently, for the voice was Richard Atwood's.

He pushed back the grey wig to display the curly chestnut hair beneath, removed his glasses, and the muffling wrapper that had helped to hide the lower part of his face, and then laughed heartily at her disconcerted looks.

"Aren't you glad to see me?" he asked, sobering a little, when he found that she did not speak. "I could not keep away from you any longer! I wanted to satisfy myself that you are well, and kindly treated, and so on; and as Mark could not be coaxed into taking holiday with me, I came alone. *You* don't blame me for it, do you, Eda?" he asked, in his low sweet tones. "Was it not natural that I should be anxious about you?"

"Blame you! How could I be so ungrateful?" she exclaimed. "But why this disguise?"

Richie laughed and reddened. "You dear, simple child! What would my lord and my lady say, if they heard that a gay young fellow of two-and-twenty had been visiting you? I think it was a very bright thought of mine, to make myself so like your grandpapa that no one could raise an objection to me."

"But the deception, Richie!"

"Excellent, isn't it?" he answered, with an amused glance at himself in a looking-glass opposite. "I flatter myself I have played my part admirably. The smart lady's-maid who ushered me here wheeled forward the easiest chair she could find for the asthmatic old gentleman who could scarcely find breath to thank her!" And Richie began rehearsing the feeble movements and wheezing cough with which he had imposed upon Morison, as well as the footman who had admitted him.



(*Drawn by* F. BARNARD.)

"Looking over the sketches the artist had added to his portfolio."—*p.* 123.

But Eda could not share his mirth, nor force a smile, when he reminded her how he had assumed a similar guise in a charade the last Christmas they had spent together. She could not help thinking of what Richie ignored—the false position in which his heedless act had placed her. He was here under false colours; if his masquerading were detected, she would be overwhelmed with shame; and if it were not, she would have the burden of the secret upon her—a secret which would keep her in continual terror lest it should leak out, and give her kind friends cause for displeasure. If the earl and countess returned before Richie departed, they would good-naturedly insist on exercising their hospitality towards her visitor; and even if he quitted the house at once, Eudora would hear of his coming, would question her concerning him, and what could she say?

Her distress became so apparent, that Richie perceived it, and taking both her hands in his, entreated to know what was the matter. It was difficult to make him comprehend the view she had taken of his mad freak; but when he saw that she was absolutely unhappy lest Lord and Lady Chessington should find him there, he hastily resumed his disguise, reproaching himself the while.

"If I were not the most thoughtless of fellows, I should have taken these things into consideration; but the prospect of seeing you, and the fun of dressing up, must have blinded me to the folly of the act. I begin to think Mark is right when he says my head is always leading me into blunders that make my heart ache in the repairing. But pray don't look so uneasy, dear Eda; say you forgive me, and I'm off! Send me away with a smile, or I shall be miserable for ever! Ah, if I had such a dear little thing as you always at my elbow, I should not be continually getting into scrapes, should I?"

But Eda, whose eyes were fixed on the carriage drive by which the Chessingtons would return, could scarcely answer him; nor did she breathe freely till, leaning on his walking-stick, he had crossed the park in the direction of the nearest railway station, and she had no longer reason to fear a rencontre which might end in his detection.

It was not until her agitation had subsided that she began to find excuses for Richie, and to think that his good intentions deserved a better requital than her averted looks and cold speeches. For a few days she continued to feel both grieved and vexed at the heedlessness with which, in the fun of proving himself an excellent actor, he forgot who might be compromised by it, as well as the insult to the earl and countess such trickery involved. But when Richie's regrets were repeated in a very penitent and affectionate letter, Eda ceased to recollect anything but that his attachment for his old playfellow had been stronger than his prudence, or she might have said with truth, his sense of honour and honesty.

"Morison tells me that you had a visitor while we were out," Lady Eudora observed, the morning after Richie's escapade. "You dismissed him very abruptly, didn't you?"

"He was in haste to get back to town," said Eda, with burning cheeks and downcast eyes.

Something unusual in her voice made Eudora raise her head from her book to glance at her. "Did this old gentleman bring you any bad news? Is your brother well?"

"Quite, thank you; I have not had any bad news; but don't ask me any more questions, please."

Eudora looked suprised, but changed the subject directly, and in the pleasure of teaching fresh tricks to her Skye terrier forgot all that seemed odd in Eda's reticence respecting her visitor.

The winter was now setting in. Eda had been at Chessington for a considerable period, and still the countess hugged herself on the success of her experiment. The chilliness of the weather was certainly one reason why Eudora was sometimes found drawing and writing at times that used to be devoted to a romp with the dogs or a visit to the stables with her father. But another and more powerful one was to be found in the attachment with which Eda had inspired her. She was often haughty and capricious, and would even tease her quiet little companion for her conscientious scruples; yet it was for these scruples she loved and respected her; and, as Lady Chessington had predicted, the steady unobtrusive course of one who took the Bible for her guide in all things influenced Eudora more than she was aware of. She could not wrangle with, nor set her will against Eda's, as she did against her mother's and Mr. St. Orme's, because Eda refused to be drawn into arguments, or to assist her in finding excuses for her conduct. What Lady Eudora was proposing to do was either *right* or *wrong*; there could be no middle way, no alternative, but positively obeying or disobeying; and the wayward heiress often found herself refraining from some folly, lest she should seem to deserve the reproach of selfishness that had already stung her so deeply.

"Do *you* think me selfish, Eustace?" she asked her cousin, one day when she had been pondering over the annoying charge.

"Quite the contrary, dear Dora; I have often had to tell you that you are disposed to be too generous."

"Ah, but I do not mean in that sense of the word. I am fond of giving; I like to relieve the poor, and so on; but in what Eda would call the deeper and truer meaning of the word, now tell me, am I selfish?"

"I am afraid so, Eudora!" and he spoke in such low, pained tones, that she divined what it cost him to say this. She was beginning to dimly perceive that one may be the possessor of many virtues, and even pride oneself on being liberal to the needy, courteous to inferiors, and capable of many acts that recommend us to those about us, yet do none of

these things in singleness of heart. Neither was it so easy as it had been to thrust the blame of her misdeeds on her mother. Lady Chessington was treated by Eda with an affectionate respect that shamed Eudora into imitating it; and a severe illness, that left the countess so weak that she required constant attention, drew the mother and daughter still closer together.

During the festivities of Christmas, Mr. Allonby, the artist, came to Chessington Hall on his way back to London, and Eda was pleased to be able to renew her acquaintance with him. He had been in Scotland, he told her, copying a picture for a nobleman to whom the Earl of Chessington had recommended him, and his stay had been protracted till he was longing to get back to the old friends at home.

"You will scarcely be in time to spend your Christmas with them," Eda observed, as, with Lady Eudora, she sat looking over the sketches the artist had added to his portfolio. "Are you one of a large family, Mr. Allonby?"

"Yes, Miss Granton; but there are only three of us left in the old home—Gran, who presides over our domestic affairs, my sister Doris, and I."

"Though last, not least, I suppose," Eudora jestingly observed. "Confess now, Mr. Allonby, that you are an autocrat when in the bosom of your family."

He laughed good-humouredly. "I leave the defence of my character to Doris and Gran. I am content to know that they will be glad to have me back. Doris assures me in her last letter that, although I give her no end of trouble with my 'untidy ways,' I am very much missed."

"For the identical reason you have just alleged?" Eudora demanded.

"Possibly. Did I not just tell your ladyship that I am too prudent to attempt my own defence? By the way, I have a sketch somewhere here of my sister. She has one of those statuesque faces we artists find excellent studies."

As he tossed over the bits of cardboard he had taken from a pocket of the portfolio, two or three fell at the feet of Eda. She stooped for them, and was transfixed with surprise, for, portrayed on the largest, she beheld the smiling eyes and somewhat sensuous but winning features of Richie Atwood.

Involuntarily she glanced at Mr. Allonby for an explanation, but he was talking to the countess, who had just joined them, and Eda had had time to overcome her astonishment when Lady Eudora peeped over her shoulder.

"What are you looking at? What a very handsome man! Who is he, Mr. Allonby?"

"Do you really call that a handsome face, Lady Eudora?" the artist inquired, as she held the sketch towards him.

"Certainly I do," she promptly responded. "Do not you?"

"In some respects, yes; but it lacks something without which no mere animal beauty can give any real satisfaction. This face is weak. If there were greater breadth in the brow, and the chin and upper lip were moulded in a more resolute cast, how it would improve it!"

"Ah!" said Eudora, carelessly, "you look at all these things from an artistic point of view. Do you ever find your ideal? But of course you do not; how should you, when your too critical eyes detect imperfections in the most perfect?"

"Isn't that a paradox, Lady Eudora?" Mr. Allonby asked, with a smile.

"I dare say it is, for I am not great at arguing. You have not told us the name of this gentleman over whose portrait we are disputing. Is he one of the shining characters of this generation?"

"No, indeed," the artist answered, quickly, and in rather disparaging tones; "that is the head of a young fellow who visits at the house of one of my relatives, and his name is ——"

"I can tell you the name of the original of that sketch, Lady Eudora," said Eda, crimsoning to the temples, but speaking very distinctly. "It is Richard Atwood, and he is my brother's friend—and *mine*."

She moved away as she finished speaking, to answer a signal from the countess, who wanted her help in some difficulty in the worsted-work with which she was amusing herself.

CHAPTER XVI.

With his eyes fixed on the unfortunate sketch, Mr. Allonby sat for several minutes, trying to recall the precise words he had used in speaking of Richie; but Lady Eudora, quick to perceive the ludicrous, laughed at the recollection of the startled look with which he had heard Eda proclaim her acquaintance with the young man, and began to rally him upon it.

"You owe Miss Granton an apology," she said, "for you certainly did not give her the impression that her friend is a favourite of yours. You had better follow her, and make your peace."

But Mr. Allonby did not move. "Don't you think, Lady Eudora, that it is sometimes wiser and kinder to let an awkward matter rest? On reflection Miss Granton will, I am sure, acquit me of any intention of offending her." And, as if determined to change the subject, he began asking her ladyship if he was to have the honour of a sitting from her before he went to town.

"Yes," said the earl; but "No, no!" cried his daughter, so persistently that, when alone with her, Eda asked if she had any real objection to having her portrait taken.

"Yes, one that is insuperable," she answered, frowning and colouring.

"Lady Chessington wishes it very much," she was reminded.

"And that is why I refuse. It sounds awfully undutiful, doesn't it? But I happen to know that mamma wants my miniature for Eustace, and I do not choose that he should have it."

"And yet I believe you to be sincerely attached to Mr. St. Orme!"

"Yes," said Eudora, blushing still more deeply, "I believe I am. He is a good man, and wonderfully patient with me. If he were not my cousin, and if I did not know that all our friends think it would be an excellent match for both of us, I might learn to like him well enough to marry him some day. As it is, I hope he will find a better wife than I should be—don't you?"

"Mr. St. Orme certainly deserves to have a greater value set on his affections than you are testifying," Eda answered, with warmth, for she did not like the flippant tone she had taken.

"Hear, hear!" cried Eudora. "I dearly love to work you up into a pet, O championess of all the injured and abused! But you are quite right; Eustace deserves a bride who will be more submissive and sweet-tempered than I should be. I don't think I shall ever consent to leave my own dear indulgent father; but if I do, it shall be to marry in a more romantic style than mamma proposes for me; and I'll certainly not have a man whom I can twist round my finger!"

"That is an unworthy boast, Lady Eudora," said Eda; and Lady Eudora had the grace to look ashamed of it.

"So it is, very unworthy. Please forget that I ever spoke so foolishly. I wish my tongue would not run away with me so often. Of course, I did not mean what I said."

How far this was true, who shall say? But certain it is that some of the light words just spoken so carelessly were destined to be remembered and regretted long afterwards.

Mr. Allonby, after another vain attempt to obtain a sitting from Lady Eudora, went to town, every one expressing themselves sorry to lose him, for he was so cheerful and well-informed as to be a valuable companion in a dull country house. Talking of him and her little adventure in the railway carriage, Eda was led to speak of the brother she had left in London; and Lady Chessington questioned her closely about Mark and his present position.

The loving sister intended to be very sincere in her replies, but she was devotedly attached to Mark, and it was more natural to dwell upon his good qualities—his energy, his abilities, his horror of all low vices—than to speak of the faults of his character. With regard to his position, she only knew that he held a small agency, and was struggling very hard to obtain more lucrative employment. Sometimes his short and always unsatisfactory letters were couched in hopeful terms, sometimes in very depressed ones, and of late—but this she could not bring herself to mention, for she believed that Mark's disappointment rendered him unjust—he had complained bitterly of Richard Atwood's selfishness, declaring that he should not be able to put up with it much longer.

"Has your brother no friends in London who would render him more efficient assistance?" Lady Chessington inquired, after one of these conversations.

Eda explained that they were almost strangers in the great metropolis.

"Then it is a great, a very great pity that he should be there alone. Nothing seems sadder to me than the thought of a young man being cast upon the great world homeless. I have been talking about him to the earl, and telling him what I have learned from you about your brother's position."

Eda's work dropped in her lap. If Lord Chessington, who was both rich and powerful, would interest himself in Mark's fortunes, how thankful she should be!

The countess smiled at her eager upraised face.

"For your sake, my dear," Lady Chessington went on, "we shall be glad to lend a helping hand to your brother. But we must first know what he is fit for; and so the earl has been suggesting that he might perhaps come here for the present as his secretary and librarian."

"Our books are in a disgraceful state," interposed Eudora. "Eustace was saying only yesterday that many of the finest works are spoiling."

"If Mr. Granton accepts our offer, he will catalogue and arrange them for us," her mother replied; "and so, Eda, we will leave you to write to your brother. Tell him that the arrangement is merely to be a temporary one, and that its duration will depend on circumstances. If Lord Chessington is satisfied that he will do credit to his recommendation, he will lose no time in endeavouring to procure him a more lucrative post."

Eda could scarcely find words to express her thankfulness; and as soon as the countess left her she flew to write her letter to Mark, and tell him what bright prospects were opening before him.

"You will make me wish I had a brother, if you look so ridiculously happy at the prospect of seeing yours," Eudora merrily told her. "I hope he is the very moral of you, as the old women say."

"I don't think Mark is *much* like me," Eda answered; and from that moment, though she could scarcely have told why, a feeling of distrust mingled with her joy. What if Mark proved himself unworthy of the earl's goodness? The thought was indignantly scouted as soon as it presented itself; but it came back again and again; and it was throbbing in her heart when she was told that Mark had answered her letter in person, and was waiting in the morning-room to see her.

(To be continued.)

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 8. Philip.

Chapter to be read—Acts viii.

INTRODUCTION. Ask the children what Christ had foretold about the spread of the Gospel. What had He compared it to? (Matt. xiii. 31). Have seen it spread from one hundred and twenty to five thousand in Jerusalem; how was it to spread its branches in other places? What had its enemies tried to do? Who was forbidden to preach? With what success? What was done to Stephen? Who kept the clothes of the witnesses, and made himself active in persecuting? What would the Christians do to avoid persecution? Just as Christ had told them—to flee to other cities (Matt. x. 23), but what did they do when they got there? Thus, persecution only spread the Gospel more, so became a proverb, "Blood of the martyrs the seed of the Church." Trace spread of Gospel in Samaria.

I. A False Convert. (Read viii. 5—25.) Ask who Philip was, and where he was now sent. When had Samaria been visited, and by whom? Remind of Samaritan woman talking with Christ, and of the converts made (John iv. 39); of the grateful Samaritan leper; therefore Samaritans prepared to hear more. What power did Philip possess to confirm his preaching? (v. 6). What power did he not possess? Who were sent down by the Apostles, and for what purpose? (v. 14). Hence show that Philip the deacon or evangelist (xxi. 8) preached, baptised, and worked miracles, but could not impart the special gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Now inquire about Simon. Describe him as a village sorcerer, pretending immense power. Whence derived? (v. 10). All the village consulting; ignorant rustics and even upper classes are alike beguiled. Now they hear of a greater power of God, and see the miracles. Remind of magicians who could not stand before Moses (Ex. viii. 19), acknowledging God's power; so this sorcerer, professing true faith, is baptised. How the news of Samaria receiving the Gospel is carried to Jerusalem. Who were sent down? Picture the scene: the arrival of the two apostles; the excitement among the new converts; the solemn service; the laying on of hands; the descent of the Holy Ghost. Who was watching the proceedings? What request does he make, and how does Peter answer it? What did this show on Simon's part? (*a*) *Ignorance* in thinking God's gifts could be purchased. For passages showing that they are free gifts, see James i. 17, Rom. vi. 23, and many others. (*b*) *Pride*, evidently wanting this power to retain influence over the village. Still, evidently some good at work in Simon, as he asks Peter to pray for him (ver. 24).

Practical Lessons. (1) *Sin of witchcraft.* Ask for the first commandment, and show the folly and wickedness of consulting witches, fortune-tellers, &c., as dishonouring to God. (2) *Freedom of God's gifts.* Were they to be bought, could not be universal; being free, within reach of all (Isa. lv. 1), to be obtained by prayer (Luke xi. 13).

II. A True Convert. (Read 26 to end.) Philip having preached to villages, has now an individual to instruct. Who was this proselyte, and where returning? Let the children tell the following points in his character—(*a*) *He was earnest.* Look out Ethiopia in map to show the distance he had come for worship. (*b*) *He was studious.* Solemnised by the services of the Temple during the feast, he was returning in a thoughtful mood, and reading: what chapter? (*c*) *He was docile.* Not content to read through a chapter and then stop; wanted to understand.

Who was watching the Eunuch, and who was sent to guide him? Show how God is thus intently seeking out men to worship Him aright, not leaving them alone, but guiding them in the use of means: thus the Magi astrologists by a star are led to Christ; Peter, the fisherman, converted by draught of fishes; the Eunuch, when reading the Scriptures, has a heavenly-sent guide. Now picture the journey continued—Philip; the Eunuch; the earnest conversation; servants catch snatches of it; what had Christ coupled with faith? (Mark xvi. 16). The Eunuch taught this duty, desires the Christian rite. What is the requisite? Does he possess it? (ver. 37). Philip's work over, he is taken elsewhere. The Eunuch realises the fruits of the Spirit—love and joy (Gal. v. 22).

Practical Lessons. (1) *Seekers will be taught.* None ever sought God in vain. Question is, are we seeking Christ, anxious to learn of Him, become like Him. He will teach us by His Word, His Spirit, His ministers, His providences. (2) *The importance of true faith.* Simon received a curse, the Eunuch a blessing. Both seemed sincere. Believe on Christ, pray for true faith, use outward means, and will have joy in believing.

Questions to be answered.

1. What was the effect of Stephen's persecution?
2. Who preached in Samaria, and with what result?
3. What mistake did Simon make, and what did his mistake proceed from?
4. What two lessons does story of Simon teach?
5. What three points do you notice in the character of the Eunuch?
6. What practical lessons may we learn?

COMFORTABLE WORDS.

SHORT READINGS FOR THE SICK ROOM. BY THE REV. GORDON CALTHROP, M.A., VICAR OF ST. AUGUSTINE'S, HIGHBURY; AND SELECT PREACHER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

"The Word was made flesh."—St. John i. 14.

WHEN St. John, in his Epistle, cautions his disciples to "keep themselves from idols," he means, we suppose, to warn them against those conceptions of the Deity which men frequently frame for themselves, and which do not correspond with the reality. Idols of wood and stone the Christians of that day were little likely to bow down to; but with so many false teachers abroad in the world, and so many new heresies broached, it was not improbable that some of them should be induced to set up what was really a mere projection from their own minds, and call it "God," and worship it. The Apostle, then, was anxious that his "little children" should know the true God. And no wonder, for nothing is so important, so indispensably necessary to us, as this knowledge.

To say nothing of those who are ignorant of revelation, consider how often even Christians go astray, what detriment they suffer, what loss of comfort and of strength they undergo, from imperfect acquaintance with the subject! It is no unusual thing for us to fancy that God grudges us our happiness, or that He takes a kind of delight in inflicting suffering upon us, punishing where punishment is by no means necessary. More frequently still, we find it difficult to accept unreservedly the offers of grace, whilst we intellectually repudiate the idea of merit, and talk glibly of our own unworthiness. The feeling still clings to us that we must *do* something—perform some good work, it may be, or accomplish some important reformation — before we can expect to receive the fulness of the Divine favour. These misapprehensions are sad impediments to the spiritual life. They obstruct its flow. They render impossible a perfect confidence or open communication between ourselves and God. It is they who "*know Thy name*, who put their trust in Thee."

Most important, then, is it for us to form and retain a true conception of God. Now, where can we find such a conception?

The same St. John who warns us against "idols" tells us also that Jesus Christ is the "Word of God." The phrase is peculiar to his writings, but it is easy enough to understand it. Language is the utterance of the man—the going forth of that which is in him. "Speak, that I may *see* thee," said the old philosopher. And though we may express our meaning partially by signs and looks and gestures, it is not until we put into language the thoughts that are passing within, that we become fully intelligible to those who are round about us. When, then, the Apostle calls Jesus the "Word of God," he implies that Jesus Christ expresses what God is; that it is through Jesus Christ, through His person and His teaching, that the Eternal Jehovah, Whom no man hath seen or can see, becomes intelligible, becomes comprehensible, to the mind of man; or, as the Saviour himself expresses it, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." Do you want to know what God is? Look at Jesus of Nazareth, study Jesus of Nazareth, there you will find the object of your search.

Now let us touch upon one or two thoughts which suggest themselves.

First: Is not the revelation which we have of the unseen God in Jesus Christ a very surprising one? Of course we are used to it now. But try to put yourselves in the position of a man who is expecting an Incarnation, but who does not know what the manner of that Incarnation will be. All he knows is, that God will enter into human life, and manifest Himself in a human form. Now, would such a man ever conceive of the meek and lowly Jesus, the companion of peasants and artisans, the carpenter's son—Jesus, who submitted to every insult and indignity, who lived a hard life, and died an agonising and ignominious death upon the Cross? Would he? I think not. He would form altogether a different idea. He would associate with the Incarnate God the idea of *power*, of lofty station and unlimited wealth, of extensive territory, fleets and armies and victories; or, at least, of mighty intellectual achievements, and the quiet triumphs of peace. These are the circumstances with which we should all be inclined to surround the Divine visitant. Jesus of Nazareth would be far from our thoughts. But is it not consoling for us poor, tempted, feeble, anxious, perplexed creatures to find in Jesus Christ what the great God with Whom we have to do really is? The Old Testament has taught us something in this direction. The high and lofty One, that inhabiteth Eternity, dwells also with him that is of a contrite and a humble spirit. The Lord, Who is great and of great power, and Whose understanding is infinite—the same Lord healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. But until Jesus Christ came to earth, and moved amongst us, God manifest in the flesh, we could hardly have fully understood that the greatest and

most powerful of all beings—the Being Whom our fearful hearts so strongly incline us to dread—is also the gentlest and kindest and tenderest and best.

Then, is it not a great advantage to have God brought down within our reach, and made, as it were, tangible to us? If I look at God apart from Jesus Christ, I am bewildered. He is eternal; He is infinite; He is omnipotent; He is the great origin and source of life—"uncaused Himself, but causing all besides." Yes; but there is little here, for my affections at least, to lay hold of. I have got little more than an abstraction. But when I turn to Jesus Christ, and see how He loves me, and cares for me, and sympathises with me, and notice the wondrous combination of purity with tenderness, of gentleness with power, that He presents—I feel I have come to a real Person standing before me; and I can throw myself at His feet, as Thomas did, and exclaim, "My Lord and my God!"

Lastly: Is it not also a great advantage to us to possess that fourfold portraiture of Christ which we have in the Gospels? Each Evangelist carries us to his own side of the One majestic figure. To Matthew, He is the King—the King, winning His crown by suffering and death. To Mark, He is God's servant, pervading human life with a strange and irresistible activity, the great Worker for God and man. To Luke, He is the compassionate Son of Man, embracing in the arms of His sympathy the entire human race, holding humanity precious for humanity's sake. To John, He is the Son, God of God, Light of Light, the co-Eternal Word of the Eternal Father. Each plants us at His own point of view; and as we, under the Spirit's teaching, follow each guide, and listen to his descriptions, we become more like Him Whom we contemplate—we are "changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

MAY FLOWER, OR "SERVANT OF ALL."

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LITTLE BUTTERCUP," "NOTHING BUT A SONG," "HOW TO ENTER INTO REST," ETC.

CHAPTER X.

"I have known a luxuriant vine swell into irregular twigs, and bold excrescences, and spread itself in leaves and little rings, and afford but trifling clusters to the winepress, and a faint return to his heart which longed to be refreshed with a full vintage; but when the Lord of the vineyard had caused the dressers to cut the wildor plant and make it bleed, it grew temperate in its vain expense of useless leaves, and knotte i into fair and juicy branches, and made account of the loss of blood, by return of fruit."—JEREMY TAYLOR.

"A quiet abode at His feet,
That shall not be taken away."—L. A. W.

MAY'S cold was but slight, and after a long night's rest, she awoke, to see Phillis standing beside her.

"Well, May, how do you feel?"

"Oh, all right," she answered; and then finding how late it was, was glad to get up.

Just as she finished dressing, Geraldine came in; it was always a comfort to see her bright face, and May begged her to stay with her.

"I can't stay now, May Flower; but Stephen wants you to go down to him in the study when you are ready."

"Yes," she answered with a half sigh, "is he very angry?"

"Angry?"

"Yes, about yesterday?"

"Oh no, darling; you need not be afraid."

"I don't think I ever am exactly afraid, but you know I was so very bad yesterday."

"I'm sure he only wants to help you to be better. Be quick and run down."

And surely she did get helped. Neither excusing or defending her or Tom, he showed how the things had been in themselves. Then he went to the deeper ground—what the life of those who were wholly given to Christ should be.

May listened, more gentle and quiet than he had ever seen her before.

"'I am with you alway,' is the promise Christ has given us," he said; "and that promise we must use and live on; that is, that possessing the Lord Jesus Christ, we must now live on Him, and do every act of our life, even the very commonest, most lowly act for Him, for His sake. If we do this, May Flower, our lives will grow holy to the very centre, for Christ's presence will gradually, but most surely, cast out all that is sinful and wrong."

"It is easier for you, Stephen, than for me," she said.

"Why?"

"You are older, and you are a clergyman."

"*That* does not make it easier, child. It is just how closely we are living to our Lord, that makes a thing easy or difficult. As for being older, think of the bud of a rose; is it not a perfect and beautiful thing? In its way it is just as perfect as the full-blown flower, so, though you are only a child, you may be a child of God, and walk in the sunshine of His presence, loving and pleasing Him. And then, as for my being a clergyman, that again has nothing to do with it. I believe it is the highest and noblest profession a man can embrace; but a clergyman ought not to be more given up to God than a business man, nor than a child. Our profession and circumstances have nothing to do with it in one way; wherever we are, and whatever we are, we must be

wholly and utterly surrendered to God, and we must close our hearts to all that might separate us from Him, and open them wide, fully to receive all the love and blessing He is ready to bestow."

"Oh, I want it all so much," she said.

"And you are far more anxious to-day than you were yesterday?"

"Far, far more, Stephen," she answered, with her hands clasped. "Somehow, I saw it all more plainly yesterday than ever before, and I'm just set on it."

"And you are not afraid, May Flower?"

"Yes I am; but you know what you said just now, 'Lo, *I* am with you alway.'"

"Yes, child; never let go of that, for it will carry you through all, and 'in His presence,' even in this life, 'is fulness of joy.' Now I have something else to tell you of. This morning there was a letter from——"

"From Rosamond?" May whirled with delight.

"Asking you," Stephen went on, "to go there next Tuesday. Well, I'm afraid we can't manage that, but I go away on Friday, and you will have to wait till then, and I can drop you at Uncle Fernaval's on my way."

So the long-desired visit was at hand.

"Oh, it *is* delightful!" she cried, and then flew to the others.

How the days passed she knew not, but at last the Friday came; the baggage, the fly, the train, and she was close there before she thought how long it would be till she saw Stephen again.

"Oh, Stephen," she said, suddenly, "I shan't see you again till Christmas!"

"Just thought of that?" he asked.

"Only just. Oh dear, I shall miss you, when I get back!"

"Do you know what I shall most want to know, when I come back again at Christmas, May Flower?"

"No," she said, looking as if she knew very well.

"I shall want to know if your verse has become very much dearer to you," he answered.

"'I am with you alway?'" she asked; "I am sure it will be, Stephen."

"Here we are!"

The train ran into the little station, and May was given up to her aunt Mrs. Fernaval, and Rosamond, who stood waiting on the platform for her.

Those six weeks were a happy time; the long, golden autumn slowly fading into winter; then the return home; the short days, and long evenings; the first frosts and snows, till Christmas was at hand, and Stephen home again.

Very bright and cheerful the fire looked the evening of Stephen's arrival, and very comfortable May found the few moments in the study, leaning against her brother as he sat in his arm-chair, before tea.

"It's all right, Stephen," she said.

"What's all right?"

"Your text."

"Is it, child? I knew it was when I looked at you; is it better than when I was at home in the summer?"

"A thousand times," she said.

"Well then, we must follow the first part of the text, 'Teaching them all things whatsoever I have commanded *you*.'"

"That is more for you than for me."

"I think not; we have each our little world to live in, and our words, and looks, and ways, *must* all teach what He has commanded us, so surely as He is with us alway."

And he found it had begun already, though unconsciously enough to her. There was no doubt but that it still was a very hard thing to her to be "a servant of all," yet it was a thing she could never give up; for without it she knew she could never truly show herself "a good servant of Jesus Christ," which it was the deepest longing and desire of her bright eager spirit to be.

THE END.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

45. Give the passage from which we may assume that the prophet Isaiah, from his position in society, was of royal lineage, or at least of high rank.

46. Give *six* instances of the use of the word "church" to denote a particular assembly of persons meeting for religious worship.

47. "If," said Zacchæus, "if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him *fourfold*" (Luke xix. 8). Show that this was greatly in excess of what was required by the Mosaic law.

48. Show from one of our Lord's discourses that the manna which fell in the desert was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 96.

29. Our Lord *before* His death had promised to meet His disciples in Galilee *after* His resurrection, and notwithstanding their unbelief, He kept His promise. See St. Matt. xxvi. 32; xxviii. 7, 10, 16, 17; 1 Cor. xv. 6.

30. In one only, that of the rich man and Lazarus (St. Luke xvi. 19—31).

31. "Render," said our Lord, "to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's" (St. Mark xii. 17).

32. Ezek. xxvii. 18.

33. St. Matt. viii. 29; St. Mark iii. 11; St. Luke iv. 34, 41.

34. For the *freewill* offering a blemished animal might be offered. See Lev. xxii. 23.

35. The battle of the four kings against five. See Gen. xiv.

36. Isaac. See Gen. xxii. 6.



(*Drawn by* A. Hopkins.)

THE FORTUNE OF WAR.

'TIS after the battle! the field is strewn o'er
With that which shall love, struggle, suffer no more!
More awful this hush than the warfare's wild din.
'Tis after the battle. The posts they ride in.

But the proud glance of triumph is dimmed with regret,
The cheer of acclaim trembles faltering yet;
Too late come the laurels that honour would shed
O'er ranks of the dying, o'er lines of the dead.

He has fought through the battles; the roll of the drum
Is still, and she watches!—the letter has come!—
A letter has come, but the writing is strange—
O heart, still thy beatings! oh, read of a change!

——"I have fought my last fight. You were noble and true,
And the hardest of all, love, is parting with you!
The strong arms whose hope 'twas your refuge to be,
Are shattered and lost; now farewell, you are free!"

* * * * * * * * *

Down the hospital lines, by the dying and dead
She has passed—she has found it! she kneels by his bed!
She has bathed with her tears her brave warrior's brow,
Once lover, but lord, hero, conqueror now!

"Free! free! yes, the depths of my heart's love to know,
By the might of a love that could ache for me so!
In the prime of thy strength I was careless and cold,
Now life, to be near thee, is all turned to gold!"

She will love him and keep him, in sickness and health;
She will have him and hold him; her love is her wealth.
For sorrow and pain tear disguise from the heart,
But the two they have welded fall never apart.

ALESSIE BOND.

EDWARD TURNER, CARPENTER AND BUILDER.

BY AGNES MACDONELL, AUTHOR OF "MARTIN'S VINEYARD."

CHAPTER VIII.

AN UNPROFITABLE SUNDAY EVENING.

"Oh, how better a thing it is to look into happiness through another man's eyes!"

ON the Sunday evening Charlie Brereton came in, as he seemed in the habit of doing. We had been reading a book that Robert had got from the village library; but after Charlie came the peace of Sunday evening was gone. He began to tell us about some of the Shakespeare readings he had attended in London. He could describe the scenes, and repeat the words sometimes, and make it all so real, that my mother even would get interested, and listen. This evening Charlie began to tell about one of Shakespeare's plays he had heard read. It was "Othello." He told the story of the Moor who murdered his wife from jealousy, being worked on by a wicked friend to believe her false. Charlie sat on a low stool by the fire, and when he told the end, when the Moor finds out his error, and stabs himself in remorse, he leaned forward, with his hand against his heart, and repeated the dying words of Othello in a low voice. I saw Barbara's hands had dropped into her lap, and her eyes were full of tears fixed upon his face, and I felt her heart had gone to him. I heard my mother say she didn't like the story and the murderous talk; if people listened to those sorts of things they must get to feel wicked themselves, she was sure, she said.

"Do you think I talk like a bloodthirsty man?" said Charlie, laughing; "why, I couldn't hurt a woman with my little finger. You don't believe I could, do you?" he said to Barbara.

She began to laugh, as if she was ashamed of her tears.

"Oh no, you could not do what Othello did," she said; "you're too—too easy for that."

"Yes," he said. "There's another fellow in the play, called Cassio, he is more in my way, I think. It takes a quieter man to get as angry as Othello, mad enough to kill his wife—a quiet chap like you, Ned."

After they had been talking over the story a bit, Charlie began again about the readings, wanting the two girls to go to London with him to hear them. He had talked of this before, I found. My mother opposed it a good deal; but Charlie knew he could argue and persuade her into anything. Barbara would not say either yes or no. She laughed, and said he had made her cry over his description, and that was enough for her. She was standing by the fire, with one foot on the fender, and I thought her face looked troubled. She looked at me once, as if she expected me speak for her, but an angry heart held me silent. He went on saying that she did not care how much she vexed him by saying she would not go; that he would get reserved seats, so that she need not go before the time of the office closing; he knew she wanted to go, and why need she persist in saying no.

Barbara said, "Please don't insist so. It's very kind of you; but I cannot promise till—till I have talked it over with Ann."

He went on in a low voice, and I could not hear her reply, and then he said, "But if she wants to go, and says she will, you will promise to go too—it's a bargain; if you won't—well then, I'll take her alone!" and he laughed, but half angrily.

He went across to the side of the table where Ann sat apart, and drew his chair up to her's, and began talking in his quick earnest way. Ann looked down on her work, and shook her head; but as he went on, she looked up at him, and I heard him say, "I know you will not refuse the first, the only thing I

have ever asked you!" She turned away her head as he bent towards her and laid his hand upon her shoulder.

"Come," I said, for I could bear it no longer, "it is time you were going, Charlie! Say 'good-night!' and come!"

"Let go of me, Ned, I say! I am going to get a promise before I go," he said, and he turned back in the door-way.

"Now promise me, Ann; say one word to make me know that you will please me."

She said in a low voice, "Yes;" and then he turned suddenly to Barbara, with a look of triumph. He whispered something in her ear that made her start, and her cheeks flush, and ran down the garden walk.

"Stop!" I cried, "I want to speak a word with you. Don't wait up for me," I said to Ann; "shut the door, and leave the candle on the table; I shall not be long."

Charlie Brereton was waiting for me at the gate.

"What is it, Ned?" he asked; and I thought his voice sounded uneasy in the darkness. "It's very cold out here these damp nights, and not pleasant standing."

"Look here," I said, "I want to speak with you, and get a plain answer from you, Charlie."

"Well," he said.

"I don't like this Shakespeare business——nor what you have done in the matter," I was going to say, but he interrupted me quickly, and impatiently.

"Oh, hang it, what fault do you to find with it? It will be a bit of amusement, that's all."

"You shall not go alone with those two girls."

"Please yourself about going," he said, angrily; "but if you're going to be as precious sulky as you were to-night, they would enjoy it as much without you, I should think."

"Look here, Charlie Brereton," said I, "I want to tell you one thing. I don't see that you are acting right; and I want you to remember that if you are thinking of just playing with either of the women in the house, then you'll have to answer me about it."

"What do you mean?" he said, impatiently.

"I mean," said I, "that you shan't come up here talking night after night, and making love to one and the other, and then turn off with the next girl that comes in your way. I know your fickle faithless light ways, and you shan't play them here. I'll throw up my London place, and come to Birchfield, and work by the day, sooner than I'll let you bring mischief here!"

He laughed; but I don't know whether it was from uneasiness and shame, or whether I did him too great a wrong when I thought him a heartless villain; but, quicker than the thought, I had caught him by the throat. He struck up my arm, but I held on, and we closed, and struggled hard and fierce in the darkness. It was the first taste of triumph and exultation to me. He had seized the happiness of my heart in his light fingers, and thrown it down, but now I held him in my grasp. He was lighter and more active than I was, but his purpose was not so strong. I heard his short panting breath, and the crackling of the ling beneath our feet, but no word was spoken; I knew that he was in my power. At last he fell. It is an evil thing when a man lets the hatred of his heart possess his whole body, like a fiend, that urges him on beyond his will in this way, and makes him feel—as I felt then—nothing but fierce triumph as his adversary lies at his feet. Many a man has been hurried into a crime that has blackened his whole life and his memory after him through a burst of anger like mine; but through God's mercy I was spared that doom—Charlie Brereton was not dead, he was only stunned, and in a few moments he was upon his knees feeling about on the heather for his hat. It gave us both time to cool.

He got up, and stood before me, and said, "I see what you mean by all this, Ned Turner," he said. "If you think I am to be dictated to like a child, you're mistaken. Do you think I am going to harm any one? well, you're mistaken; but if you think you're going to frighten me out of the way—but, indeed you shall not—and so I give you warning!"

He flung off at a brisk pace down the hill-side, and left me with my evil thoughts in the darkness.

(To be continued.)

"ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."

BY THOMAS ARCHER.

"IN THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH"—*(concluded)*.

THE entrance in the hall of a cheerful, genial gentleman, with a kindly, brisk manner, and a reassuring expression of deliberation and repose in his observant face and easy bearing, rouses us from melancholy fancies, and with a few words of courteous welcome we are at once conducted to the door that is to open to us the first scene in this wonderful visit.

A spacious assembly-room—let us call it by the good old name of "parlour," for there is much quietly animated talk going on—talk, and needle-work of all kinds, from the knitting of a warm woollen shawl to the manipulation of delicate lace,

and the deft handling of implements for making those exquisite tortures of society known as anti-macassars. With ever so wide an experience of halls, salons, suites, or drawing-rooms, the visitor can see nothing resembling this wonderful parlour elsewhere. A room of noble proportions, one end of which is occupied by an organ; the great windows reaching almost from floor to ceiling, and overlooking a broad expanse of lawn, with a glorious view of hill and woodland beyond; on the tables flowers, books, ornaments; in every kind of couch and chair—many of which are comfortable beds on wheels and springs—a company of women, with bright, cheerful, intelligent faces, full of a recent interest, and, even in cases where some paroxysm of pain is passing, with a certain serene satisfaction which it is infinitely good to see.

There has been a morning service, conducted by a visiting clergyman, and there is a general expression of approval which, if the reverend gentleman himself were present to witness it, would surely prove highly gratifying. The congregation has settled down to easy talk, and has resumed its occupation of plain and fancy needlework. Here is an old lady whose silver hair adds to her natural grace and dignity, who is busy with wool-work, and at the same time engages in a discriminating criticism of the address to one of the many visitors who sit and spend an hour of their afternoon in agreeable chat. There is a pretty but rather sad-eyed *mignon* lady, whose excellently-fitting silk dress, delicate hands, and general "niceness" of appearance, quite prepare us to see the beautiful examples of all kinds of fancy work of which she never seems to tire. All the work of the patients is for sale, and every year, in June, they have a grand bazaar at the hospital, so that those who are skilful and capable are able to clothe themselves as they please—everything except clothing being found by the charity to every inmate, except two or three who are able to pay for their own maintenance. Now we hear the low tones of cheerful talk, the pleasant ripple of laughter—note the brightening glance, the quick smile, the feeble but earnest finger-clasp which greets the cheerful salutation of the house governor, Mr. Darbyshire, or the presence of his wife, the lady matron of this great happy family of incurables.

Nor is the wonderful revelation of cheerfulness, of light in shadow, less remarkable in the dormitories themselves. But then what rooms they are! Each bed is as it were set in an alcove of its own snow-white hangings, relieved by bits of colour which would delight an artist's eye—pieces of embroidery, framed illuminated texts, bright flecks of Berlin wool-work, or glistening designs in beads, or deep glowing knick-knacks wrought in silk and lace. Each little bedside table, though it may hold medicine and diet—drink and requisites for the sick—is decked with flowers and little framed pictures, gaily-bound books, and bright-hued toys and trifles, that make it look like a miniature stand at a fancy fair. In some cases the sense of combined purity and glow of colour is so great, that it is difficult to realise that we are in one or other of a series of sick-rooms. Everything is so spotless, so exquisitely clean and orderly, that nothing less than perfect nursing could explain it—for be it remembered that the place is open to visitors every day—and amidst some of the most terrible afflictions from which humanity can suffer there is nothing revolting. Expressions of pain and of utter prostration and weakness there are, of course; but even these are only alternative from the general placid contentment and thankfulness that is the prevailing characteristic.

Even in two severe cases of cancer the terrible effects of the malady are less notable, because of the surrounding conditions. A sprightly and engaging girl, with features and social life alike marred and obliterated by this dreadful malady, is surely one of the saddest of all the sad sights in such an institution; but here the brightness and genial influence of the place, and of those who are its ministrants, have had their effect, and even the half-obliterated features gain a grateful, loving, cheerful expression; the poor eyes beam with pleasure as the governor starts some reminiscence of that pleasant summer water-party of his, in which one of the two sufferers had to be carried to the boat in his arms, and both of them, deeply veiled, were rowed by those same guarding arms for a glorious voyage on the river, where the summer's sunshine and gladness stole into the hearts of the sufferers, and left a halo of remembrance that is not perhaps so very far from the anticipations of that stream which maketh glad the children of God.

Here are rooms wherein only two or three beds are placed, while few of them contain more than six, but all of them are bright, airy, lofty, full of space, and with the same sense of purity. And from every window some fresh and lovely view of the surrounding landscape, with all its changeful aspects, may be seen—the beds being so placed that every patient has her own special expanse of territory to solace her waking hours, even though she be unable to go down to the assembly-room. Here, in a room particularly bright and cheerful, lies a young woman with a wealth of dark hair on the pillow where her intelligent face beams with a certain courage, although her body and limbs have been for years immovable—only one arm, for an inch or two, and three fingers of the right hand, can be stirred—and yet, as we stand and talk with her, some small simple jest about her own condition causes her to laugh till the bed shakes. She

has learnt to write by holding a pencil in her mouth, and inscribes neat and legible letters on paper placed on a rest just in front of her face. She is not only cheerful, but actually hopeful, though she has been for years in this condition; and her relations, great and small, visit her, to find her always heartily determined to look on the bright side. At the foot of her bed, near the window, is a swing looking-glass on a pedestal, and in this she sees reflected the distant prospect of autumn wood and field, extending miles away. Judging from her nobly equable and smiling face, she must be the life of the room of which she has been so long an occupant. In another apartment a poor schoolmistress suffering from hemorrhage of the lungs lies reading for many hours a day, her face bearing a painful expression, her manner eager, her constant craving to work on by the study of books concerning the problems of this earthly life and the sciences that strive to demonstrate them and yet only bring us to the barrier of the eternal world. She yearns for one more day amidst her classes, and for the opportunity of testing the results of sick-bed thoughts on a method of education which should adapt itself to the individual temperament and mental peculiarity of each child. Amidst a troubled tide of thoughts that are perhaps sometimes too much for the weary brain, she may learn to recognise the rest that comes after hearing the Divine voice say, "Peace! be still;" and so a great spiritual calm may fall upon her, and give her rest.

Yet another visit, and we find a girl who, from an accidental fall, is as immovable as a statue, her dark questioning eyes and mobile face alone excepted. Yet she is sometimes lifted into a wheel-chair that stands stabled by her bedside, and joins the company in the great parlour downstairs. There is another little parlour, with quite a select coterie, under the presidency of an elderly gentlewoman, who is busily knitting at a table, while her friends recline at the windows, on their special couches; and in several of the dormitories patients are sitting up, reading, working, or looking at the fitful aspect of earth and sky on this October afternoon. Sufferers from heart-disease, with that anxious contracted expression so indicative of their malady, are numerous; but the larger number of the patients seem to suffer from rheumatism, or paralysis—among them one lady, with silvered hair, and yet with bright, expressive eyes, and still bonny face, who was once a well-known singer in London. She is unable to rise from couch or bed, but the readiness of repartee, the bright inquiring look, the quick appreciation and retort, remain, as do a certain swift expressive action of head and hands, which is marvellously suggestive of dramatic gesture; for, happily, her hands and arms are still capable of movement, and she has several periodicals on the coverlet among them the latest monthly part of the QUIVER, in one of the stories in which she is evidentlyinterested. She, with two or three others, are inmates of the hospital at their own charges.

We have but little time to devote to the men's side of this great institution; but its plainer dormitories and furniture, its large day-room, where daughters sit talking in low voice to fathers, sisters to brothers, wives to husbands—its pleasant out-door contingent, who have just returned from slowly perambulating the grounds in wheel-chairs, or sit basking outside in the latest gleam of sunshine—its club in the rustic hut especially appointed for this purpose — all might bear comment. Here is a sturdy youth, who, falling from a tree, and alighting on his heels, incurably injured his spine, and now lies all day, mostly out of doors, and without a coat, frequently engaged in knitting. There is a poor gentleman, who has for sixteen years been almost immovable, from rheumatism, even his jaw being so fixed that he takes food through an aperture in the teeth. He has been through two or three hospitals, and under the care of the most eminent surgeons, and has come here now as to an ark of refuge, where he can read and talk, and be wheeled about the neighbourhood on occasional visits. Only one case of all those that we witness is startling in its melancholy sense of terrible loss and incurability; that rigid, grimly-set face, in the ward where the corner bed in which the grizzled head lies is the only one occupied this afternoon. The body belonging to that face is almost immovable—the ears are deaf, the tongue is mute, the eyes are nearly sealed—not by sudden calamity, but by gradual yielding to decay or disease. He has been an inmate several years, and is the one case here before which we may almost quail in our solemn sense of affliction; and yet, and yet, to the touch of certain loving hands that dead face kindles; that mind, seemingly locked in stupor, wakes to life; that intelligence, encased in a casket iron-bound and motionless, can understand the signs that are made upon his own hands or forehead, and interpret them so as to give some kind of grateful answer. It needs the touch of the lady nurse to bring out this strange music from an instrument so unstrung; but that it should be done at all is an evidence of the hold that loving sympathy and some subtle influence almost beyond mere bodily capacity of expression has taken in these dear souls of the sick and the afflicted. That is where the shadow lifts, even in the darkness of the valley; that is how the Spirit of Christ may abound; and the soul, in recognising the work of the disciple, may recognise the Lord therein, and remember the Living Word—"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me."

ENGLISH SACRED POETRY.

THE tone which characterises the early poetical literature of most countries has always been strictly religious. In Greece we find the earliest bards thoroughly pervaded with a religious spirit. Homer sang hymns to his gods; Hesiod has devoted a long poem to their glory; and when Athens had reached her climax of political and intellectual splendour, the religious element lay at the basis of her finest poetry, her sculpture, her painting, and even her oratory. Among the Romans we find the same principle equally illustrated. The earliest specimens of their literature which have come down to us are fragments of hymns; and a great German critic finds reason to believe that the greater proportion of the early poetry which has perished was of a religious character also. In reading the history of early Oriental literatures the same truth strikes us. Sardi, Ferdusi, Jani, and even Hafiz, have left us some beautiful specimens of sacred poetry; and the Seven Poems, which are the earliest specimens of Arabic literature, were dedicated to the deity of the Arabians, and suspended in the temple.

Sooner or later, however, under the deteriorating influences which follow in the train of advancing civilisation, the religious and secular elements in poetry become separated, and poetry suffers from the disunion. The two modern nations which are especially rich in sacred literature are the Germans and ourselves. A finer and nobler mass of religious poetry the world has never seen. Each of these literatures, however, though presenting many points of similarity, is marked by its own peculiar characteristics. English religious poetry has more fire, more energy and buoyancy, than that of the Germans, which is often sombre and oppressed. The prevalence of shadow and gloom which marks their painting and much of their architecture, finds its expression in their poetry. The majority of the German sacred poets, moreover, were, as compared with their secular brethren, second-rate men. Many of our sacred poets, on the other hand, stand among the first in our literature, as Milton, Young, Cowper, Addison.

The first poet of any note, nay, some say the very first poet who appeared in England, was a religious poet, Cædmon. There are few more touching episodes in literary history than the tale of this simple bard's life, for he was a true son of song. Amid the lovely scenery of Whitby—where the Lady Hilda, one of those sweet saint-like figures which pass like a ray of sunlight over the dark page of sanguinary and chaotic early history, had founded her monastery in the year 657—Cædmon dwelt. He was originally a pagan, but, falling under Hilda's influence, he became a Christian, and "a brother in her monastery, specially distinguished by divine grace" (we are quoting the venerable Bede's account of the poet, "for he used to make songs apt to religion and piety, so that whatever he learnt through interpreters of Holy Writ, this he, after a little while, in poetical words, composed with the utmost sweetness and feeling, would produce in his own tongue, that of the Angles." But Cædmon did not become a poet till he was of advanced years, and then the gift came to him miraculously in a dream. Bede tells the tale, and we cannot do better than quote it exactly as he tells it, availing ourselves of Mr. Morley's very literal version:—"Cædmon was of secular habit until of mature age, and never learned any poem. Sometimes, therefore, at a feast, when, for the sake of pleasure, all should sing in their turn, he, when he saw the harp coming near him, rose from table and went home. Once when he did that, and, having left the home of festivity, went out to the stables of the beasts, whose custody was on that night intrusted to him, and there, when at the usual hour he yielded to sleep, one stood by him, saluting him, and calling him by name. 'Cædmon,' he said, 'sing me something.' 'I cannot sing,' he said; 'for I have come out hither from this feast because I could not sing.' Again he who spoke with him said, 'But you have to sing to me.' 'What,' he said, 'ought I to sing?' But he answered, 'Sing the origin of creatures.' Having received this answer, he began immediately to sing in praise of God the Creator." And from that moment the poor cowherd Cædmon became a mighty poet. We must not, of course, be too critical in reading such a legend, but read it as we read poetry, for its great beauty and suggestive symbolism. Cædmon's poem, which has come down to us, is written in the Anglo-Saxon language; it very nearly perished in the wreck of Anglo-Saxon literature, and the one little copy which preserved for us a poem so noble and interesting, is deposited in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, and is a small folio consisting of 229 pages. The poem is entitled "Cædmon's Paraphrase," and commences with a fine exordium, which may be thus translated:—"It is very right that we praise with our words, love in minds the Keeper of the Heavens, Glory King of Hosts. He is the source of power, the head of all His great creation, Lord Almighty. He never had beginning, nor was made, nor cometh any end to the Eternal Lord; but his power is everlasting over heavenly thrones. With high majesty, faithful and strong, He ruleth the depths of the firma-

ment, that were set wide and far for the children of glory, the guardians of souls." The poet then, beginning with the fall of the rebellious angels, tells how God resolved to create a better race and a fair earth. He then describes the Creation in a passage of considerable graphic power, part of which, with the assistance of Mr. Sharon Turner's version, we subjoin :—

"There was not then here,
Except gloom like a cavern,
Anything made ;
But the rude ground
Stood deep and dim
For a new lordship,
Shapeless and unsuitable.
On this with his eyes he glanced—
The King, stern in mind—
And the joyless place beheld.
He saw the dark clouds
Perpetually press
Black under the sky,
Void and waste.
* * * * * *
Then separated,
The Governor of victory
Over the water-flood,
Light from darkness,
Shade from shine.
He made them both be named
Lord of life.
Light was first,
Through the Lord's word
Called day.
Creation of bright splendour,
The Creator after separated
From the pure shine.
Our Maker,
The first evening.
To him ran at last,
A throng of dark clouds ;
To these the King himself
Gave the name of night ;
Our Saviour there separated."

After giving an account of the creation of Eve (for the leaves describing the other part of the Creation are cut out of the MS., which is unfortunately mutilated in other places), the poet passes on to the rebellious angels in hell. Satan is haranguing them :—

"He raised himself
Against his master ;
He sought inflaming speeches ;
He began vain-glorious words ;
He would not serve God ;
He said he was his equal
In light and shining."

Satan then sends a dark messenger, who finds Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Disguising himself as a serpent, he tempts Eve to eat the fruit. The Fall ensues, and Cædmon then describes the exultation of the fiend, and how he returns to the "broad flames, the roofs of hell, where lay his master bound in fetters." After this follows a description of the misery of Adam and Eve, and their expulsion from Paradise. Cædmon then versifies the narrative of the events related in the Book of Genesis, in their chronological order, till, by an abrupt transition, he passes on from Abraham to Moses, and sings of the overthrow of Pharaoh's host in the Red Sea. At this point the poetry, which rather flags in the interval, becomes suddenly full of fire and spirit. This scriptural paraphrase closes with Belshazzar's Feast. The MS. ends with a poem, having for its subject Christ and Satan, and represents Satan in hell dreading the power of the Mediator, the descent of Christ, and the rescue of souls, known in old legends as the harrowing of hell. This part of the MS. is, however, very imperfect, being full of gaps and misplacements. The most interesting fact connected with this poem of Cædmon's, irrespective of its own intrinsic worth, is that, beyond doubt, it supplied Milton with the idea of his "Paradise Lost." The reader will note the similarity between the plot of this poem and that of Milton's great epic. He will note how closely such a passage as the following, for instance, corresponds with the description in the first book of "Paradise Lost," and with Satan's first speech :—

"But iron bands
Lay around me ;
Knots of chains press me down ;
I am kingdomless.
Hell's fetters
Hold me so hard,
So fast encompass me ;
Here are mighty flames
Above and beneath ;
I never saw
A more hateful landscape.
This fire never languisheth,
Hot over hell ;
Encircling rings,
Biting manacles,
Forbid my course."

To gratify the reader's curiosity we quote the original Anglo-Saxon of this passage, that he may see what it is like :—

Iren benda
Rideð racentan sal
Ic eom ricesleas !
Habbað me swa hearde
Helle clommas
Fæste befanȝen
Her is fyr micel
Ufan and neoðone
Ic a ne ȝeseah
Laðran landscipe
Liȝ ne aswamað
H'at ofer helle
Me habbað hrinȝa ȝesponȝ
Slið hearda sal
Siðes amyrred."

With all his uncouthness, and habit of falling into prolix description, Cædmon is a genuine poet, and sees everything, as Johnson says of Thomson, with the eye of a poet. In his narrative, for instance, of the Flood, he does not forget "the exulting fowl perched on the floating corpses." We must now say good-bye to this honest old bard, to whom we should be grateful for the true poetry which, to use his own words, "like a clean animal ruminating it," he turned into most sweet

verse, and left to his country. Cædmon left a few disciples behind him, and has considerably influenced the character of the Anglo-Saxon literature subsequent to his age; but as these disciples and their poems are very obscure and very uninteresting, we make no scruple in passing them by, and will proceed to King Alfred, for the intermediate names of Wilfrid, Aldhelm, Bede, John Scotus Erigena, do not stand high in the rank of poets, and moreover, they wrote for the most part in Latin. King Alfred's translation of Boethius is the next important work which touches on sacred poetry, inasmuch as it is interspersed with versions of Boethius's poems. Boethius was a philosopher who lived in the sixth century, in the reign of the Ostrogoth Emperor, Theodoric, and he wrote in Latin a book which has always been a great favourite with the thoughtful scholar. This book is entitled "De Consolatione Philosophiæ," or, "Concerning the Consolation of Philosophy," and, though written by a pagan, is full of the most beautiful morality. It is written in Latin prose, interspersed with Latin poetry, and these pieces of Latin poetry were translated by King Alfred into Anglo-Saxon. Alfred, it must be confessed, does not keep very close to his original, and is somewhat inaccurate in his translations of certain passages. His version is, however, on the whole, spirited and adequate. The following is his version of the Address to the Deity:—

"Oh, thou Creator
Of the pure stars,
Of heaven and earth,
Thou on high seat
Ever reignest,
And thou all the swift
Heaven turnest round;
And through thy holy might
The stars compellest,
That they obey thee.
* * * * *
Oh, though Eternal,
And thou Almighty,
Of all creatures
Maker and Governor,
Pardon thy miserable
Offspring of earth—
Mankind,
Through the power of thy might."

This we give as a fair specimen of Alfred's poetical powers. By the way, the reader should remember that Anglo-Saxon poetry, though not rhyming, has a metre of its own, which we fear is rather imperfectly caught in the very literal versions with which we have in this paper presented them. The peculiarity which distinguishes Anglo-Saxon poetry from prose is a very regular alliteration (that is to say, a succession of words beginning with the same letter), so arranged that in every couplet there should be two principal words in the line beginning with the same letter, which letter must also be the initial of the first word on which the stress of the voice falls in the second line. It is necessary to remember this in reading Anglo-Saxon poetry, or versions of it which aim at reproducing the original. To proceed, however, with our narrative. In addition to this translation of Boethius, and his many other books, William of Malmesbury tells us that Alfred had begun a version of the Psalms, but that before he completed the first part he died. Sacred poetry has sustained a loss in this, for it would have been very interesting to read King Alfred's version of the works of a great king with whom he had so much in common, and the vicissitudes of whose life bore in many ways so striking a resemblance to those of his own. The next sacred poem in the Anglo-Saxon tongue is a very striking ode, and may be found appended to the menology. The concluding lines of it we subjoin:—

"The Creator alone knows
Whither the soul
Shall afterwards roam;
And all the spirits
That depart in God.
After their death-day
They will abide their judgment
In their father's bosom.
Their future condition
Is hidden and secret;
God alone knows it,
The preserving father.
None again return
Hither to our homes,
That any truth
May reveal to man
About the nature of the Creator,
Or the people's habitations of glory
Which he himself inhabits."

After Cædmon's Paraphrase, however, by far the most striking sacred poem of the Anglo-Saxon, is a short fragment describing the grave. This belongs to a later period of Anglo-Saxon, when the language was becoming Normanized, and is supposed to have been written about the reign of Henry II. It begins:—

"For thee was built a house
Ere thou wert born;
For thee was a mould shapen
Ere thou of thy mother camest;
Its height is not determined,
Nor its depth measured."

But as our readers are probably familiar with it in Longfellow's version, we forbear to quote further. Such then was sacred poetry among our rude Saxon forefathers, unpolished and simple, but full of fervour and energy, and imbued with that sweet child-like simplicity, that unaffected earnest spirit of devotion, which marks the early literature of most nations.



(*Drawn by* F. Barnard.)

"Your brother is too proud!"—*p.* 139.

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER XVII.

PERHAPS a fear that she had been doing him some injustice made Eda more than usually demonstrative when she ran into the arms of her brother; but, in truth, she was delighted to see him, and she thought she should never grow weary of gazing at his beloved face.

"Aren't you quite sure that it's I myself?" he quizzically demanded, at last. "Shall I give you another kiss to convince you? Oh, Eda, you don't know how often I've wished that I had never let you leave me! I didn't know the value of your sympathy till I couldn't have it!"

"I would have come to you; I would have endured any privation that we might be together, dear Mark!" she tearfully assured him.

"Didn't I know this? and wasn't it because I should have been ashamed to take advantage of your good nature that I did not tell you how sorely you were missed?"

"But we need not part any more now, Mark! Lord Chessington's offer——"

"Ah! what about it?" and Mark Granton, who had grown very manly during their separation, released his sister from his embrace, and, putting her in a chair, sat down beside her. "Is it worth accepting, my dear? Because I feel rather unwilling to turn my back on London, although I am not doing any good for myself at present."

Then Eda repeated, more diffusely than in her letter, all that the countess had said she and the earl were willing to do for him, and finished by asking enthusiastically, "Are they not good and generous?"

"They could not help being good to you," he answered, kissing her again. "As for the generosity of the offer, I suppose I shall be expected to work for my wages; in which case the obligation will be mutual, eh, Eda?"

"But do I not tell you that the earl only proposes to have you under his own eye for a while, that he may be better able to recommend you to something more lucrative? I thought you would be as pleased as I am."

"Why, so I shall be, *if* he fulfils his promises; but really, Eda, when one has been knocking about in the world, one learns to doubt all indefinite pledges. I should not care to be mewed up here long!" and he cast a disparaging glance around him.

The brightness was fast fading out of Eda's smile. "Surely, Mark, you cannot prefer the noisy smoky City to this beautiful park and mansion!"

Mark laughed. "I should like this place uncommonly well, if it were my own; and I do hope to possess something of the kind before I die. But there 's a high hill to climb first; and if the nearest way lies through the smoke and noise, why, I must put up with them."

"I wish, dear Mark, you would not talk as if you thought of nothing but making money."

"It 's a way one gets into, when one lives with people who do nothing else," he carelessly replied. "How well you are looking, my little Eda! How do my lord and my lady use you? because I shall not consent to come here if my sister is not treated as she ought to be."

"Indeed, I am very happy, and no one could be kinder than the countess or Lady Eudora. The earl does not speak to me often; but that must be entirely owing to my feeling so shy of him; for only last week, hearing some one say that it was my birthday, he gave me this dear little watch and chain."

"The very thing I longed to be able to bring you myself, if I could have raised the cash!" said Mark, as he admired the earl's pretty present. "But you must take the will for the deed. I have had hard work to keep my head above water, I can assure you."

Mark did not appear to remember that a large and valuable ring was glittering on his finger, or that the simple watch-guard of hair he used to wear had been replaced by a massive-looking Albert chain, with two or three trinkets attached. But if he had been reminded of this inconsistency, he would only have averred that in London a man must make an appearance if he would do any good for himself.

Lord and Lady Chessington came into the library together, as soon as they returned from their drive; and Eda's uneasiness vanished, when she saw how favourable an impression her brother created. To her—who knew how young he was, and how short a time had elapsed since he was living quietly in a secluded village, with no more knowledge of the world than he gained from books—there was something verging on the ludicrous in the grave and self-possessed manner in which he discussed the principal topics of the day. She knew that he must have great confidence in himself, or he would not have ventured to approach subjects of which he could know so little. But the earl and countess were as much pleased as surprised to find him so well-informed and intelligent. They had expected to behold a shy rustic youth, who would require a great deal of drilling to render him presentable, and lo! he talked and behaved with the air of one to whom courts are familiar.

Before Mark Granton left Chessington House

arrangements for his speedy return had been made; and the earl did not attempt to conceal his belief that he had secured a valuable assistant. Seeing her kind friends so well satisfied, Eda permitted herself to feel unalloyed happiness in the thought that ere another week had elapsed, she and her brother would be once more dwelling beneath the same roof, and enjoying daily intercourse.

It was not till Mark was bidding his sister adieu that he saw Lady Eudora; but learning from the countess that he was just going, she ran into the room with a lovely bunch of exotics, plucked in the conservatory, for Eda to give to her brother.

Eda, who was writing down the address of a bookseller on whom Lord Chessington had asked Mark to call, did not hear in what terms he thanked her ladyship, but as she went towards them, she was rather scandalised to see him stoop for a spray of myrtle with which Eudora had been toying while she talked, and lay it between the leaves of his pocket-book, saying that it should be his memento of the first happy hour he had known for many months.

"You should not have done that!" said Eda, as the young lady, her eyes downcast, her cheeks crimson, glided away.

"Done what? How strait-laced you are! I am not coming here as a serving-man, who must not presume to speak above a whisper to the ladies of the house. I shall expect to be treated as a gentleman."

"I know that, dear Mark; but I do not think the countess would have been pleased if she had been here."

"Nonsense! This little Eudora is a charming girl, and my act of homage was rendered too respectfully to offend her."

"I was not speaking of Eudora, but of her mother. You know, dear Mark, we must not let the kindness of the earl and countess tempt us to forget——"

But here she was ruthlessly interrupted. "Thanks, Eda; I know all the rest. Please to remember that I am no longer a boy, whom you are at liberty to lecture whenever you feel inclined. I'm not at all likely to forget that your *belle amie* is heiress of Chessington. Bid me good-bye, or I shall lose my train. I begin to think that I shall like my new berth, after all."

"And Richie?" his sister inquired. "You have not told me anything about your old friend. Will he not miss you very much?"

"Richie? Oh no; why should he? We have not seen much of each other for some time. He is so disgustingly selfish, that I could not stand it."

"Richie selfish!" Eda repeated, incredulously; for in his boyhood he had been remarkable for his generosity.

"Well, I don't mean in the matter of *giving!*" Mark explained. "No fellow could be readier to share what he has with any one who needs it; but his good-nature is all on the surface. Ask him to really inconvenience himself for your sake, and he will contrive to forget all about it. In fact, he is more ready to promise than to perform. Such instability would not do for me, and so I cut him."

"Perhaps you were too exacting," Eda ventured to say, in defence of the absent.

"Perhaps I was," Mark carelessly replied. "Anyhow, I cannot stay to argue the point. If her little ladyship should have taken offence at what I did, you must smooth it away as well as you can."

But Eudora made no comment upon what had occurred, so it soon escaped Eda's memory, especially as nothing happened to revive it.

Mark came on the appointed day, and proved so efficient a secretary, that the somewhat indolent earl frequently congratulated himself on being so well served. His correspondence no longer worried him by getting into arrears, his papers were gradually brought into such order that he was spared periodical hunts for missing ones; and sundry business matters, that by neglect had fallen into almost inextricable confusion, were disentangled and made plain once more. Mark also found time each day for the work he had undertaken in the library, where he catalogued the rare volumes and manuscripts collected by an ancestor of the present earl; and besides all else, he was always ready to copy music or mount drawings for Lady Eudora, or execute commissions for the countess, who, since her health had become so precarious, was often glad to have some one at hand to whom she could delegate any little affair connected with her charities either in the neighbourhood or in town.

In fact, the young man found so much to do that his sister saw very little of him. He was generally busiest during those few hours she called her own, and though cordially invited to spend his evenings in the drawing-room, he rarely did so, preferring to carry his book into a cosy room that adjoined the library, and was therefore known as the study, although its principal use was as a receptacle for Lord Chessington's guns, whips, &c. There Eda would sometimes join him; but though always welcomed pleasantly enough, he would soon give her a kiss and send her away, alleging, and perhaps with truth, that the crabbed letters of the German he was teaching himself to read, danced before his eyes when he knew that she was sitting by and watching him.

Sometimes, when Eudora and Eda were returning from the long rambles in which they indulged as the spring advanced, they met him strolling in the plantations, and stayed to chat for a few minutes; but he was always the first to move away, even though Eudora sometimes pouted at his haste.

"Your brother is too proud!" she would say; "he avoids us as if he feared contamination."

"He did not intend to offend you," Eda assured her, with a smile at her pettishness. "He admired

our flowers, accepted the one I gave him for his button-hole, and then, hearing me say you were tired, wisely and kindly walked on, and left us at liberty to do the same."

"But he is always the same," Eudora complained. "He keeps us at arm's length, and will not let us be friendly!"

"So much the better; Mark's self-respect teaches him his position and yours."

"Of course you take sides with your brother; but it is not pleasant, say what you will, to be so continually reminded of one's rank. We cannot help being born rich, although Mr. Granton treats one as if it were a crime."

Eda laughed outright. "My dear Lady Eudora, what queer ideas you take into your head! If Mark were to show any signs of forgetting that you are the daughter of his employer, would you not be quick to resent it?"

"No; for I am beginning to hate and despise these foolish distinctions!" she answered, with vehemence.

"Do not say so in Mark's hearing, for he sets an undue value on what you are just railing against."

"No one should blame him for aspiring to be *great!*" said Eudora, with emphasis.

"But Mark and I differ as to the meaning of the word. A man may be immensely rich without being great or estimable."

"Not if he possesses all those qualities—energy, intellect, ambition—that make a man both!" was the eager reply.

"*If*; how very few combine with them the lowliness of heart that I have heard my dear mother say must be at the root of all true worth."

"I wonder to hear you disparage your brother so unkindly!" exclaimed Eudora. "You should not expect a young man, so well fitted to shine in the world, to adopt your old-fashioned notions."

"I am not finding fault with Mark," the surprised Eda answered; "on the contrary, I would make any sacrifice to further his interests."

"But you think he ought to be contented to fritter his youth away here, making out stupid business letters for papa, and running hither and thither for mamma. You would have him say, 'Thank you' for their condescension in permitting him to do it, and consider himself a very fortunate youth because he earns enough to buy himself a few clothes."

"I think Mark has reason to be very grateful to Lord Chessington for having him here; but I am not ashamed to confess that I cling to his lordship's promise to obtain him a higher post," Eda told the impetuous girl.

"And so he shall!" cried Eudora. "If no one else can sympathise with Mr. Granton, I can, and do; and I predict that in the course of a few years even you—stolid little unenergetic Eda—will wake up, and be pleased to find that your brother is making a name and growing famous."

"I haven't the least objection to such an awakening," was the amused reply. "But pray what have I done or said to make you think me indifferent to my brother's prospects?"

"That's just it; you are, as you express yourself, indifferent; you do not enter into his hopes and wishes, as a loving sister ought to do."

"Has Mark been saying so?" asked Eda, seized with a suspicion that he must have been complaining of her.

But Lady Eudora laughed at and evaded the question. "How ridiculous! Is it likely that he would complain of you? and to me, of all persons in the world! I use my powers of observation, which are not as mean as you seem to think them."

"But you do not form just conclusions, if you think I am careless about Mark," Eda persisted.

"Then I'll never make unjust remarks again, for I do not like to bring the tears into those kind eyes of yours! After all, you are the best little friend and sister in the world; and if I grumble at you myself, I'll never never let any one else do so!"

Lady Eudora gave her companion an affectionate hug, and nothing more was said about Mark. But, after rating Eda so sharply for her coldness, it certainly was odd that she did not appear to share the proud sister's pleasure when the editor of a scientific journal accepted an article Mark had written on some Roman remains in the locality.

"I am sure Mr. Granton is very clever—very clever indeed; but—no, thank you, I do not care to read the paper. I know nothing about antiquities." And she turned away so hastily, that poor Eda, who had reckoned on her sympathy, was very much disappointed.

However, it was not at all unusual for Lady Eudora to be whimsical, and perhaps she afterwards repented her unkindness, for in the evening Eda heard her discussing a passage in the aforesaid essay with her cousin Eustace, who had just returned to Chessington from the Highlands, where he had been staying for a considerable time; or a fancy that she had hurt Eda's feelings may have induced her to peruse the paper, after all, for some days afterwards it dropped out of a secret drawer in her davenport, though with a blush she flung it back to Eda, professing to wonder how she came by it.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Mr. St. Orme seemed a little surprised when he found Mark domiciled at Chessington, but he did more than tolerate him. He treated him with a considerate kindness for which Eda knew not how to be sufficiently grateful. Never by word or look did he remind the young man that they were not equals, but assisted him in his labours in the library, and interfered in his behalf whenever he thought the earl oblivious of the fatigue and monotony of

his secretary's occupation. It was owing to one of his suggestions that the brother and sister were set free for an hour before luncheon daily, that they might walk or sit together, and enjoy a little unrestricted intercourse.

Eda gladly accepted the privilege; but that daily hour did not prove as pleasant as she had anticipated. Mark was wearying already for the greater excitement of the metropolis, and he spent the time in murmuring at his lot.

"You may say what you will," he told her, "but the inequality with which fortune's gifts are meted out is horribly exasperating. Look at me, reduced to be a dependent in another man's house; then turn your eyes on the earl, and ask yourself if it isn't a pity that we cannot change places."

"Why, Mark, will nothing less than a coronet content you!" his wondering sister exclaimed.

"Why not? What use is it to the man who owns it? Lord Chessington is a very good, stupid sort of an old chap, with just sense enough to ride decently and shoot well; and to this inane thick-headed old fellow are given these fine estates and a title, while I am a pensioner on his bounty."

"Are you very sure that you would do more honour to the earldom than its present owner?" asked Eda, satirically.

"Quite sure. I only wish I could prove it to you."

"But I do not," she answered; "for his lordship is an excellent master to his servants, and a liberal, thoughtful landlord to his tenants. He may appear rather inert to a brisk impatient youth like you; but, with one or two trifling exceptions, he is my *bear ideal* of the 'fine old English gentleman.'"

Mark curled his lip. "My dear, the species is effete and useless, and the sooner it dies out the better. We want men in England who can infuse a little new life and spirit into our aristocracy."

"England can never cease to need men who 'fear God and honour their Queen,'" she retorted; "and the earl does both."

"Ah yes, he is very well in his way; but it's no use to talk to you, Eda, for you are one of those poor-spirited creatures who think that if a man is a lord he must be perfection."

She looked hurt at the tone he was taking. "I am not aware that I carry my reverence for rank to such extreme lengths; nor do I think you ought to ridicule me for disliking to hear Lord Chessington discussed so slightingly. He has been very kind to both of us, and so has Mr. St. Orme."

"St. Orme is a prig," said Mark; "but it is his nature. You could not make anything else of him. What a shame it is to propose throwing Lady Eudora away upon such a poor spiritless piece of humanity as he is!"

"Lady Eudora is sincerely attached to her cousin, and recognises the worth which you do not seem able to appreciate," said Eda, rebukingly. "I hope, when you talk in this strain, that it is only to tease me; but I cannot help telling you that it is both unkind and ungenerous."

However, Mark only laughed at Eda's indignation. "My dear child, I never pretended to share your sentiments towards my lord and my lady, so you should not get in a temper with me for my candour. I do my duty, and obey all the behests of my titled employers; does not that content you?"

"It can only be lip service, if you *mean* what you have been saying," she told him.

He evaded a direct reply, and complained that she was too exacting. "You ought not to expect me to get up an immense fund of gratitude to these people because they pay me a decent salary for my services. Could they do less?"

"Perhaps not; but you need not turn and sting the hand that loads you with benefits," she retorted; for Eda was now too much annoyed to be very careful what she said.

Her angry speech, however, had such an effect upon its auditor as to startle her. The colour receded from Mark's face till it left him ghastly pale, and he grasped her almost fiercely by the arm as he asked her what she meant.

She hastened to apologise. "Forgive me, dear Mark; I spoke too sharply. You had vexed me very much, or I should not have done so."

"But you must have a reason for bringing this charge against me!" he exclaimed, with a distrustful and searching look. "Has Mr. St. Orme, or Lady Eudora——"

"Neither of them have ever said anything about you but what is most kind, most generous!" she interposed. "I talked at random, for you had provoked me by your disparaging mention of Lord Chessington. Pray forget it. Do I not know that, *say* what you will, you are incapable of doing anything that would appear ungrateful!"

"You go from one extreme to another," he muttered, crossly. "I cannot speak to you as freely as I should like to do, for I never know whether I shall not trench upon your high-flown notions of what is right and honourable. But, under any circumstances, I do not think my only sister should be the first to censure me."

"I will not be so hasty and unkind again, dear Mark," she assured him; for Eda was now beginning to think she must have been unjust as well as severe in her strictures.

"We shall see, when I put you to the test," he answered, in freezing accents; and barely permitting the affectionate embrace with which she besought forgiveness, he left her.

It was their first serious difference since he had been at Chessington Park, and Eda made herself

unhappy about it till they met on the morrow, when it was a relief to find that he had overcome his ill-humour. Nay, when she made some allusion to her offence, he stopped her directly, saying—

"Tush, little sis! let bygones be bygones. I wish I were half as good as you are, then we should never fall out; but as I cannot be, why I must submit to be lectured sometimes, or else to keep you at arm's length."

He laughed as he said this, and, throwing his arm about his sister, gave her a kiss; and she might have decided that he spoke more in jest than earnest, if she had not found that from this moment a barrier grew up betwixt them which no effort of her own could remove. Mark was always smiling, always kind, when they met; but he never sought her, and she knew that he no longer reposed any confidence in her. To outward appearance he was unchanged, and there was even a caressing tone in his voice that it never used to have; but it did not deceive Eda. Others might and did say how fondly he was attached to his sister, but she was bitterly conscious that the ring of true affection was not in the pleasant-sounding words he lavished upon her, though she puzzled herself in vain for the real cause of the estrangement, over which she fretted in secret.

(*To be continued.*)

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 9. Saul of Tarsus.

Chapter to be read—Acts ix. 1—31.

INTRODUCTION. Have seen the progress of the Church in Samaria, now turn back to Jerusalem. Remind of Stephen's death, and of what it gave rise to: persecuted Christians fled everywhere: who was active in the persecution, kept the clothes of the witnesses, proceeded to more active measures? What led Saul to all this? Not told much of his early life and education in this chapter, but gather it from elsewhere. From Gal. i. 14, see what an eager, zealous Jew he was—eager to propagate Jewish religion and destroy its enemies. From 1 Tim. i. 13, see how sincere he was in so doing, really thinking he was doing God service. This eager, impulsive, persecuting Jew, is to become a devoted servant of Jesus Christ.

I. The Persecutor (Read Acts ix. 1—9). Question on Saul's work. Not content with delivering up Christians at Jerusalem, filling the prisons there, must needs get leave to extend his persecuting work. The High Priest, mad against Christ and His people, gives him letters authorising him to seize Christians as far as Damascus, and bring them to Jerusalem. Remind how signally High Priest had failed hitherto to put down the Christians. Peter and John had defied him, and the numbers had increased largely; so Saul and a number of like-minded friends (xxvi. 14) start for Damascus. Let children compare the accounts in chaps. xxii., xxvi. with this. They will see that all saw a light brighter than the sun, that all fell to the earth, and heard a sound, but that Saul alone heard the words of the speaker. Ask when another man travelling to curse God's people was suddenly stopped, but pointing out that Balaam was doing it for gain, while Saul was doing it (as he thought) for God's glory. Now picture the scene—the sudden light; the start of fear; the falling to the ground speechless; Saul addressed by name; his question; the reply, his second question; his willingness to obey; his blindness; cannot even mount his ass again; led to Damascus, a three days' journey.

Practical Lessons. (1) *Sins of ignorance.* Remind how under Jewish law sacrifices were appointed for such (Lev. iv. 2). Two prayers should be offered: "Teach me Thy way," lest make fearful mistakes, like Saul; and "Cleanse me from secret faults." (2) *Christ and His people one.* Whom had Saul been persecuting, and of whom does the voice speak? (ver. 5). So Christ calls Himself the vine (John xv. 1), and if, being members, we suffer with Him, shall share His glory (Rom. viii. 17).

II. The Young Christian. (Read 10—22). Question on the story of Saul at Damascus, showing the natural hesitation of Ananias to receive him, and the gentle and patient way in which God bears with him; his doubt removed, he at once obeys. How had Saul been spending the three days? Remind how Christ always coupled fasting with prayer (Matt. xvii. 21). What would he be mourning over? the wrong use of his talents. What would he be praying for? pardon for past and strength for future. What would he be resolving? on a changed life. Now, at the end of three days' fast and prayer, comes Ananias. Notice his kind words. How does he address him? Also alludes to the vision of Christ on the way, and states his message. What happened? Sight to his eyes. What to his mind? This always work of Holy Spirit—to teach, show error, lead to Christ, strengthen will, purify soul. What did he do at once? Remind children that he was a well-educated man, learned in the Scriptures, only had wrongly understood them; now, being taught by Holy Ghost, at once sets forth Christ as the Messiah in Damascus.

Practical Lessons. (1) *The work of the Spirit.* Impress on the children the need for constant prayer

for this. Only they led by Spirit are truly God's sons (Rom. viii. 14—16). (2) *Work begins at home.* Many when converted want at once to go away from home. Saul began at Damascus; let our light shine first in our family, school, &c.; then, like Saul, may be called to higher work.

III. SAUL PERSECUTED. (Read 23—31). What had Christ said to Ananias about Saul's suffering? (ver. 16). Soon begins. Why is this? Because Satan always hinders a good work. Notice that the Jews, and not Gentiles, of Damascus, opposed him, as their priests had done to the apostles at Jerusalem. Picture the scene of the escape; some friend with house on wall (like Rahab's, at Jericho) lending aid; the window stealthily opened at dead of night; the watch till the sentinel's back turned; the Apostle placed in the basket; the cords carefully secured and slowly lowered; the whispered inquiry as to whether all was right; hurried answer, and instant flight; escape to Jerusalem, head-quarters of the Jews. Ask how disciples received him; at first doubtfully. Who brought him forward? Perhaps Barnabas, a friend of Ananias, and had special letter from him. Now welcomed, shares their work, and preaches Christ boldly.

PRACTICAL LESSONS. (1) *Persecution.* Christ had warned all His disciples to count the cost. So must children be ready to endure hardness, perhaps lose friends; give up comforts for the sake of what is right. (2) *Boldness.* No cowardice in Saul's flight, because Christ told disciples to do so; but who would have gone right into heart of Jewish head-quarters but a bold man? So children must be bold for Christ at school—in rebuking bad words; in saying prayers; in refusing to cheat masters, &c.; at home—in setting good example, &c. So will receive Christ's blessing at His coming.

Questions to be answered.

1. Describe Saul's life as a Jew.
2. Describe the events of the journey to Damascus.
3. Give two lessons taught by the vision.
4. What happened to Saul at Damascus?
5. Describe his escape.
6. What practical lessons may be learned?

THE BRANCH OF HOLLY.

PART I.

SNOW had fallen heavily during the night, and the sky was still dark and lowering, as a cart laden with holly passed along the wet and plashy streets, while an admiring crowd of children followed its course with longing eyes. At length, in turning the sharp corner of a lane, a small branch fell to the ground, at the very feet of a poor little girl who was crossing just at the moment. Her sad face lighted up with an expression of pleasure as, eagerly seizing it, she gazed on the polished leaves and scarlet berries. "Mother will like to see this," she thought. "Poor sick mother! it will put her in mind of many a happy Christmas long ago. But stay——"

A sudden idea induced little Essie to set off running after the cart, and, going timidly up to the driver, she said, holding out the branch, "Please, sir, this is yours."

"Well, little one," he replied, good-naturedly, "keep it, as you've got it. There's many a one wishing for a pretty bit like that."

The child hurried off with her prize. "'Tis really mine now; and after all we'll have something to mark Christmas!" But Essie slackened her pace as she pictured to herself the dingy room, empty of furniture, and the wretched bed on which her mother lay, hungry and shivering, while all she had to bring home was a branch of holly. "And yet," she thought, "God, who made these pretty green leaves and bright berries, has sent them to me, just to show He doesn't forget us altogether; and perhaps, if we trust Him, He'll do more."

As this gleam of hope was passing through Essie's mind, she stood near a shop-door; and presently these words caught her ear: "Oh, mamma! do look at the lovely piece of holly that little girl has in her hand, with more berries than any we have at home! It would just do to decorate my baby-house! May I ask her if she would sell it?"

"Certainly, dear, if you like; but remember all the toys you want to buy."

"Oh, I would rather have the holly!"

Then, approaching Essie, she said, "Little girl, I will give you sixpence for that branch."

The bargain was soon concluded, and Essie, scarcely able to credit her good fortune, darted off with the money to a provision-shop. "She might recover, if I could bring her something nourishing every day. And how easy it was to sell that holly! I wish I could get some more. I wonder where it comes from?" Thus thinking, she arrived at home, and after mother and child had enjoyed an unusually plentiful meal, Essie told her story, and how much she wished to obtain more holly.

"No use, child," replied the mother. "It grows far away in the country—too far for you, so think no more about it."

But Essie could not give up the idea; and the more she looked at the pale careworn face of her mother, the more determined she felt to carry out her new plan. As soon, therefore, as the sick woman had again settled to rest, she went out; and after

wandering about in the cold wet streets, and asking many questions without obtaining any satisfactory replies, to her great joy she espied the same man who had given her the holly-branch in the morning, returning with his empty cart. Forgetting her timidity in anxiety to gain information, Essie ran towards him, and begged he would tell her where holly was to be found.

"Well, you're an honest little one," he said, at once recognising the child, "and I don't mind telling you I got mine at a place called Hollybank, about three miles from town. But why do you want to know?"

"Because I sold the piece you gave me for sixpence, and if I had more I could sell it too. Mother's ill, and I have no food for her. If it's only three miles, I could walk that far. Which is the road, please?"

"I'll give you a lift, if you're set on going, child. Jump into the cart, quick!"

She would have liked to go home and tell mother, but this was too good an opportunity to be neglected; so, climbing in at once, she was soon on her way. Notwithstanding the cold, it was pleasant out on the country roads. And, to Essie's surprise, the fields were all of a dazzling whiteness, and the trees, though bare and leafless, had a beautiful snowy clothing on every bough. After a while the cart stopped at a cross-road. "Now, little one, down with you; our ways separate here. Go on to the right, and you'll soon reach Hollybank."

"And may I climb up and take as much as I want?" asked Essie.

"Why, child, it's not really a bank at all. 'Tis a gentleman's place. You'll see a grand gate, and if you can get through that and up to the big house, I wouldn't be surprised if the young ladies gave you some holly to sell for your sick mother."

"Thank you, sir," said Essie, setting off at a quick pace, and full of hope.

After what appeared to her a long walk through the soft snow, she arrived at a large gate, with a pretty little cottage at one side. The gate was shut, and as she tried to push it open, a woman came forward. "There's no admittance here for beggar-children," she said.

"Please, ma'am, I'm not a beggar. I came all the way from town, and I want to go up to the house."

"From town, indeed! I'm sure we've enough of your kind here already; we don't want more."

"Oh, ma'am, mother's so ill."

"I knew you were a beggar—be off, at once!"

"I'm not, indeed! Do let me to the house!"

"What do you want?"

"Holly; I was told the ladies would give me some."

"Well, they won't, for no more can be spared. A cart-load of it went off this morning. So go away."

And after making sure that the gate was locked, the old woman hobbled back to her lodge. It was useless waiting longer, and poor Essie turned away, bitterly disappointed—a long dreary walk before her, and no hope of bringing anything home for mother. She was not even certain of the way, and wandered on for some distance without meeting any one, when suddenly the cold became more intense, the sky darkened, and soon a heavy shower of snow began to fall. Bewildered and frightened, the poor child looked round for shelter, and found that she was standing near the parapet of a bridge. Perceiving a little sloping path at one side, she descended cautiously. The stream was almost dried up beneath, and the arch afforded a tolerably comfortable refuge from the storm, so, crouching behind a large stone, Essie could not resist the drowsiness which came over her, and soon forgot all her fatigue and disappointment in a sound sleep.

(To be continued.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

49. How frequently does St. Matthew quote from the prophet Zechariah? Give chapter and verse.

50. In what part of the Bible is reference *first* made to battering-rams?

51. Prove from the Psalms and the prophecy of Isaiah that the nation of the Jews was intended by the vineyard mentioned in Matt. xxi.

52. Mention *three* memorable *intercessory* prayers of our Saviour.

53. Why did God forbid the Israelites obtaining horses from Egypt?

54. Where is the first mention in the Bible of "money" as used by the merchants?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 112.

37. "I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children" (Ps. lxix. 8). See St. John vii. 5.

38. By St. Paul only. See 1 Tim. ii. 5; Heb. viii. 6; ix. 15; xii. 24.

39. Both were charged with blasphemy. See St. Matt. xxvi. 65; Acts vi. 13.

40. Three times (St. Matt. xxii. 16; St. Mark iii. 6; xii. 13).

41. "Set ye Uriah in the fore front of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die" (2 Sam. xi. 15).

42. Gen. xiv. 15; Gal. i. 17.

43. 1, The son of the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings xvii. 17—23); 2, the Shunammite's son (2 Kings iv. 18—37); and 3, the man buried in Elisha's grave (2 Kings xiii. 21).

44. 1, Before Annas; 2, before Caiaphas; and 3, before the Council. See St. John xviii. 13: St. Matt. xxvi. 57; St. Luke xxii. 66.



(*Drawn by* CHARLES GREEN.)

VAIN REGRETS.

ALAS! that sunshine of a sultry noon
Should scorch and wither up the tender grass;
Alas! that all we love is lost so soon;
Alas! alas!

Alas! that fragrant flowers should fail and fade,
That with the passing summer they should pass;
Alas! that beauty in the dust is laid;
Alas! alas!

Alas! that riches should have wings to fly,
That years of toil have taken to amass;
Alas! for breaking hearts beneath the sky;
Alas! alas!

Alas! that on the white and wasted cheek
The hectic colour should the rose surpass;
Alas! that death in slow decay should speak;
Alas! alas!

Alas! that in our grief we only see
That bliss beyond but darkly through a glass;
For *there* the burden of no song will be,
"Alas! alas!"

J. R. EASTWOOD.

THE TRIPLETS OF THE BIBLE.

BY THE REV. J. BILES HITCHENS, AUTHOR OF "THE FURNACE," "THE FACE OF THE KING," ETC.

I.—THE THREE-ONE GOD.

"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—MATTHEW xxviii. 19.

IT is said that when St. Augustine was writing his discourse on the Trinity, he strolled by the seaside in meditation. There he saw a child digging a hole in the sand, and then attempting to fill it with sea-water by means of a shell. In answer to the student, the child said he intended thus to empty the great deep. "Impossible!" said Augustine. "Not more impossible," replied the little one, "than for you to explain the mystery of the Trinity." Truly, there is mystery incomparably great—mystery unfathomably deep—in the doctrine suggested by the text. Utterly incomprehensible is the manner of God's existence. But the presence of difficulty should not be regarded as any valid objection to the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity. Indeed, we should welcome mystery on such a theme as being presumptive evidence of the truth; for in the nature and attributes of the Blessed One whom we denominate "God," there must needs be arcana far beyond the reach of mortal minds. We never, never expect to "pierce the marble hardness of God's secret with the leaden point of our dull apprehension;" and yet, so far as the light of Scripture will guide us, we desire to force our way, believing that it is the Christian's privilege and duty to compare spiritual things with spiritual, to prove all things, and thus seek to the utmost to understand what Heaven has designed for our perusal and profit.

Now, that there are three Persons in one God certain followers of Dr. Priestley wholly deny. They hold that Deity belongs to the Eternal Father *alone*. They teach that "Jesus of Nazareth was a man, constituted in all respects like other men, subject to the same infirmities, the same ignorance, prejudices, and frailties;"* that His death was simply the death of a martyr to the truths He proclaimed; and that the Holy Ghost is nothing more than an influence, or property, or power, by which the One God communicates with man, and operates on the hearts of men. Holding the essential personal oneness of God, they reject the precious doctrine of the Atonement, and declare that nothing is needed in order to acceptance with God besides true repentance on the part of man. With such views being every week propounded, and with men who conscientiously embrace such sentiments ever and anon crossing our path, it is wise for us to survey the foundations of our faith. Let us, then, go at once to the teaching of our grand old Bible; for if the doctrine of the Trinity is not taught therein, we are under no obligation to accept it; but if it *is* discovered in the sacred records, then it is our solemn duty to embrace the same, however greatly it may surpass our power of comprehension. Indeed, unless we accept the light of revelation, we are altogether in the dark: there may be only one, and there may be a multitude of gods, for aught we know. The voice of Nature, as Paley and others have clearly shown, will suffice to teach us that there is a oneness of purpose, a harmony of counsel, but not that there is but one First Cause. The fact of the Divine unity is found alone in Scripture, where it is the uniform and unequivocal teaching. We should therefore search for the explanation of the fact in the sacred writings. The inspired men who are the first to declare must be the best to define the doctrine.

Opening the Bible at its very first page, we are impressed with the fact that the Infinite Being is referred to by plural appellations. The fourth word of Scripture—"*Elohim*," translated "God"—is plural, and is joined with a singular verb. It strictly reads thus: "In the beginning *Gods* created the heavens and the earth." This plural form is of repeated occurrence. Thus, for example, we should properly read: "Know ye that Jehovah, He the *Gods*, He hath made us." "The Lord our *Gods* is one Lord." "If I be *Masters*, where is My fear?" "Remember now thy *Creators* in the days of thy youth." "The knowledge of the *Holy Ones* is understanding." In

* Belsham.

perfect accordance with this, we find the plural form of speech used. Thus, in the first chapter of Genesis, God the Father, as President of a mystic Council, declares His will thus: "Let *Us* make man in *Our* Image." Again, it is written: "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become like *One of Us*." "And the Lord said, Let *Us* go down." These are not artificial expressions, but are the common forms of speech in the oracles of God. No criticism has yet succeeded in resolving them into mere idioms. They defy all explanations but the one we offer, the plurality of Persons in the unity of the Godhead. They unmistakably suggest both unity and distinction.

In harmony with these plural forms of expression, we must have observed that *three*, and *only three*, *Persons* are alluded to by the inspired scribes under divine appellations, and that each of these three has the attributes of divinity explicitly applied to Him, whilst the very same penmen as explicitly teach that there is but one God. The ancient form of benediction, used by the Jewish high-priest, is worthy of notice: "The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace" (Numb. vi. 24—27.) Here are the three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—distinctly appealed to. The Father is the Author of all good; He it is who blesses and preserves. The Son redeems and reconciles; He it is who brings light and grace for fallen man. The Holy Ghost is the Giver of peace and joy. We cannot read this Jewish benediction without being reminded of the Apostolic blessing, in which the distinct existence and work of the three Persons in the Trinity are so unmistakably set forth. The Aaronic benediction breathes with the Gospel. As we listen to the high-priest of the old economy uttering those beautiful words, we seem standing by the side of the preacher of righteousness, in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, as he says, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all." The Jews regarded the Aaronic benediction as containing allusion to the Trinity; for, according to some of the Rabbis, the blessing was pronounced with the hand uplifted, and the first *three* fingers of the hand extended, to express a triad, or trinity in the Godhead.

That was a remarkable vision the Prophet Isaiah was favoured to enjoy, which he records in the 6th chapter of his prophecy. He tells us that he saw the Lord in the temple, sitting upon a throne, and accompanied by seraphs, who veiled their faces before Him, and shouted with alternate responses, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts!" Now, I am aware that some commentators and others say that the threefold use of the word, "Holy" was simply a superlative expression, and intended only to give emphasis to the declaration. But in the presence of what is elsewhere written concerning that vision, I venture to affirm that it is not so. There is evidence of a Trinity in Unity here. In the 8th verse it is recorded that, whilst overwhelmed with what he saw and heard, he also caught the accents of a supernatural voice, saying, "Whom shall *I* send, and who will go for *Us?*" The Evangelist John makes reference to this vision (chapter xii., verse 41), and says it was Christ whom the prophet saw:—"These things said Esaias, when he saw His (Christ's) glory, and spake of Him." Then in the Acts of the Apostles (chapter xxviii., verse 25), St. Paul alludes to the vision, and quotes the words of the prophet as being the language of the *third* Person of the Trinity, saying, "Well spake the *Holy Ghost*, by Esaias the prophet, unto our fathers." Now, for a moment think of this: *three* times the seraphs repeat their homage —"Holy, Holy, Holy." The Jehovah speaking says, "Who will go for *Us?*" John says it was *Christ* who was thus seen by Isaiah; and Paul asserts it was the *Holy Ghost* who spake to the prophet. Taking these facts together, I think our conclusion is a safe one, that the adoration referred to the Divine *Three* in the one essence of the Lord of Hosts.

In other places of Holy Writ the distinction is made between the Persons of the Godhead. Isaiah, in chapter xxxiv., verse 16, says, "Seek ye out of the Book of the Lord and read, for *my* mouth it hath commanded, and *His Spirit* it hath gathered them." Here is *one* Person speaking of the Spirit —another Person. Again, in Isaiah xlviii. verse 16: "Now the *Lord God* and *His Spirit* hath sent Me." These words are spoken by the Messiah, for the prophet adds immediately, "Thus saith the *Lord, thy Redeemer*." The prophet Haggai, (chapter ii., verses 4—7), has these words: "I am with you, saith the *Lord of Hosts;* according to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so *My Spirit* remaineth among you: fear ye not. For thus saith the *Lord of Hosts*, I will shake all nations, and the *Desire of all nations* shall come." Here are three Persons mentioned—the Lord of Hosts, the Spirit, and the Desire of all nations.

Ever and anon, throughout the Old Testament, we discover allusion to a mysterious Personage who appeared unto men. In that garden where the spotless infancy of our race was passed, a Being was alone with Adam—a Being who bore the title and wielded the power and exercised the prerogatives' of God. On the unveiled countenance of that Being our first parent was per-

mitted to gaze, and the accents of that Being's voice he was privileged to hear. Abraham saw the same Person, and heard words from His lips. Jacob spent the whole night, at the ford of Jabbok, in His hallowed company. Moses looked on the face of that Being till his own countenance was radiant with brilliant glory, and he heard Him declare, "I am the God of thy fathers;" "I am that I am." Isaiah saw that wondrous Visitor attended by celestial intelligences; and many others saw, heard, and were permitted to worship Him, and speak of Him, as God. Yet we read that God is a Being "whom no man hath seen or can see;" and Jesus says, "No man hath seen God at any time." How are we to reconcile these statements? Let us hear the Great Teacher. He says, "Before Abraham was, I am;" "Have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen *Me* hath seen the Father, and how sayest thou, then, Show us the Father?" He whom the Apostle describes as "the image of the invisible God," "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person," and of whom it is written, "The Word was with God, and the Word was God"—He it is who appeared unto men under the Old Testament economy, manifesting Himself by the temporary assumption of a sensible form.

This Jesus in the fulness of time appeared among men as the "Son of Man" as well as the "Son of God." His Messiahship He satisfactorily proved by the miracles He wrought, by the words He spake, by the death He endured, and by the resurrection and ascension which followed. He was the "masterpiece of His own art; the subject of His own teaching." Speaking of Himself he said, He had all things in common with the Father; that He was *in* the Father and the Father in Him; that the kingdom of God is His kingdom; that all power in heaven and on earth is His; that the angels are His; that He gives eternal life; that He will judge all; that He is with His people for ever; and that without Him nothing good can be accomplished. Now, *all* He said of Himself must be accepted as truth, otherwise nothing He uttered deserves a moment's credit. If He were not what He declared Himself to be, He was of all impostors the most impudent and impious: His pretensions were crimes of the most colossal magnitude. But accepting His teaching as divine, we shall discover in His utterances repeated evidences of the doctrine of the Trinity. Indeed, if the divinity of Christ be granted, the question is settled; for He not only claimed to be Himself "equal with God," but declared that there was a third Person whose presence in the Church was a necessity. Addressing His disciples, just prior to His departure, He said, "When the Comforter is come whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth who proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me."

The divinity of the Spirit is not so repeatedly declared as is the divinity of Christ. This might be expected after the assurance of Jesus—"He shall not speak of Himself;" "He shall testify of Me." But sufficient is revealed to conduct the unprejudiced reader to the conclusion that the Holy Ghost is God. His divine agency is interwoven with the entire texture of the inspired writings. It cannot be eliminated. The attributes of deity are ascribed to Him. Holiness, eternity, omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, and sovereignty—perfections exclusively belonging to God—are His. He is represented as performing the work of God, and receiving the worship of men. Sins against the Spirit are sins against God; whilst His work is portrayed as absolutely necessary for the illumination, regeneration, sanctification, and comfort of the soul of man. The paternal love of the Father required the redeeming love of the Son to display it; and the redeeming love of Jesus required the sanctifying love of the Spirit to apply it. Christ provided the price of our redemption, and the Spirit supplies the power. The one would be inoperative without the other. Immanuel declared whatsoever He received from the Father; and the Eternal Spirit of Truth first faithfully preserved in Scripture, and now lovingly applies to the soul, whatever Christ declared. This the Apostle fully recognised when he wrote such words as the following:—"Now, I beseech you, brethren, for the *Lord Jesus Christ's* sake, and for the love of the *Spirit*, that you strive together with me in your prayers to *God* for me." "Through *Him* (Christ) we both have access by one *Spirit* unto the *Father*." "Praying in the *Holy Ghost*, keep yourselves in the love of *God*, looking for the mercy of our *Lord Jesus Christ* unto eternal life."

Thus underlying all Scripture, as the foundation upon which the superstructure rests, is it taught that there are three Persons, and yet that the Lord our God is one Lord. The only conclusion that *can* be accepted, if Scripture be accepted, is this, that there are three Persons in one God—"One Divine nature or essence common unto three Persons, incomprehensibly united, and ineffably distinguished; united in essential attributes, distinguished by peculiar idioms and relations, all equally infinite in every Divine perfection, each different from the other in order and manner of subsistence. That there is a mutual existence of one in all and all in one; a communication, without any deprivation or diminution in the communicant; an eternal generation and an eternal procession, without precedence or

succession, without proper causality or dependence; a Father imparting His own, and a Son receiving His Father's life, and a Spirit issuing from both, without any division or multiplication of essence. These are notions which may well puzzle our reason in conceiving how they agree, but ought not to stagger our faith in asserting that they are true. For if the Holy Scripture teacheth us plainly, and frequently doth inculcate upon us, that there is but one true God—if it as manifestly doth ascribe to the three Persons of the blessed Trinity the same august names, the same peculiar characters, the same Divine attributes, the same superlatively admirable operations of creation and providence—if it also doth prescribe to them the same supreme honours, services, praises, and acknowledgments to be paid to them all—this may be abundantly enough to satisfy our minds, to stop our mouths, to smother all doubt and dispute about this high and holy mystery."*

Unable to comprehend the mystery, the best we can do is to accept with confidence what the Bible declares, and learn how in Nature the doctrine is often illustrated and set forth. A familiar object will frequently serve to simplify a most abstruse theme; and so, in things sacred, the natural often throws light upon the supernatural. You stand in your garden, and gaze with pleasure upon the blades of grass, the blooming flowers, and the ripening fruits. Well, remember each has three distinct qualities—colour, shape, size. Separate, yet essential, these three qualities together form one idea. You sit in the winter season by your fireside, and as you watch the curling flame, and enjoy the genial warmth, you note that the fire on your domestic hearth has substance, light, and heat—yet it is but one fire. You thank God every day for the light—do you not know that it is constituted of three primal colours? You look daily upon the cheerful faces of the little ones entrusted to your care—each boy or girl is a creature to God, a child to the parents, and a subject to the Queen. You introvert your gaze, and study yourself—you find the will, the affections, and the thoughts to be three distinct consciousnesses, but you are a unity of such consciousnesses.

"Matter, and breath, and instinct, unite in all beasts of the field;
Substance, coherence, and weight, fashion the fabrics of the earth;
The will, the doing, and the deed, combine to frame a fact;
The stem, the leaf, the flower; beginning, middle, and end;
Cause, circumstance, consequent; and every three in one.
Yea, the very breath of man's life consisteth of a trinity of vapours,
And the noonday light is a compound: the triune shadow of Jehovah."

It is surely worthy of notice that Trinitarian Christianity has everywhere found a hearty welcome, whilst the cold and cheerless creed of its opponents has slowly grown, and has never widely spread. Heaven has smiled most graciously upon the one, and frowned upon the other. Though storms of opposition have gathered round it, and tempests of persecution have spent their fury upon it, Trinitarianism, like a house founded upon a rock, has stood safe and strong. Two unequal wills have again and again come into collision—the will of the rebel man and the will of the Infinite Creator—but in every struggle the glory has been accorded to God. His supreme purpose has been effected by man, in man, and in spite of man. Of old, Constantius, Julian, Valens, and Apollinaris, and latterly Strauss, Rénan, and others, laboured in vain. All who have ever set themselves against the Lord's Anointed have been ingloriously defeated. The stone which the builders rejected has become the head-stone of the corner. If the sceptics were in the right, surely the God of truth would have caused their opinions to take root and cover the land; but after eighteen centuries, it is still a weak, unpopular, unwelcome, and, in the majority of places, an unknown thing. But the doctrine it opposes has secured world-wide triumphs. Our Christian religion, honouring the three Persons in the one God, has propagated itself amongst all races, and has penetrated all climes. The world's hopes of progress and prospects of peace and purity are based upon it. Every month renews and intensifies our anticipation of the time when the triumphant shout shall be raised: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our God, and of His Christ."

The rejection of this doctrine involves the repudiation of the sages of antiquity. Separate nations, springing from the one family, received this doctrine by tradition. Over that traditionally received truth God graciously watched, despite the polytheism and idolatry which prevailed. Hence the idea was possessed by the wise men of all the great heathen nations. "It was warbled by the lyre of Orpheus and the lips of Plato; it was hieroglyphed upon the pyramids of Egypt and the pagodas of India and China; it is stamped upon the Lama of Thibet, and sculptured in the gigantic and dateless temples of Elora and Elephanta. The sages of China, and the Druids of Britain, and the Runic bards of Scandinavia, and the priests of Mexico, as well as the astronomers of Chaldea and the fire-worshippers of Persia, had all their oracles or emblems of a trinity long before Christianity taught the doctrine of Judea." It is not, therefore, a doctrine of to-day. We did not receive it from the theologians of modern times. We are not indebted for the belief of this truth to any of the creeds. It has come down to us from

* Dr. Barrow.

the beginning. It is as old as the world. It was first a matter of sacred tradition, and then of inspired revelation. To reject this doctrine is, therefore, to treat with scorn and opposition the voice of all antiquity and the verdict of the Christian Church.

But we cannot reject it, for it is vitally connected with the value and influence of the Scriptures. If the doctrine of the three-one God is not worthy of reception, then the Bible is no longer deserving of the reverence, regard, and research of mortals; it is not a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path, but a destructive and delusive mirage; it is not the guide of our steps, but the betrayer of our confidence, and the destroyer of our souls; it gives no longer a certain sound; it aims no more at my happiness; it is, in a word, a bad book, and undeserving of perusal. Either we must accept the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, or, to be consistent, we must give up our Bibles! There is no middle course. For consider, the avowed end of Revelation is to bring man to love God with all his heart, and mind, and soul, and strength; the first commandment is "Thou shalt have no other Gods before Me," and idolatry is held forth everywhere in the Book as "that abominable thing which the Lord hateth." Who, then, is Jesus Christ, who is commended as the object of affection, admiration, confidence, and worship? And who is this Holy Spirit whom we are called on not to grieve, and to sin against whom is to sin against God? If Jesus and the Spirit are mere creatures, then, whilst the Book cautions us against idolatry, and teaches us there is but one God to adore, it holds up two others for our adoration. Its language is deceptive, and its tenor dangerous. There is no other book of such doubtful morality that would be admitted into our homes. An author who ostensibly aimed at one object, and yet throughout his volume inculcated the very reverse, would very soon cease to be read. But if the doctrine of the triune God is granted, then the whole Scriptures agree in all their parts, and the statements throughout accord with the moral and spiritual end proposed.

Moreover, the doctrine of a plurality in the Divine essence is vitally connected with our Christian experience. If we reject it, then the graces which we have been taught to foster in our hearts are wholly valueless, or they are wrongly based; the fabric of our hopes falls ingloriously to the dust; the pinion of our faith fails any more to carry us into the realms of blessedness; the floodgates of joy are for ever barred and bolted; the river of our peace stagnates into depression; the tongue of supplication cleaves to the roof of our mouth. We who deemed ourselves possessed of privileges, and honours, and riches, are lonely, poor, degraded outcasts. We have *not* the surety for our debt we thought we had. We have *not* the sacrifice for our guilt we had joyously believed. We have *not* a Mediator in the High Court of Heaven. We have *not* a High Priest in the Upper Holy of Holies. We have *not* an ever-present and sympathising Friend. We are *not* instructed by a Supreme Teacher within, nor sustained by a Holy Comforter. There is no one to take us by the hand and introduce us to the King; no one to help our infirmities; no one to set us a perfect example; no one to give us any revelation of God's character; no one to show us that there is really a hereafter! If this doctrine be not true, ours is a condition of utter helplessness, hopelessness, and horror. This Dr. Priestley allowed shortly before his death. He said to Dr. Miller, who differed from him: "There neither can, nor ought to be, any compromise between us. If *you* are right, we are not Christians at all; and if *we* are right, you are gross idolators." Thank God we accept this doctrine, we rejoice in it, we are prepared to cleave to it. Let us, then, learn to render to each person in the Godhead the honour due to Him. Let us recognise distinct operation on the part of each, but be sensible that the work of each is absolutely necessary for our ultimate admission into the realms of life, and light, and joy.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 10. Cornelius.

Chapter to be read—Acts x.

INTRODUCTION. Ask to whom the Gospel had been preached at present: to Jews on the day of Pentecost; to Samaritans by Philip; to Eunuch of Ethiopia. Now shall hear of a Roman soldier being taught the Christian faith.

I. Cornelius at Home. (Read 1—8.) Make the children describe the character of Cornelius: his *inner* life—fearing God, praying without ceasing; his *outward* life—bringing up his family well, giving alms liberally. Remind how Christ connected prayer with alms in Sermon on Mount, as fulfilling man's duty to God and his neighbour (Matt. vi. 4, 5). What happened one day? At what time? What used to go on at the ninth hour? (Acts iii. 1.) He being a Gentile, not admitted to privileges of Jews in Temple, was praying at home. Why was he afraid? Who else were afraid at appearance of angel? (Luke ii. 9). What did the

angel tell him? For whom was he to send? Who went on the errand? Remind of Joshua, the captain, who would only have God-fearing servants in his house. So he told his servants the story, and sent them away.

II. PETER AT JOPPA. (Read 9—18.) How long did the journey take? Reached Joppa at sixth hour, *i.e.*, noon. What was Peter doing? Like David, who prayed at noon as well as morning and evening. Describe Peter on the house-top. Gone up for quiet, and rest, and prayer, in heat of the day. Flat roof, awning overhead from sun; would look down on blue waters of Mediterranean; little vessels putting into port of Joppa; children playing on sand; fishermen mending their nets; the Apostle hungry, probably had a busy morning convincing Jews, makes his noon-day devotions while dinner preparing. Question upon Peter's vision, explaining from Lev. xi. 4, &c., which animals were considered unclean; remind of the Jews' prohibition as to swine to this day. How often were the dream and the voice repeated? Remind how Pharaoh's dream, repeated twice, was to make it more certain (Gen. xli. 32). Now let the children see the meaning of the dream. Who were meant by the clean animals? The Jews, admitted into covenant with God, receiving all the promised blessings, the Messiah, &c. (Rom. ix. 4, 5). Who were considered unclean? Jews not allowed to eat with Gentiles (Acts xi. 3)—more than that, Jews could not endure that Gentiles should be preached to; heard St. Paul with patience till he announced his commission to the Gentiles (Acts xxii. 21). But to whom had Christ come? message to shepherds was "to all people." What Gentiles saw Him soon after His birth? So His lifting up was to draw all men to Him (John xii. 32), and Apostles were sent to all nations. Till now they could not have understood this, so this vision was sent. God, by His Son's death, had cleansed Gentiles as well as Jews, so they were no longer common.

III. THE MEETING. (Read 19—33.) Peter meditating on the vision, is told to go with the men. Whose office is it to teach? So the Spirit taught him as it had Philip, not merely for great things, like the speaking with tongues, but for incidents of everyday life. How happy the servant would be when he saw Peter. How was the return party enlarged? (ver. 23). How was Peter received by Cornelius? Did it make Peter proud? (ver. 26). Cornelius tells his story while the large company listen.

IV. THE SERMON. (Read 34—43.) Peter's sermon being read, let these heads be noticed:—(1) *All who fear God are accepted by Him.* All His creatures equally cared for, acceptable in His sight; no one, then, need feel forgotten; seek God and shall find; draw near Him, and He will draw near you. (2) *Peace comes only through Christ.* All Jewish sacrifices pointed to Him; His death for all, Jews or Gentiles; He, full of Holy Ghost and power, man and God, is Saviour of world; His death an atonement for sin; His life one of devotion to His people. He must be believed in if would have peace (ver. 43). (3) *Christ also the Judge.* Came at first to save; if not accepted, will condemn; therefore Christ must be accepted for life, death, and judgment.

V. THE BAPTISM. (Read 44—48). What followed immediately upon the sermon? Their hearts prepared, the word not caught away. How did Peter's friends regard it? What then did Peter suggest? In whose name were they baptised? Notice (1) that the inward grace was in this case given before received the outward sign. (2) That they were baptised immediately on believing in Christ. What a happy party they would be; no wonder invited Peter to spend a few days.

PRACTICAL LESSONS. (1) *Man's equality in God's sight.* Let it teach us never to despise others not had same advantages and privileges. (2) *Obedience to God's will.* Cornelius acting on message, received these great blessings. Peter acting on vision, received first Gentile family into the Church.

Questions to be answered.

1. Describe the character of Cornelius.
2. Describe the vision to St. Peter, and explain it.
3. Show the feeling of the Jews to the Gentiles.
4. Analyse Peter's sermon.
5. What was there remarkable about the baptism?
6. Give two lessons taught.

A SUNSET.

"We shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."—1 JOHN iii. 2.

THE sun sinks calmly, and entire;
But in the lake beneath it seems
Like a distorted, restless fire,
As 'twere the sport of airy dreams;
And yet it figures forth realities
Familiar to human hearts and eyes.

For man himself, at best, we find
Resembles much yon borrowed blaze,
Now flickering to the evening wind
Which o'er the tempting water strays,
Full soon to fade away from mortal sight
Into the quietly absorbing night.

But faith looks deeper into space
Beyond our feeble vision's range;
And whispers sweetly of a place
Where bliss is undisturbed by change;
And not a ripple passes o'er the soul,
But Jesu's image is reflected whole.

D. G.

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER XIX.

EDA was in the library one morning, searching for a book the countess wanted, and Mr. St. Orme, who was sitting there writing, had courteously laid down his pen to assist her in finding the missing volume, when they were interrupted by the entrance of Lady Eudora; she came in panting and glowing with excitement, holding an open letter in her hand.

"Oh, Eustace, I am so glad to find you here! I want to ask you something. A boon, a boon, sir knight! Don't run away, Eda, it's no secret; and it concerns you, or, at least, your brother, which is the same thing, isn't it? First of all, tell me, coz, if mamma is right when she says that you are hand-and-glove with one of the cabinet ministers, Lord —— ?"

Though Mr. St. Orme answered with a smile, there was a little constraint in his manner, which escaped the notice of his impetuous cousin.

"I must be allowed to doubt my aunt using the expression you impute to her; but she tells you correctly that I am on intimate terms with Lord ——. We were at Eton and Oxford together."

"Yes, and you still correspond," Eudora eagerly added, "and he wants you to go into Parliament; and it was you who recommended to him the secretary who is just leaving him. This letter is from mamma's old friend, Mrs. Burton; just listen to what she says:—

'Tell Mr. Orme, if he is still with you, that his protégé, young Maurice, has been so ill that his physician advises a warmer climate, and through his patron, Lord ——, the young man has been appointed to a consulship at one of the Italian ports. So Lord —— will want another secretary.'"

She paused, and fixed her eyes on Mr. St. Orme, who was looking at the pattern of the carpet.

"Well, Eustace, you will recommend him another, won't you? Mamma was saying that it would be an excellent opening for Mr. Granton, and so I came to you at once. Write to his lordship directly, will you?"

"Affairs of this kind require some consideration, Eudora," she was gravely told.

"Nonsense!" the young lady retorted; "I hate to be answered with such unmeaning words. Do you think Lord —— would refuse if you asked him to give the berth to Mr. Granton?"

There was a pause, and then Eustace St. Orme answered, "No, I do not think he would; but——"

"But you do not like to ask favours. Neither do I; only as this is not for yourself you may do it with a good grace. Sit down and write the letter, there 's a dear boy; papa shall give Mr. Granton testimonials of his ability and so on, and I'll reward you for your good nature by singing you all those horridly doleful ballads you think so beautiful!"

She dashed across the room to an escritoire, put pen, ink, and paper ready, and then uttered another half-coaxing, half-impatient, "Come, Eustace, come!"

"First let me have a little conversation with you, dear Dora," he urged; and Eda, whose hopes had risen higher and higher while Lady Eudora was talking, caught a glimpse of his sober face, and hoped no longer. She saw that whatever might be his reasons for it, he did not intend to recommend Mark to the vacant situation, and made her escape from the room to relieve him of the embarrassment her presence evidently occasioned.

"Eda has run away," Lady Eudora exclaimed. "How ungracious she must think you to hesitate in this manner! She will not feel half as thankful for your recommendation as if it had been promised more promptly and kindly."

"I should be much grieved to hurt Miss Granton's feelings; she is a most estimable young woman; but——"

"Another horrid but! What is the matter with you this morning, Eustace? Aren't you willing to use your interest in Mr. Granton's behalf?"

"Certainly; I will do anything I can conscientiously do for a person of whom your father thinks so highly as he does of Mr. Granton."

"Well then, write to Lord —— without any more delay."

"But, Eudora, I am afraid I cannot think with you that this young man is fitted for a post of such importance."

The young lady began to redden angrily. "Why not? He is gentlemanly, intelligent, and anxious to rise in the world. Oh, Eustace, you cannot be so cruel as to stand in his light!"

"Gently, dear Dora. I do not deny that Mr. Granton is what you describe him; and so far from wishing to injure him, I am ready to do aught that lies in my power to further his interests."

"Isn't this blowing hot and cold with one breath? You will and yet you won't; how am I to understand you? I wish you wouldn't be so over-cautious, Eustace."

"Can I be too careful whom I recommend as a trusty and valuable servant to one of my best friends?"

"Too careful? No. But what have you to say against Mark Granton?"

"This much, Eudora; that he has not inspired me with the confidence I must feel in the man I send to Lord ——"



(*Drawn by* F. BARNARD.)

"It had been her mother's."—*p.* 155.

"You do not like Mr. Granton. You are jealous of him!" she exclaimed, passionately.

"Jealous because your father finds him a more useful and sociable companion than I! Nonsense, Eudora; you ought to know me better than to think me capable of such meanness."

Still she pouted, and drew away the hand he would have taken, asking, "What do you know to Mr. Granton's discredit?"

"Nothing; nothing whatever. Don't you see, dear coz, that he may be a very well-conducted young man, and yet not fitted for a berth of so much importance?"

"No, I do not see it. In my opinion he has every quality that fits him to undertake it, and it's horribly aggravating that when such an opening presents itself, you are so heartless, so cold-blooded, as to stand between him and good fortune."

"Gently, Dora, gently! It is scarcely fair to abuse me because I am as loyal to my friend as you are to yours. As soon as I find an opportunity of serving Miss Granton's brother *without losing my own self-respect*, I will do so."

"Promises, especially evasive ones, mean nothing," Eudora scornfully asserted, "and your refusal to fulfil the pledges I gave in your name will look like an insult to Mr. Granton. I know *I* should regard it as one were I in his place. He will be cruelly mortified, cruelly!"

"I hope not," Mr. St. Orme replied. "I shall be sorry if I have hurt or disappointed him; even though it is so indirectly that I am sure he has too much good sense to blame me for it."

"But what will he think of *me?*" and Eudora's eyes began to fill with angry tears; "I felt so sure that you would use your influence for him, that I did not hesitate to say so."

"I will go to Mr. Granton and explain that your good-nature led you into an error. He is so young, and so well placed here, that he can afford to wait until something more suitable offers."

"No," said Eudora, planting herself between Mr. St. Orme and the door, "you shall not gall him still more by an hypocritical pretence of regret for your ill-nature. I will myself tell him that I made a terrible mistake when I depended on your good feeling."

She left the room, and Eustace St. Orme returned to his writing; but her reproaches had vexed and disturbed him so much, that his letter was thrown aside unfinished. He did not like Mark Granton; and though he thought he had good grounds for distrusting the young man, he knew that it was no use saying so; that he could not make Eudora think with him. He loved her for the generous warmth with which she pleaded the cause of her friend's brother; but at the same time it grieved him that she had not sufficient faith in his own affection to understand that he did not willingly refuse her anything; but had acted in this matter according to the dictates of his conscience.

Nor did the affair end here; he was obliged to see that both Lord and Lady Chessington shared in some measure their daughter's vexation at his refusal to recommend Mark Granton to the vacant post. Eda was the only one whose demeanour towards him was unchanged. She was too sincere to pretend that she did not regret it, but she had studied Mr. St. Orme's character sufficiently to feel satisfied that he had excellent motives for what he had done; and telling herself that Mark's youth and inexperience justified him in asserting that her brother was not fitted for so onerous a post, she strove to reconcile him as well as herself to the disappointment.

That Mark did feel it bitterly, she was sure, but he would not acknowledge it. "Pooh!" he said, carelessly. The berth was not such a catch that he need fret at losing it. St. Orme had acted just as he anticipated, and anything was better than lying under an obligation to such a prig. He dared say he should do very well without the patronage of a fellow he disliked.

Eudora said nothing—a most unusual course for her to take, for she was accustomed to talk so fast and loudly when displeased, that every one in the house was made aware of it; but in these passionate utterances her wrath ordinarily evaporated, and it was as new as it was unpleasant to her cousin to see her avoid him day after day, and refuse to be conciliated.

Perhaps he was the only person who noticed how much she had changed of late, for Lady Chessington had been seized with another attack of lung disease, violent enough to confine her to her own suite of apartments, and Eda was in such constant attendance upon her, that Eudora was left to her own devices for several hours each day. But she no longer cared to ride or drive with her father, or Mr. St. Orme—who attributed her refusals to the angry feelings she still cherished—and either took long solitary strolls, or shut herself up in her own room where she read or dreamed her mornings away.

Eda found her there one day listlessly scribbling on the margin of a volume of poems, and peeped over her shoulder to see what author she was ill-using.

"Byron! I do not wonder that you are such a careless reader, for we agreed, did we not, that his writings are not to our taste? But why are you reading them at all?"

"Why? I don't know. Oh, because I am too idle to care for anything better. Some of his verses are very melodious, and chime in with my feelings just now."

"Just now," repeated Eda, smiling, "you would have been better engaged if you had accepted Mr. St. Orme's proposal, and rambled as far as the waterfall, for your hands are feverish, and you look tired. Dear Lady Eudora, you stay in-doors too much."

"I am very well," she answered, briefly, and was withdrawing herself from the affectionate caress, when a little gold chain she wore round her throat caught in the button of Eda's cuff; it snapped, and a trinket suspended from it fell to the floor.

Eudora stooped for it directly, exclaiming in great perturbation, "My locket, my dear little locket, is it broken?" and was returning it to her bosom, when Eda, with pale cheeks and dilated eyes, arrested the movement. She had caught a glimpse of the ornament, and recognised it. It had been her mother's, and since Mrs. Granton's death had passed into the hands of Mark. How came it in the Lady Eudora's possession?

CHAPTER XX.

For a brief interval Eudora, with drooping head, sat cowering before her friend, too confused or shame-stricken to meet her anxious gaze; but in a little while she rallied her spirits, and throwing herself into Eda's arms, exclaimed—

"Don't look at me so strangely! You know all at last, and I am glad of it; very glad. It has made me miserable to have such a secret, and from you!"

"What secret? What is it I have to hear? Not that Mark has dared to——"

But Eudora sprang up, and imperiously made a sign to her to be silent.

"Not a word against him; I will not hear it. If any one is in fault, it is I! But no one can blame us for loving each other. There, now I have told you all. I have promised to be Mark's wife, and I mean to keep my word."

"Mark must be mad!" was all his distressed sister could find voice to say; but Eudora laughed, though it was a little wildly.

"People always are when they fall in love. You are not very complimentary to me!"

"I am not thinking of you, but of my brother," Eda replied. "I must see him, reason with him, remind him of his position and yours, before he can commit worse follies."

But Eudora held her tightly when she would have quitted the room.

"You shall not scold him; I say you shall not! Is it such a very great folly to love me? I know I am heedless and in many respects unworthy of him; but I mean to be wise and thoughtful for his sake. Oh Eda, my little friend and sister, you will help me and teach me, will you not?" But Eda scarcely had patience to hear her out.

"Let me go to Mark, and insist that he leaves this house at once! You are a silly, romantic girl, Lady Eudora, and you cannot know what you are saying!"

"I do not deny that I am what you call me," said Lady Eudora, still retaining her grasp on Eda's dress; "but Mark has promised to put up with all my faults, and I love him dearly. Eda, I will be a true wife to him, and do my utmost to help him to become as rich and famous as he aspires to be."

"You do not know what you are saying," Eda repeated. "What kind of love is that which is told secretly, and which leads a young girl to deceive her parents? For shame, Lady Eudora! Where was your own sense of honour when you listened to Mark's wooing, knowing as you do that Lord Chessington will never sanction it?"

The young girl bit her lip, and coloured high.

"I never intended to meet him secretly. It was by chance, the merest chance, we encountered each other—at first," she added. "And no one else sympathised with him, no one else understood him, nor comprehended what high and noble aims he has."

"Very noble, certainly, if leading you into clandestine proceedings is a specimen of them!" exclaimed Eda, bitterly.

"I tell you the fault rests with me," Eudora interposed. "You are cruel to judge us so harshly. You ought to be on our side, and help us in the struggle we have before us."

"Help you! to do what?"

"To overcome mamma's opposition. I shall be able to manage papa myself. When he finds that I am resolute, he will give way; and then, oh then, Eda, we shall all be very happy! Mark will be such a dutiful son to my parents. We shall always live with them, you know; and papa will get him into Parliament, and—and don't say anything unkind, pray don't!"—Eudora's head was now resting on her friend's shoulder, and she was sobbing convulsively—"for I am very, very wretched. I never concealed anything from mamma before; I never wilfully fretted papa; and when I think how disappointed he will be to find that I cannot marry Eustace, I feel that I could not go through with it if it were not for Mark.'

"I am glad he has not taught you to quite forget what you owe to your parents," Eda retorted. "He must go away, Lady Eudora, and you must never think of him again."

"What! after promising by everything I hold dear and sacred that I will be his wife!" cried Eudora, dashing away her tears and assuming a resolute air. "I shall grieve very much if mamma refuses to forgive us, but I shall not alter my determination. I will never give Mark up unless he gives me up. I vowed to be his, and I will keep my word!"

Eda put aside her clinging hands, feeling too much annoyed to argue longer, but Eudora would not be shaken off.

"Where are you going? What are you going to do?"

"I shall first seek Mark; tell him what I think of his conduct, and warn him that if he does not take

steps to put an end to this disgraceful affair, I must."

"But I forbid you to interfere. You have no right to do so!" cried Eudora, angrily. "How can you meditate anything so dishonourable? I gave you my confidence, telling you my thoughts and intentions freely, because you are the sister of my plighted lover, and you are not justified in repeating even to him anything that I have said."

"My first duty is to my employers," answered Eda, steadily. "How could I look them in the face if I knew that I was conniving at my brother's base endeavours to entrap you into a secret marriage?"

"Mark is not base," was the passionate retort. "It is you who are harsh and unkind. What was more natural than for me to love him when I saw him struggling with so many disadvantages, and knew that with my hand I should be able to give him the wealth and position which are all he needs. For the first time in my life I am glad that I am rich; yes, and glad that Mark will owe something to the 'silly romantic girl,' as you call me, whose faults he does not see so readily as you do."

Eda looked at her with angry wonder, struggling with her pity. To a girl of Eudora's temperament there might be a strange sort of gratification in being wooed in this fashion; but how could she have so thoroughly forgotten her duty and self-respect, as she must have done, to pledge herself to Mark secretly? As for him, she could scarcely trust herself to think of what he had done. There must have been stolen interviews and assignations, to keep which both must have deceived those who trusted them. She was accustomed to find excuses for everything her brother said and did that militated with her own conceptions of right and wrong; but she could not do so now. With his boasted knowledge of the world, he must be well aware that in such a marriage *he* only could be the gainer, and that he was taking unfair advantage of Eudora's romantic generosity, as well as betraying the confidence of her parents.

"Don't look so worried, dear little Eda," the young lady was whispering, when she roused herself to listen, "It will all come straight by-and-by. It isn't the first time that a demoiselle of high degree has fallen in love with a fortuneless knight; and if I am satisfied with my choice——"

"But are you? Can you feel that you would be happy with one whose first step has been to teach you to deceive your best friends?"

Eudora bit her lip, and began to lose her temper.

"You are behaving just as Mark said you would; making the worst of everything, and taking the most exaggerated, distorted views of what we have done, instead of suggesting some plan for us to act upon. Remember, Eda, we have gone too far to retreat, and you will but precipitate matters if you are rash and obstinate."

"I must talk to my brother," she answered. "If no thought of the countess's grief or your father's anger has had power to deter *you* from acting so madly, how can I hope that my remonstrances will have any effect?"

"I have only done as hundreds have done before me—pleased myself," Lady Eudora retorted, so recklessly, that Eda would not be detained any longer, but went at once in search of Mark. The sight of Lord Chessington, who came out of the study as she approached it, smiling at some little jest of his own, made her shrink back, feeling as guilty and ashamed as if it were she who had been sinning against him; nor was her embarrassment lessened by finding Mr. St. Orme with her brother, assisting him in looking over some plans that had been sent in for a row of almshouses the earl proposed building.

How kind, how good, Eustace St. Orme looked! There was the shadow of a great sorrow on his brow, but it was never allowed to interfere with his duties, or his readiness to serve others. Mark, though by far the handsomer of the two, always appeared to disadvantage beside the man in whose clear soft eye there was never a look of guile; and whose life, if an uneventful one, was stained with no excesses.

Mark must have guessed the nature of her errand as soon as he glanced at Eda's troubled face, for he put out his hand directly, saying, "I know what you want, my dear little sis., but I really cannot stop to talk to you just now. I shall be at liberty by four o'clock, when you will find me in the library. Will that suit you?" As Mr. St. Orme was present, there was nothing for it but to assent and retire; but those hours of suspense were very painful ones, and rendered almost intolerable by being spent with the countess, who, as Eudora avoided her room on pretence of a headache, sent for Eda to read to her.

This she did so badly that Lady Chessington soon asked her to leave off, saying, "I cannot listen to you to-day with any pleasure, for your voice is husky, and you read as if your thoughts were ever so far off. But never mind, my dear," she kindly added, when Eda apologised, "you cannot always feel equal to the task of reading aloud. If you will wind these wools for me, we will talk."

At first it was not difficult to keep up the conversation, for the countess was merely making inquiries respecting some sick poor Eda had been visiting for her; but somehow, though neither knew in what way it happened, she began to speak of her daughter, and insensibly adopted a more confidential tone than usual.

"If her health improved," she said, "Eudora must soon be introduced into society. It was pleasant, though, to see that she was not so restless and eager for change as she used to be. Did not Eda think she was more womanly of late? Mr. St.

Orme thought so; and he was sincerely attached to his wayward little cousin. Ah! what a husband—gentle, yet firm—he would make for the woman who was able to appreciate him. What a comfort it would be to see Eudora united to so excellent a young man!"

It was torture to sit there and hear the fond mother thus hinting at her own hopes and wishes, knowing all the while how sadly they were to be disappointed; and at last the distress Eda could not conceal was noticed by the countess, who fancied that the closeness of the room had affected her, and kindly insisted that she should go into the garden, and try whether the fresh air would not revive her.

Eda thankfully accepted her dismissal, and went to her own chamber, to arrange some plan of proceeding; but her brain was in such a whirl that she could not think coherently. She could only throw herself on her knees, and pray, in broken words, that her entreaties, or if those failed, her indignant remonstrances, might awaken Mark's slumbering conscience, and prevail with him to bid Lady Eudora farewell for ever.

In this manner, or restlessly watching the hands of the clock, she passed the time till the hour had arrived at which Mark had promised to meet her, and then, with as composed an air and steady a step as she could assume, she hastened to the library.

(To be continued.)

THE CHRISTIAN GRACES.

BY THE REV. G. A. CHADWICK, M.A., RECTOR OF ARMAGH.

LOVE.

"Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world."—1 JOHN iv. 17.

IN this passage we have a question suggested, and two direct statements made.

1. The question is, How may a loving character be obtained? Who can bring a tender thing out of our hard and stony hearts? Wherein is our love made perfect?

2. We are told, secondly, that likeness to God must be sought in character, not in powers or talents or acquirements, for it is when our love is made perfect, that we are as He is.

3. And we learn thirdly, that such a character will give us boldness in the day of judgment.

First then, we have to ask, Wherein is our love made perfect? What remedy can be discovered for the heartless selfishness which is the disease of the whole world, and the source of all its miseries? We find in the context exactly the answer which a Christian ought to expect. What is the centre of Christianity but Christ? Who else is the good physician? It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell—in a person, not in doctrines, nor church organisations, as such.

Therefore the 14th and 15th verses tell how "the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world; and whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." That is to say, although he was despised and rejected—a tender-hearted man of sorrow, who put forth His compassionate hand to the leper's loathsomeness, and took the youth he had raised and delivered him to his mother, and in the garden restored the ear of one who had come out against him as a thief, and pitied the daughters of Jerusalem in the hour of his own anguish; although he had no stoical hardihood, no theatrical grandeur, no splendour of this world, yet whosoever believes that Almighty God was in His pitying dying love, God dwelleth in that man, and he in God. Knowing Jesus, you lay your hand upon the very heart of love, you feel it throb, its pulses pass into your own; and thus you know and are partaker of love itself, which is divine, which is God. For God is love, as the passage goes on to insist, and so it is plain that if God dwelleth in any man, then *love* dwelleth in him, and he in love. This is the inspired answer, "Herein is our love made perfect."

Yes, if you want to really love your fellows, and your God, you must study Christ in the Gospels: the beauty, the infinite and sacred beauty of His life and death must grasp your lives, and be a power in them. You must not be content to excite in your breast a half-religious and half-hysterical sensation, which will pass away and leave you weary and hard and disappointed; but you must acquaint yourself with the fairest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely, that the beauty of His Divine character may raise you to the love of God, and that the example of His Divine compassion may inflame you with the love of man. There are people in our day who would fain brush aside all thoughts of God and Christ and supernatural things, to enthrone instead some vague feeling of benevolence and charity. Alas! human benevolence would soon grow cold, without the example of the Cross to feed its fires. When they tell us that benevolence is the true religion, we answer, "Not so; but religion is true benevolence." When

we have confessed, with the 15th verse, that Jesus is the Son of God, and in Him perceived, with the 16th verse, that God is love, it is then, it is herein, that our love is perfected.

II. We are told that so far as we are thus made perfect in love, we bear God's image; we are as He was in the world. Now there are two great roads along which man has toiled in the pursuit of the summit of perfection, to be like his Maker. One is power—physical, political, mental power. We rightly think of knowledge as an attribute of Him whose eyes, as a flame of fire, read the past and the future like an open scroll. We rightly ascribe authority, splendour, pomp, to Him whom the noble army of martyrs praise while the angels bow their crowned and imperial heads. And therefore there has always been a strong temptation to think of God's likeness in the increase of power, and pomp, and knowledge. It is said of the conqueror at his feast, that—

> "Erect in awful state
> The *godlike* hero sat."

Herod in royal apparel, delivering the speech on which the hearers' lives depended, enjoyed the flattery which said it was the voice of a god. And man's first temptation was to be as God, knowing good and evil. Yet at the moment when he listened to the tempter's lying whisper, he was already more like God in the possession of an innocent free will, than when his eyes were opened only to discern his own abjectness, and skulk away and hide what was made in the image of God.

We do not deny that there is something Divine in knowledge. If God is light, and if whatsoever doth make manifest is also light, then there must be some faint and dim reflection of His excellent glory, in the patient meditation which measures the sun, and weighs the moon, and tells the materials of the stars. But yet every new exploit of the intellect proves more painfully that the tree of knowledge is not that of life. The stars are cold fires, but with power to burn and brand his littleness into man. Still, the passions of civilised nations and of profound students rage and clamour, and our eyes are opened, only to know that we are naked.

Not such is the true road to a recovery from the disastrous opening of the history of our race.

It is when the character is renewed, when love is made perfect, that we are in the world as He is above. For indeed Christ, who declared Him unto us, did so by the magic of a loving nature. It is true that the power of God was with Him, diseases shrank from His touch, and His voice recalled departed spirits from their shadowy home to the deserted mansions of the flesh; but it is also true that we think, in his most amazing works, less of their miraculous energy than of their sweetness and tenderness. The words, "He that was dead came forth bound hand and foot with grave-clothes" are less striking than the words, "Jesus wept." That the rocks should be rent and the graves opened is less impressive than the prayer of the dying Lord, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Therefore it is that the evidence of mere power lingered only a little while with the infant Church; but the broad seal of hearts renewed, of Christ-like characters, is on her commission from the first age until now. The clearest answer to the sceptic is in this moral miracle, in the power to turn to loving and holy lives, and say, "These are our epistles, known and read of all men." But there is no worse sign of a church, even from the merely controversial standing-point, than that the love of many should wax cold.

Wherever the Gospel is a power, there the water of life is not only a well to quench the individual thirst, but also a river of living water, to dispense blessings far and free.

III. And lastly, this perfecting of love makes us bold in the day of judgment. It is much to have assurance even here. The touch of disease, the cold shadow of the angel of death, even a sighing wind, even the cadence of some boding melody, has power to shake many a bosom with vague spiritual fears. What shall it be at last, in that infection of terror when kings of the earth, and every bondman and every freeman shall call to the rocks and hills to cover them?

> "When louder yet, and yet more dread,
> Swells the high trump that wakes the dead?"

No assumed composure, no hardihood of temperament will resist that strain; no self-respect will nerve the man who sees the last veil torn away, and the record of all secrets opened before men and angels.

He will not fear who recognises in the Judge the Saviour; who has walked with him year by year; whom grace has taught to resist and overcome everything that would separate between him and his God; whose love has resented and cast out all that intrusive and tormenting fear that was really a slander on the heart of the Father, and on the adequacy of the satisfaction. He has long since spread out his sins before a pardoning God. He has found a strength to overcome and cast down the accuser of the brethren. He has owned and realised the worst, and trusted, in spite of the worst, that Christ would keep that which he had committed unto Him unto the day which has now come. He who sits there is his Redeemer; and, as he gazes, the most glorious of all faces wears the expression, the character, on which the saint has so often pondered, and which at last, in some poor measure, has also become his own. And he has boldness in the day of judgment, because as God is, so is he in this world.

THE SPIDER, FLY, AND CREEPER:

A FABLE.

A TREE-HOLE spider (if you know
The ground on which we call him so,
For some might rather hear him hight
In finer speech a *Dendrodyte*)
Had taken up, to shield his poll,
In some big elm, a small-doored hole;
And there, before his sally-port,
Around his lofty wooden fort,
Had built, with ropes of awful size,
His web, foreboding death to flies.
By chance there came a-walking by,
A silly many-footed fly,
And, climbing to the fort on high,
He asked the crafty spider why
He had the repework up so nigh
His house; and eke so wide and high.
The spider now, as ever, sly,
With head and lidless eyes awry,
Spoke up and answered with a lie,
"For my defence against my foes,
Who else might trouble my repose;
For my defence, and only that:
I would not hurt a friendly gnat."
Just then had sought the tree, and heard
His words, a Treecreeper, a bird;
"Oh, what a lie that wretch has told!"
He said. He scuttled to his hold.
"Why ran you to that hole? Come here."
"I'm glad," he said, "my hole was near.
I ran in hither for defence."
"Defence," replied the bird, "forsooth,
And where, Sir Sprawler, is your truth?
Defence, indeed, and why not get
Behind your strong defence the net?"
"No," spider said, "I need not stand
By that, with these good walls at hand."
"Ah!" said the bird, "you crookèd hips,
I'll prove your lies by your own lips;
You cheat the fly with your pretence
That you build webs for your defence.
With this defence, ten times as good,
Within this castle of hard wood.
I'll have you yet, if I've good eyes,
Before you've cheated many flies;
I'll nab you running up and down
Some tree, before the leaves are brown;
I'll snap you up the while you sprawl
About the side of some old wall."
"And then," said spider, "shall I die,
All out of justice to the fly?
Or else, that righteous you may eat
My wicked body for your meat?"

The spider here, and eke the bird
Betoken hypocrites in word—
The men who hide their selfish aims
Beneath the shams of worthy names.

THE BRANCH OF HOLLY.

PART II.

MEANTIME, a merry party of boys and girls, laughing and talking gaily, and enjoying their walk through the fresh-fallen snow, arrived at the cross-roads. Unlike poor Essie, they were well muffled against the cold; and to those who are light of heart and surrounded with all the comforts of life, a white Christmas seems only to bring an increase of mirth and pleasure. After many farewells, and promises of meeting again soon for another walk, three of the number, consisting of a brother and two sisters, separated from the rest, and took the way towards the village. "I think we're going to have a fall of snow," said Mary, the eldest of the girls; "see how dark it is growing." "And shan't we go on?" asked little Bella. "I want to buy a great many things for Christmas."

"Not to-day," replied her sister; "we must turn at once, for here comes the shower."

"And a heavy one too!" said Richard. "I say, girls, you'd better run to the bridge for shelter. It's a jolly place in frost."

Taking each other's hands, the three children hastened on, and soon reached the friendly arch. As Richard hoped, the roof was hung with icicles of every shape and form, making the rough stone-work appear like the walls of a fairy grotto; but while they were examining these beauties with wonder and delight, Mary whispered mysteriously, "There must be some one here besides ourselves; listen!" Pausing for a moment, they all heard distinctly a sound like deep breathing close to where they stood.

"It might be some wild animal!" exclaimed little Bella. "Do let us go out again into the snow!"

"No, no; we must find out what it is first," and Richard walked courageously to the very centre of the arch, and, looking carefully about, perceived a little figure lying on the ground, in the shadow of a large stone. Beckoning his sisters forward, he pointed to the spot. "Oh, 'tis a poor little child asleep!"

exclaimed Mary. "How cold she must be in such thin clothes this perishing day!"

"We'd better rouse her up," said Richard, "for I've heard 'tis dangerous to sleep in the snow."

The three children then stooped anxiously over Essie, and Mary, gently touching the pale cheek, said softly, "Awake, little girl; this is too cold a place to rest."

But it was a harder task to rouse her than they had anticipated; and when at length the poor child opened her eyes, and endeavoured to raise herself, she felt giddy and bewildered, and for many minutes was unable to stand without support. Richard proposed that when the snow-shower ceased they should see her home. "I don't think you'd be able to reach it by yourself," he added; "but where do you live, for I don't remember ever having seen you about here?"

"I'm a stranger from town," began little Essie, "and I came here in a cart with a kind man, who gave me a seat. Mother's ill, and she'll fret about me, and I don't know how to get back."

"But why did you come?" asked Mary.

Then followed the story of the holly branch, and of all her hopes, and subsequent disappointment.

The children looked at one another, and seemed greatly interested when she mentioned the name of the place to which she had been directed, and after a little whispering together, Mary said, "We live at Hollybank; so perhaps you have not had your journey for nothing after all. God, who sent that holly-branch which you took as a promise that He would do more, has guided you here, and sent the snow-shower to drive us into shelter, so that you might not be left to sleep in the cold. If the old woman at the gate had let you up at that time you would not have found us at home, but now, if you will come back with us, we will ask papa for some holly; for though he said he had given away all he could spare this year, I think he would let you have a little, as you have come so far, for your sick mother."

The snow had by this time ceased, and the four children set off for Hollybank, where, after a good dinner before a comfortable fire, Essie began to feel rested and revived. But she could not forget her mother's anxiety, and when called up to the Hall to receive the holly she had been promised, declared she was quite able to set off at once with her precious load. Then Richard mentioned that his father had met the driver of the cart, who had corroborated her story, praised her honesty, and offered her a seat back to town later in the evening. This was good news indeed to Essie, who had dreaded losing her way in the dark; and now she felt as if all her troubles were at an end. Bright and happy the poor child looked, notwithstanding the cold, when seated, about an hour after, beside the kind carter, with a bundle of holly at her feet consisting of the very choicest branches Richard could select covered with scarlet berries and shining leaves.

"I shall be able to spare a little of it for our own room," she said. "Mother will enjoy the sight, and I have something more to bring her this time;" and she glanced with delighted eyes at a basket filled with good nourishing food, which Mary and her little sister Bella had been allowed by their mother to pack for the poor sick woman. That was a happy evening indeed, when Essie displayed to her astonished mother all the good things she had brought home to make her strong and well. "And we shall have a real Christmas after all," she said, holding up the holly, branch by branch, for admiration, while the poor woman declared the sight made her feel brighter and more hopeful than she had been for many a long day. "For surely the God who sent such beautiful things into the world in the middle of winter could send comfort and relief in the season of darkest sorrow!"

* * * * * *

A year passed away, and again it was Christmas Eve. Again Essie was decorating her mother's room with holly; but how changed was everything around! It was no longer in a dingy lane, but a pretty cottage in the country covered with evergreens—in fact, it was the very gate-lodge of Hollybank from which Essie had been turned just a year before. The old woman had gone to stay with her son at some distance; and now Essie's mother, strong and well, thanks to the kindness of her new friends and the good fresh air, lived there with her little daughter, who attended school every day, worked for the young ladies, and considered herself the happiest child in the world. "And all my prosperity," she used often to say, "commenced with that branch of holly."

S. T. A. R.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

55. On what special occasion did Aaron lay aside his high-priest's dress while in the administration of his office?

56. Who was it caused the destruction of the city of "Nob?"

57. What is called in the Bible, "The Royal Law?"

58. Where, and by whom was St. Paul called "Mercurius?"

59. From whom were the Kenites descended; and on what occasion do we find any of them serviceable to the Israelites?

60. Prove that the children of Korah were not destroyed in the destruction which came upon "Korah, Dathan, and Abiram."

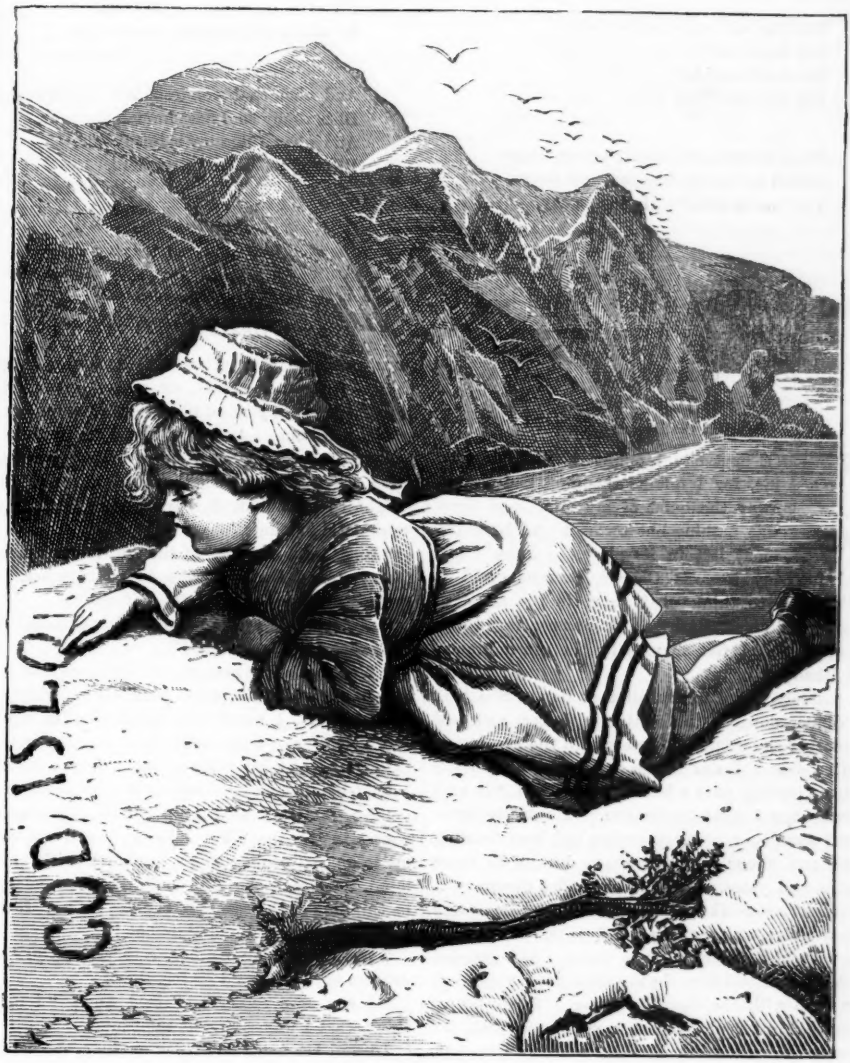
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 128.

45. From the position in society of those who were sent to him by the king, as recorded in 2 Kings xix. 2.

46. Acts ix. 31; xiv. 23; xxi. 5; Rom. xvi. 23; 1 Cor. xiv. 23; xvi. 19.

47. See Numb. v. 7.

48. St. John vi. 27—58.



(*Drawn by* J. LAWSON.)

THE WRITING ON THE SHORE.

The author of this little poem saw "God is Love" written on the Trusthorpe Sands.

I READ one morning on the sand,
And written by a childish hand,
A truth the billows cannot teach—
A truth past human wisdom's reach—
God is Love.

It seemed a very angel's trace,
God's footprint in that lonely place;
It brightened up the sea and sky,
And glad I was I could reply,
God is Love.

And much I thanked my little friend,
Who thus her joyous creed had penned;
And may she know for evermore
The truth she wrote upon the shore—
God is Love.

The tide will come again to-day,
And wash that lovely print away,
But death and hell cannot erase
The charter of the child of grace—
God is Love.

What though an absent darling sleeps,
Gulfed in the sea's remorseless deeps,
Yet "all is well." He took away
But what He gave, still I can say,
God is Love.

What though I bear an evil name,
And wrongly suffer bonds and shame,
I'll write upon my prison floor,
As saints and martyrs have before,
God is Love.

And when that wondrous love has brought
Bliss to my soul past human thought,
And when I don my raiment fair,
I'll sing as loud as any there,
God is Love!

GEORGE S. OUTRAM.

EDWARD TURNER, CARPENTER AND BUILDER.

BY AGNES MACDONELL, AUTHOR OF "MARTIN'S VINEYARD."

CHAPTER IX.

THE ACCIDENT.

"Out of the jaws of death."

THE next day brought its reckoning for me, for I felt as though I had thrown away the quiet of my mind, and there was nothing but torment and bewilderment left in its place. I knew I had acted foolishly towards Charlie Brereton, and it troubled me to think of it now, in the midst of all my grief about Barbara. It was contrary to all my ways, and I felt shamed by the remembrance, as if I had got drunk.

I scarcely saw Barbara all that day. She took her dinner down to the station with her, and told my mother she would not be back till the evening.

After dinner I was in the little shed behind the kitchen, looking over a box of tools I had left with Robert when I went to London. I scarcely knew what I was doing. My thoughts had been drawing closer and closer round Barbara during all these months and years, and now the sudden discovery of last night came like a sharp knife, and cut every hope asunder, and sent my life floating wide like a ship without a rudder. Every pound I had saved—all the work I had done during these past years—had been done with the thought of her. Every bit of success I had had had been sweetened with the thought that some day I might share it with her. And while I had been hoping and waiting—often with a sick heart at the hope deferred—Charlie Brereton had been winning her away from me. He who had called himself my friend—whom I had served as a friend many a time—he had done all this. I forgot in my anger and bitterness that I had never told him of my friendship with Barbara, and I accused him, with all his thoughtless lightness, of having laid deliberate schemes of treachery. I sat for an hour or more that afternoon in the little shed, thinking these thoughts, or rather letting them whirl through my mind like sticks in an angry and eddying stream. As I sat I heard my mother and Ann talking. They had been talking some time, but I had not heard what they said till now, when I caught the sound of Barbara's name, and the word "dramatic readings."

"But," said mother, "I thought it was a bargain that you and Barbara were to go together. She won't go without you, for she said so."

"Oh, mother, I cannot go. I wish I had never said what I did last night!"

"Well," said my mother, "I don't see how you're to get out of it now, when you've both given your word to go. I never was in London in my life, and I don't like these excitements either; but still, perhaps once in your life it might do you no harm. I don't like people breaking their promises."

"No, mother," said Ann, quietly, "it was very wrong to say that; but I know it will not do for me to go. I could not go to church with an easy mind, nor teach the little children on Sunday, and be thinking of the scenes of the day before. It would be like serving God and Mammon!"

"Well," said my mother, rather sharply, "what did you say you would go for, then?"

"I was over persuaded," said Ann; "I did not think what I was saying at the time."

I heard her voice was thick as she spoke, as if she were trying to keep back her tears.

I took my hat, and as I went through the kitchen I said, "I have heard what you've been talking about, mother, and I think Ann's right. I haven't liked the plan from the first; and, any way, Ann won't ever repent trying to follow her conscience, and giving up a pleasure that she doesn't think it right to have, you know."

I went out of the house, for I was restless and ill

at ease; and though I had no special object in taking a long walk, I went on for miles that afternoon far into the country. I passed Brereton's workshop on my way through the village, and stopped a minute or two in the yard, to speak to one of the men.

Charlie Brereton was not there; he had not been there since dinner-time, I heard them say.

It was late in the afternoon as I neared Birchfield, on my way home. I was tired with my long walk, and as I went through the fields that lie up the hill-side, above the Birchfield valley, I sat down to rest on a stile, leading into a hop-garden. I sat there looking down over the long lines of the hop-poles, and across the sloping meadows, to where the spire of Birchfield church rose above the trees. All this was very familiar to me, and I scarcely knew what my eyes were resting on, till I noticed the train coming down the cutting, in the bottom of the valley, just the distance of the hop-garden and one field from the place where I sat. It had scarcely gone by when it was followed by a long excursion train. I was thinking how quickly they ran them one after another during these Easter holidays, and wondering, though I tried not to think of it, whether this was the reason that Barbara had stayed so close at work at the station all day, when suddenly another train swept round the turn at full speed, and, with a long whistle, passed into the tunnel, through which the line runs just about a quarter of a mile below the Airley junction. I thought to myself that 's the 4.40 train from London, but she must be before her time to follow the others so close, and took out my watch, and held it in my hand, seeing how long she took to come through the tunnel. Minute after minute went on—three, five, six—then the whistle began to sound again and again, till it was like one continual cry, and the danger-signal was run up at the end of the tunnel. I knew something wrong had happened. I put my watch in my pocket, and ran down, breaking through the hop-groves, towards the line. Before I had got down the embankment, the sounds that met my ears told me what had happened. There, in the dimness of the tunnel, I could just see the engine lying almost on its side, the red-hot ashes scattered over the ground, and behind a dreadful confused mass, where the carriages lay piled one over the other.

The newspapers told the story of the accident next day. Two trains, the first a luggage, the second an excursion train, had gone down the line, followed by the "4.40," a quick train from London. Both the slower ones should have reached the Airley junction, and run on to a siding, before the quicker one reached the tunnel. The pointsman at the higher end of the tunnel signalled that *both* the slow trains had passed through, when in fact only one had done so. The 4.40 train steamed on at full speed, running into the excursion train midway in the tunnel.

The 4.40 train, which had done the mischief, was not damaged at all, and, when I reached the spot, was slowly backing down the line for help from the nearest station. A crowd of men and women were running to and fro, some crying out distractedly for their friends; some doing what they could to help the sufferers who were still among the carriages, which had been hurled together, and crushed into one confused heap, reaching up to the very roof of the tunnel. The darkness, the cries of distress, the shouting, the whistling of the engine echoing in that dismal place, made the scene more horrible still. The first and third class compartments had suffered most; two carriages were turned almost upside down. I saw the oil-lights in the carriages were setting fire to the wood-work, and, feeling I was more handy at this sort of work than some of the gentlemen who were busy in other ways, I set myself to getting them out.

There was one young gentleman that was very active, moving about, telling people what to do, and making them forget their fear in doing something to find their friends. He called me to him in a while, to help him as he lifted the poor creatures through the windows; some fainting, some bleeding, some only half dead with fright. He laid those that were worst hurt on a railway-rug, and so we carried them out to the fresh air, and placed them on the embankment. People saw his quickness, and the way he worked; and through the windows I heard them calling to him to come and save them, for the love of heaven; and some women's voices, God bless them, praying him to save not themselves, but some one else, an old man or a child. I broke a hole through one of the lower carriages, and through it I crept, into a dreadful den of broken glass and splintered boards, where the worst injured lay, and so I lifted them out to the doctor—for so I found he was afterwards—one by one.

Just as we had got the last woman out there comes a cry of "Fire, fire!" The smoke was rising in a column from one carriage, which we had not entered, and which lay side upwards, half buried beneath the tender. The guard said he believed there was one man in the carriage, but there was no sound of distress issuing from it. The smoke rose in such volumes through the windows that it was impossible to see anything within.

Several people shouted, "Water from the boiler! water, water!" But there were no buckets, and the water was scalding hot. The only chance for the man inside was to get him out at once. There was so little air in the tunnel that the fire could not make much way, but the smoke was suffocating.

I climbed on to the roof, and held a lantern down through the window, and looked in. The smoke cleared for a moment, and I saw a man's face; he was lying on the floor, his head resting on the seat of the carriage. The eyes were open, staring up-

wards, and there was blood on his cheek. The smoke closed in again, almost blinding me; but in that moment I had recognised the face of Charlie Brereton.

CHAPTER X.

ANN'S SECRET.

"Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,
Nor other thoughts her mind admits,
But—he was dead, and there he sits,
And He that brought him back is there.
* * * * * * * *
Thrice blest whose lives are faithful prayers,
Whose loves in higher love endure."

Several voices called me back, and said it was no use to go in, that the fire was spreading fast; but I gave the lantern to another man, and lowered myself through the window. As I dropped in, the smoke gathered about me like a choking sea, blinding my eyes and filling my lungs. I groped with my hands along the floor; there was broken glass and woodwork, a great hole in the floor through which the hot smoke was pouring in. I was almost worn-out, and fainting, when I felt an arm—I clutched it, then, with all my strength, I lifted him, and dragged him up, for he had fallen through the floor, and was half crushed beneath the wood-work. I threw his cap through the hole—for I could not speak—and raised him on my shoulders; they seized him from above, and dragged him up. The smoke grew denser round me as the hole was stopped up, and I fell, sickened and suffocated, against the seat, and thought I should never see light again. But they did not leave me there to die. I had just strength left to grasp the arms that were held to me, and was dragged up. Some one led me out to the fresh air, for my head was very weak and dizzy, and I sat on the bank among the crowd, gradually finding out where I was, and what all the noise and distress about me meant; I saw them bring out Charlie Brereton's body, laid upon an unhinged door. I went over to where they laid him on the bank. The doctor knelt beside him, examining his hurts.

"Is he dead, sir?" I asked.

The doctor looked up at me a moment, but did not answer my question, only saying, "Take some of this brandy from the flask," and he pointed to one lying by him in the grass; and he went on listening with his ear on Charlie Brereton's heart, and binding the wound on his cheek with a handkerchief. Then at last he said, "No, he is alive; but he is very badly hurt, and the smoke has nearly done for him. You have had quite enough of it yourself, I see; take a little more of the brandy. I want you to attend to this poor fellow; take him to the nearest house, and go for a doctor; if you cannot get one to go to him directly, come back here for me. A gang of workmen has been sent from the station: most of the worst cases have been removed."

Our cottage was the nearest to the Airley Junction, and there we carried Charlie Brereton, and laid him on the little bed in the room down-stairs. My mother was the only one in the house. Ann had gone up to the parsonage with some work, and Robert had taken Tom down with him to the garden. I left my mother by the bedside, and ran to fetch the doctor, who did not live far out of Birchfield. He came back with me at once. Ann was watching for us at the door. She only stared at me, with a blank look, when I I spoke to her, and led us into the room where he lay. The doctor stayed for two hours and more, and when he went, he said, "The poor fellow is in a very critical state; I have been able to set one bone that was broken. Now the great thing is to keep him perfectly quiet. The shock he has had is worse a great deal than broken bones, and noise of any kind will cut off his last chance of life, which is small enough now. I will come up again at nine o'clock."

While the doctor was in the house I went down to the station, and told Barbara. She knew, of course, about the accident, but not that Charlie Brereton had been in the train. I told her all as gently and quietly as I could, and what the doctor said, and how he gave us hope, though not a strong hope, that he might recover. She listened, leaning against the door-post, very pale and still; and then she asked where Ann was. I told her; and thinking that she desired Ann for comfort in her trouble, I said, "I will tell Ann to run down to the station to see you when I go back."

But she said quite quickly, "Oh no, don't send her down; I shall be coming up very soon myself; please let her stay where she is."

When I was going out of the door, she followed a step or two, and said, "You are not hurt too, are you? you look so ill!"

I said, "Oh no!" and went home.

That night I sat by Charlie Brereton's bedside. A little after midnight I persuaded Ann to take my mother to bed, and I was left quite alone with the sick man. He looked so pitiful and child-like lying there, with his hands straight down by his sides, and his face so beautiful and death-like, that all the feeling in my heart towards him was pity; and all the anger I had felt towards him seemed blotted out, even when I saw lying on the table the three green tickets that had fallen from his waiscoat pocket as we undressed him. Poor young chap, he had been to London to get them, and was bringing them home in triumph when a stronger arm than mine had stopped him on his way!

He lay as if in a stupor most of the night. Only once he roused up, and spoke a few words which were wild and wandering, and then, groaning, he sank back again into the dead trance, out of which he had wakened for a moment, just to the knowledge of his pain, and nothing more.

I dropped the medicine between his lips, as the

doctor had ordered, hour by hour, but he made no sign. I had many thoughts as I sat there alone, watching as it seemed in the presence of death—thoughts that were a leaven to my life ever after, and left me a different man from that hour. The hatred and anger of my heart were melted, and I had forgiven him; and I thought of Barbara, and longed to comfort her in the grief I thought she must be suffering.

Just at dawn I took off my shoes, and went softly into the kitchen, which opened on to the room where Charlie Brereton lay. Ann was there, and had been there all night, though I heard no sound through all those long hours. The candle stood upon the table, and a book lay open by it; I could only guess how she had spent the night. I never saw her look as she did then; she was so pale, and her eyes shone like stars; and in her face I read that she too had been offering the love of her heart to God, after many years of patience.

She stood beside me, and we talked in low tones about the sick man lying on the bed within. I had to go back to my work that day. She and my mother would have to take charge of him, most likely; for Charlie had no female relation but his aunt, who was old and feeble, and who kept the Breretons' house. We knew the chances were he would not live to be removed to his uncle's house, but would die where we had laid him.

"The judgment of God has fallen upon me!" said Ann, for she seemed to know that I had that in my own heart to make me understand her, and that now she felt no shame in showing me the quiet secret of her heart. "It has fallen very heavy upon me!"

"Not for your own fault," I said; "not for your own fault, Ann."

"Yes," she said. "Oh, Ned, for my folly and vanity the other night, when I thought more of myself than of my duty; but, oh, Ned, as I prayed to God this night that I might bear the punishment alone, it seemed to me—it came strong upon my heart—that God would save his soul at last; that is what I have prayed for all these years, and now I can bless the Lord for his great love, even," she said, and clasped her hands together—"even if he should die."

She bowed down her head, and a trembling fell upon her whole body with the spasm of pain and grief that that thought gave her.

Then she looked up, and drew the curtain back from the window, and we could see the faint streaks of the sunrise above the lines of the purple heather, solemn and still. "Oh, Ned!" she said, "our lives, with all their foolish hopes, seem like this candle when the sun rises, they are swallowed up in the light of the Lord, in whom is no darkness, neither shadow of turning. Blessed be His name! oh, blessed be His name!"

Charlie Brereton did not die. He lay at the cottage for full five weeks before the doctor would suffer him to be removed, and it was many weeks more before he was able to get about. Mother and Ann nursed him all through those five weeks; for although his aunt did come up every day, she was an old woman, and not so active or so able as they were to tend him as he needed in so bad an illness. It was a hard struggle for life; but his youth and spirit, the doctor said, and the good nursing, brought him through the narrow gates of life again. I did not go to Birchfield for many months after this. I was sent off into the country to superintend a rather important work soon after I went back to London; and even if it had been easy to go to Birchfield, I don't think I should have gone.

My whole life was changed now; my work seemed dull and to have lost most of its interest to me; and I waited on from week to week for the news that I thought must come, and for which I tried to prepare myself—that Barbara was going to marry Charlie Brereton. I went on with my trade steadily, and somehow prospered in it; but sometimes, in the middle of my work, the old thought of Barbara came back, and I pictured her standing in the garden as I had seen her that happy evening in the spring, or walking up from church, and Charlie Brereton at her side, and the old bitterness and misery fell over me, and seemed to blind and stifle me as the smoke had done in the tunnel that day.

I heard how Charlie Brereton was getting slowly better, and after a while Robert, who wrote to me now and again, began to tell how Charlie was much changed. Either the weakness that followed his illness had loosened his taste for his old pleasures, or the danger he had gone through had made him a more serious-minded man.

He was very quiet, Robert said. He came to the cottage sometimes, but not so often as he used to do. *(To be continued.)*

THE ORGANIST.

THE shadowy corner in the loft,
When music loud as thunder's roll
Broke from the organ up the aisle,
Grew bright with lightning from his soul.
And when the anthem sank to notes
As soft as those the evening bird
Sings o'er the glowworm on the bank,
Then low, and lower, till scarce heard;
The ceiling of that shadowy loft
To him was as a starry sky,
Whence echoes, as from angel-hymn,
Twice answered, "It is sweet to die."

E. G. CHARLESWORTH, M.A.

THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF THE LORD JESUS.

BY THE REV. T. M. MORRIS, IPSWICH.

II.—THE SECOND WORD: THE WORD OF KINGLY MAJESTY.

"And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when Thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."—ST. LUKE xxiii. 42, 43.

WE come now to Christ's second utterance from the cross, which we have characterised as *the word of kingly majesty*. The promise to the dying thief of immediate entrance upon the joys of Paradise, and communion with Himself therein, was evidently the second word spoken from the cross. The first was the word of intercession, the second the word of promise. We see Christ first praying for the forgiveness of His murderers, and we then see Him throwing open the door of grace to one of the greatest sinners. We first see our Lord's high-priestly character shining forth in an intercession founded on His sacrificial death; we then see Him declaring His kingly majesty, and at the very moment when His kingly office was subjected to the most supreme contempt.

But to understand this second utterance of Christ, we must consider the petition which called it forth.

What immediate effect was wrought in the minds of those who listened to the remarkable prayer of Christ for His murderers it is hard to determine. In the case of some, we may suppose, it was the occasion of thoughtful and anxious inquiry, if not of instant repentance. But we gather from the narrative that the result, in the majority of cases, was excitement to a more desperate and determined energy of evil in word and deed. While we cannot read the secrets of their hearts, we are presented with a most impressive picture of the outward conduct of those who were congregated around the cross.

There is Christ lifted up on the accursed tree—crucified between two thieves. And how are men regarding Him? What are they saying, thinking, feeling, in respect of Him? Had we mingled with that large multitude then assembled at Calvary, we should have found men and women regarding the same event with widely different feelings, a fact we should have soon discerned had we only looked upon the varied expressions of their upturned faces. There are Scribes and Pharisees, who have walked out to the scene of the crucifixion that they might enjoy the cruel satisfaction of witnessing the issue of their malignant conspiracy; some looking on in the silence of their bitter hate, others expressing their intenser enmity in the mocking words, "Let Christ, the King of Israel, come down from the cross, that we may see and believe Him." And many passing by reminded Him of the charge of the perjured witnesses, wagging their heads and saying, "Thou that destroyest the Temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself." While all cry, "Save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, save Thyself; come down from the cross and we will believe." Ah, but then He would not be worth believing in! They, the poor deluded ones, know not that He so suffers, and there, spite of all their revilings, remains, because He is the Son of God. He cannot save Himself and them too. It is love for sinners, it is His unchangeable determination to save sinners, which binds Him to the cross, and not the cords and the nails. He must bear the curse of the law which they have violated, in order that they may be saved therefrom. Besides these, Christ's more determined enemies, there were the common people, regarding with stupid astonishment the result of their own insensate shouting, and the soldiers, regardless of all save the execution of the sentence, and manifesting the impassiveness which only Roman soldiers could. But with all these, who were merely thoughtless or malignant spectators, there were some, and let us hope many, who were looking on with widely different feelings. There must have been many thoughtful men there, who wondered greatly what these things might mean, and in what they would finally issue. Many, beholding the things which were done, smote upon their breasts and returned. There were some there, doubtless, whom Jesus had helped and blessed, who had been the subjects of His miracles of healing, and who could not have seen the sights, nor have heard the sounds of that day of days, but for Him who was then hanging in agony and apparent helplessness upon the cross. On the outskirts of the crowd were some of His acquaintances and disciples, with a love which would not suffer them to go quite away, and a fear which kept them afar off. But if we confine our attention to the three crosses, we shall discern a diversity of feeling as great as any that we can distinguish in the surrounding multitude.

The enemies of Christ, whose malignity seems to have been unbounded, not satisfied with the accumulation of insults and injuries which preceded the crucifixion, or with the agony and ignominy inseparable from crucifixion as ordinarily inflicted, resolved, by crucifying Him between two thieves—as though He were the worst of the three—to increase, if possible, the infamy of the crucifixion itself. Everything was arranged with the design of rendering the very name of Jesus of Nazareth

an offence, and of alienating from Him for ever the affection, respect, and loyalty of men. And how can they do this better than by crucifying Him between two thieves? They little thought what they did in thus numbering Him with the transgressors—that all this should turn out for the furtherance of the Gospel, and for the honour of Christ; and that in doing all this, they were acting according to the predeterminate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and that in the case of the conversion of one of these men the world should be called to witness a most remarkable triumph of redeeming love.

We have here, then, claiming our attention what we may speak of as *the conversion of the thief on the cross.* We have proof that he was converted while on the cross—for we read "the thieves also, which were crucified with Him, cast the same in his teeth." But after an interval—and it is but a short interval—the words of blasphemy give place, in the case of one, to words of penitential confession, earnest and believing prayer.

There are few scenes in Gospel history more striking and impressive than this, which, excluding the other circumstances of the crucifixion, forms quite a picture by itself. Who that has read the narrative can ever forget how this poor crucified felon, upon whom the shadow of death was falling, was led to look in faith to the crucified Saviour, and was able to forget the agony of crucifixion in the joy of knowing that he was to be that day with Christ in Paradise!

Here there are two things to be considered by us—the prayer of the crucified thief, and the reply of the crucified Saviour.

I.—*The prayer presented by this poor crucified thief*—"Lord remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." In order to estimate the significance of this prayer, we must take into account the circumstances under which it was offered. There were many things calculated to discourage this man from offering such a petition.

There was the position of Him to whom it was presented. It was really addressed to Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of men. But it needed a very strong faith to believe in Christ at such a time—Christ on the cross, forsaken by friends, reviled by enemies, addressed constantly in the mocking but seemingly conclusive words, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." Does it seem to us even now an easy thing for one to have ventured upon Christ in such circumstances? Yet it was at such a moment, when exposed to influences so disheartening, that this poor man cried, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom."

The faith so suddenly expressed by this man is found associated with all the marks of genuine faith that are conceivable in his case. There is the expression of deepest penitence on account of past sins; there is no attempt at self-justification, he says to his associate in crime and suffering, "We indeed suffer justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds." There is appreciation of Christ's character, the fullest recognition of His innocence. "This Man," he says, "hath done nothing amiss." There is sympathy with Christ in His sufferings; and he who but a short time before had been uttering blasphemy himself, now attempts to shield Christ from the blasphemous revilings of his companion. And with all this there is the recognition of Christ as his Sovereign and Saviour; his prayer is, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." Yes, even then he was able to recognise the kingship of Christ, and to commit unto Him the keeping of his soul, as One able to save even to the uttermost.

Touchingly beautiful is this short and simple prayer, expressive of the deepest humility and the most implicit faith. He asks for nothing but remembrance. He does not ask for some chief place in the kingdom, or even for any place therein at all, but only to be remembered. He feels that to be borne upon Christ's heart in remembrance is enough. He asks this as a free gift; he feels that Christ might well forget him; he has no claim to be remembered; his prayer is, "Lord Jesus, I ask thee, for Thy love's sake, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom."

In considering this prayer, we have to think not only of Him to whom it was offered, *but of him also by whom it was offered.* How unlikely a man he was to have offered any prayer at all! He was a condemned malefactor—a man whom we might, not unreasonably, have concluded to have been hardened against every good and gracious influence. He was a notorious sinner, and the crime for which he was suffering must have been one of great heinousness. Yet this man, apparently so abandoned, was, and quite at the close of his misspent life, saved by an exercise of faith in Christ.

Witnessing this great and unexpected change, we cannot but inquire as to the way in which this transformation was effected. That *the agent was God's Spirit none can doubt.* What power less than Divine could work so great a change as this? If we believe in the Bible at all we must believe that God's Spirit is the uniform agent in conversion. There is but one Spirit, though there is a diversity of operations. This case is exceptional as to some of the surrounding circumstances, but as to all essentials it is the same as every other case of true conversion. In every case alike there must be the same real and effectual change from darkness to light, and from sin to holiness, which can only be effected by the working of God's Spirit

on the mind; that Spirit who is ever at work, turning men from the power of Satan unto God.

But we find that the Spirit of God always operates in connection with certain appreciable means—some form of *the Truth*; and though we have here little to guide us, we have no reason to regard this as an exceptional case. Truth may be expressed in many different ways; and while on the cross the malefactor witnessed enough, and heard enough, to convince him that his fellow-sufferer was One to whom he might commit the keeping of his soul. But it is not needful, nor, on the whole, reasonable to suppose that this man knew nothing of Christ till he was introduced to Him on the cross. This man was probably one of the Barabbas gang, who had been lying long in prison before he had been brought out to suffer, and he had, it is likely, heard much of Christ, though he had heeded little. How came he to have such an idea of Christ's innocence? How came he to have such an idea of the Messiahship of the crucified One? We know not, of course, the antecedents of this man's life; but it does not seem reasonable to suppose that he should have spent his time in wandering about Judea, and have never heard of Jesus, who was everywhere talked of, and whose pretensions to the Messiahship were everywhere discussed. And if he were of Jewish parentage he must have had some acquaintance with those Old Testament prophecies, the remarkable fulfilment of some of which it was his privilege to witness, and in one instance to take an unwilling part in.

As that man hung extended on the cross, we can conceive of God's Spirit bringing many long-forgotten and despised truths to his remembrance, and applying them with power to his heart. The home-scenes of childhood, the prayers and aspirations of early days of comparative innocence, may have been brought back to his mind; and it is far from improbable that he had previously met with Christ Himself, who mingled much with the lowest of the people. He may have heard some of His life-giving words, and have witnessed some of His deeds of love and mercy. On these points we can affirm nothing; the thing which we are mostly concerned in knowing is this: that he who had wandered so far, who had sinned so grievously, who seemed lost beyond the hope of recovery, was led at last to believe in Him who is able to save to the uttermost. We have here faith which is well-nigh or absolutely without a parallel. It may be questioned whether the faith of many a lifetime would, if concentrated, equal the energy of that which found expression in the prayer of this poor dying felon. Christ might have said of it what He said of a less remarkable exhibition of faith, "Verily I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."

II. We have now to consider *the answer returned by the crucified Saviour.* It is prompt and gracious, a word of majesty and mercy—"Verily I say unto thee, this day thou shalt be with me in paradise." Very impressive is the interval of silence between Christ's first word of intercession, and this second word of promise. We are awed by the majestic tranquillity He maintains in these moments of suffering. There He is on the cross, exposed to the successive indignities and revilings to which we have referred, and He answers not a word. Our blood leaps and surges in our veins at the very thought of enduring such indignities; and yet, looking on that cross, we all feel it to be a grander, nobler thing to suffer uncomplainingly as Christ suffered, than, however aggrieved, to avenge one's self.

But we are glad that the silence is broken. Had Christ, after having spoken the words of intercession, uttered no other words, it might have been questioned whether the silence He maintained was not the silence of unconsciousness. We should have been tempted to say, May not His eye be growing dark, His ear heavy in death, may He not in the weakness, or even in the insensibility of dissolution, have ceased from the vindication of His innocence? But all such questionings are at once met by the circumstance here recorded, that when the cry of penitence and prayer fell upon the ear of the dying Saviour it elicited an immediate response. He who disregarded the revilings of the multitude turned upon the dying thief a look of love, and uttered those ever-memorable words, "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise." The answer was not long delayed, and when given it was full and satisfying. "To-day thou shalt be with me in paradise." *Paradise!* the word used to denote the original Eden, and that state of ultimate felicity which was but faintly symbolised thereby. The heavenly paradise is the true garden of delights, where neither thorns nor briars shall grow, where painful labour shall give place to spontaneous and unimpeded activity—a garden in which no tempter shall lurk, into which neither sin, nor sorrow, nor death shall enter, and in which men shall again walk with God, and realise a communion more perfect and blessed than the primal. The word only occurs three times in the New Testament—here, 2 Cor. xii. 4, and Rev. ii. 7—and the reference we may take to be an unequivocal and appropriate one to that state of felicity in which the disembodied spirits of the just shall dwell more blissfully and securely than did our first parents, for too short a season, in the material paradise.

The assurance given to this poor man is not only that he shall be admitted to paradise, but that he shall be *with Christ* in paradise. "To-day," says the dying Saviour, "thou shalt be *with Me* in paradise."

"*To-day*," says Christ, "thou shalt be with Me



(*Drawn by* F. BARNARD.)

"She is our only child; let us have patience with her!"—*p.* 172.

in paradise." There is to be no waiting—no intermediate state—no weary delay in some outer court of purification. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. There is an immediate transference. To die is gain. The saints who walked here in faith and patience are now inheriting the promises. What is *death* in relation to this world is but *birth* into a higher state.

To every dying believer Christ says what He said to the crucified thief, "To-day thou shalt be with me in paradise." Whenever and wherever we are called to die, may it be our joy to see our Divine Saviour bending over us, and to hear Him whisper into our ear these words of gracious assurance, "*To-day thou shalt be with me in paradise.*"

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER XXI.

MARK, who was standing on the hearth-rug in a thoughtful attitude, came to the point at once with an easy carelessness that astonished Eda, until she remembered that Lady Eudora had had time and opportunity to warn him of her determined opposition, as well as to repeat to him her own vehement promises of fidelity.

"So, my dear sis., you have been admitted into our secret; and I hope you intend to congratulate me on my prospects. Neither you nor I dreamed, when I came to the Chessingtons, that I should find a precious little wife under their roof, did we?"

"Pray do not talk in that strain!" was the indignant reply. "You must know as well as I do that Lady Eudora can never be your wife."

"And why do you say this, Eda? Because she is rich and I am poor? It is not pleasant, I'll admit, to be forced to owe every advantage in life to the hand of the woman I marry; but I do not feel disposed to break the poor little girl's heart because she has the misfortune to be an earl's daughter."

His sorry attempt at a jest only heightened Eda's displeasure, and his familiar mention of Lady Eudora sounded like an insult in the ears of one who believed that true affection is always accompanied with respect.

"I cannot think that Lady Eudora's heart is concerned in the matter. I fear you have bewildered her with indirect appeals to her generosity, till she imagines she is doing a very noble deed in consenting to wed you. If you were an honourable man, you would not have extorted a promise that it will degrade her to keep."

"What are you saying?" he demanded, sternly. "Do you know that you are bringing most scandalous accusations against me? If I had deliberately schemed to win the young lady's affections——"

But here his sister interrupted him by bursting into tears. "Oh Mark, Mark! that is just what I am afraid you have been doing! She was wilful when you came here, I know, but too frank to commit such treachery as you have led her into!"

"I see no great treachery in a few *billets-doux* and stolen meetings. Stratagems in love and war are considered excusable," said Mark, flippantly; but Eda refused to listen to such sophisms.

"You and I were never taught to consider any kind of deceit pardonable; the dear mother who strove to make us follow in her own steps detested it! Had you quite forgotten all her lessons when you led Lady Eudora to meet you, and listen to words that should never have escaped your lips?"

"Now, my dearest Eda," said her brother, adopting a coaxing tone, "you have scolded quite enough, so do take a more reasonable view of the affair! It began, as I dare say Dora has told you, through an accidental *rencontre* in the shrubberies. I found her a charming companion, and she—well, she liked me, and was too naïve to attempt to conceal it; and so, almost imperceptibly, the intimacy has progressed, till we have fallen over head and ears in love with each other, and have resolved to risk all, but *never be parted*. I shall be sorry to bring disunion or dissension into a noble family; but I will not relinquish the hope of calling Eudora mine!"

"And her father?" he was asked. "Do you forget him? Does she?"

"Of course, she owes obedience to the earl, and if he insists on keeping us apart till she is of age, we must submit; but after that time his authority ceases. I regret, on Eudora's account, that I am not the fortunate possessor of a few thousands a year; but why should money be weighed against happiness? If Lord Chessington will procure me a colonial appointment, I can take my bride abroad till all scandal has died away; or we could travel a while till the earl felt inclined to join us."

"He will never consent, Mark!" Eda exclaimed. "How can you hope it? How could you go to the kind old man, who has been so good to both of us, and say, 'I am doing my best to make you miserable. I am requiting your generosity by doing my utmost to rob you of your only child'?"

"I certainly shall not put my request in that form of words," he retorted, drily. "And if you will oblige me by holding your tongue and *knowing nothing*, I dare say I shall manage matters very well. You can play your favourite part, the peacemaker, when the storm bursts."

"Mark!" cried Eda, catching hold of his arm, and gasping for breath, "you are not going to persuade Lady Eudora to marry you secretly?"

"And if I were, what then?"

"It would be frightfully dishonourable! You must not—you shall not do it!"

"*Shall* not, Eda?" and he knit his brows in displeasure. "I did not *say* that I intended doing anything of the kind; but whatever I do, I forbid your interference."

"It would not be acting fairly by Eudora," he asserted. "Nothing shall induce me to desert her. And really, Eda, you could not say more if I were some disreputable scoundrel whom the Chessingtons would be ashamed to acknowledge. I am of respectable parentage; my abilities are so good that they will have no trouble in pushing me on in the world; and I flatter myself that in every respect but money I am the superior of St. Orme. If they are willing to give their daughter to a fellow who hasn't half a dozen ideas in his head, they need not make a fuss if she prefers taking me instead."

"Mr. St. Orme has the fear of God before his eyes," said Eda, warmly; "and if he loved Eudora ever so dearly, he would not ask her to be his wife without the full consent of her parents. He would feel that a marriage entered upon under such circumstances could neither be a holy nor happy one."

"Then he is well named; but as I am *not* a saint, I prefer to do as any other man would who was similarly placed—grasp the prize fortune has placed within my reach."

"But is it *right?* Can you do it with a clear conscience?" Eda persisted. "Dear, dear Mark, do put these questions to yourself. What will it profit you to gain the whole world, and lose——"

She was rudely interrupted. "Don't cant, Eda. You haven't had much experience, certainly, but I should have thought you had learned by this time the impossibility of always keeping so close to the line. Pray say no more, for I have neither time nor inclination to listen. All we ask of you is to be silent; and if you will not help us, why, do nothing to our injury. You will promise this?"

"First tell me if you intend to see Lord Chessington at once, and make him acquainted with your position with regard to Lady Eudora."

"At once? No. I am not prepared to speak to the earl yet!" Mark confessed, after some hesitation, and an effort to evade the question altogether.

Eda's dread that a clandestine marriage was in contemplation revived.

"You will not speak to him? Then I will. I shall go to him as soon as I leave you, and, telling all I have learned, bid him save his daughter from the consequences of her own folly!"

"You cannot be serious, Eda!" exclaimed the angry Mark. "Would you ruin me?"

"Would you have me stand by and see the child of my benefactors plunge herself into misery? I would do a great deal for you, my dear brother, but I cannot burden my soul with such a sin as this."

Really alarmed at her determination, Mark entreated, threatened, and painted in powerful colours the despair of Lady Eudora if they were forcibly separated: but his eloquence was wasted; he could not move Eda from her purpose.

"No," she answered to his expostulations; "I am very well aware that nothing I can do or say will alter what has gone by, and I am sorry that your secret has been revealed to me. I would rather have remained in ignorance, than be ashamed of my brother and my friend. But having discovered it, my duty is clear, and I shall certainly do it."

"Can it be a sister's duty to destroy my happiness and blight my prospects?" Mark demanded; and Eda's tears began to flow again. Seeing this, he followed up the fancied advantage, and, with many caresses, entreated her to take time to consider, and not do anything that could bring trouble on others from a mistaken sense of the obligations she was lying under to the earl and countess.

"It is not you who will suffer by this revelation," he added, insidiously. "You will be applauded for making it, by some, even if you are despised by others. It is Eudora and I who will be the injured parties; whereas, if you let us take our own course, all might be well."

"Might!" Eda incredulously repeated; though she consented to give the matter serious consideration before she carried out her original intention. Mark looked relieved, and tried to extort a still more definite promise; but in this he failed. All his plausible speeches—and he made many—had not blinded her to the fact that his suit was a wrong and an insult to the parents of the infatuated girl who was the object of it; and she broke away from him even more dissatisfied and unhappy than when she first learned that Eudora had pledged herself to be his wife.

CHAPTER XXII.

EDA excused herself from going down-stairs again that evening, for she could neither bear to meet Eudora nor her parents; and, turning the key in the door, that the former might not gain entrance, she strove to decide what to do. For some time her sense of right and wrong was confused, for Mark's entreating voice was still resounding in her ears, and she loved him so dearly that the idea of doing

him any serious injury was a grievous one. Then the temptation assailed her to obey his injunction—to be blind and deaf to what was going on, and let him marry Eudora secretly, as he purposed doing. He had said with truth that, as far as outward appearance went, the earl and countess would have no reason to be ashamed of such a son-in-law; and there was no doubt that he would step into wealth and position with an ease and confidence that would go far towards reconciling the world to the incongruity of such a match.

Eda pondered and prayed till her head ached, and still without coming to any solution of her perplexities. Sometimes she felt strongly inclined to pack up a few necessaries, and take flight. The Ingles would receive her with open arms, and she could stay with them till this clandestine affair came to a climax, and comfort herself in being relieved from any further responsibilities; but every personal consideration was forgotten whenever her thoughts reverted to the earl and countess. Running away from her own difficulties would not lessen theirs, nor prevent their daughter taking a false step. And so the end of every mental debate was the same:—"I *must* speak to Eudora's parents. It is right that they should be informed of the engagement she has entered into, and I must not let any selfish anxieties as to the result deter me from doing my duty."

She looked at her watch—Lord Chessington's gift—and was not sorry to see that the hour was so late that every one in the house had most probably retired to rest. The dreaded interview could not, then, be sought until the morrow, when Mark himself might be more reasonable, and agree to her wishes. But scarcely had Eda began to cherish this visionary hope, when she heard a step approaching her door; and the next moment she heard the earl himself requesting admittance.

Imagining directly that all was known, she opened her door, looking so ghastly with fear and shame that her visitor was quite concerned.

"What is the matter with you, Miss Granton? Sit down, sit down, child. You are ill; I am sure of it. My lady fancied you were, and could not make up her mind to go to rest till some one had ascertained what ailed you. I shall fetch her."

But Eda, who had dropped into the nearest chair, started up to prevent it, and held out her hand so imploringly, that he paused, and regarded her with astonishment.

"Is this illness, or trouble? Don't be afraid to speak, my dear. But perhaps you would rather see Lady Chessington."

No. The countess was in delicate health, and any sudden shock might bring on a relapse. Eda retained sufficient presence of mind to remember this, and falter that her ladyship must not be told too hastily.

"Then it is something about Eudera!" the fond father exclaimed. "But she is well, and sleeping soundly. Her mother went into her room and looked at her just now. What is it you know or fear, Miss Granton? Don't hesitate, but tell me bravely the whole truth, and I will help you, if I can."

Eda obeyed; but how she framed her sad story she never knew, for the darkening face of her hearer, and the sternness of the eyes which seemed to read her very soul, frightened her so much that she could scarcely stand before him.

"Your brother is secretly paying his addresses to my daughter! And pray how long has this been going on? When were *you* first seized with remorse for your share in these disgraceful proceedings?"

Eda would not pause to vindicate herself, but hurriedly replied to his first question—"I fear that it has been going on for some time, and that your lordship's immediate interference is necessary. Oh, sir, they are both young and inconsiderate; be merciful in your judgment! Deal gently with them!"

At first Lord Chessington did not answer, but in his agitation he had dropped the china candlestick he carried, and Eda saw that he was unconsciously grinding the fragments beneath his heel.

"Is it a mere boy and girl flirtation, entered into in sport and idleness, or is it something worse?" he asked presently, his voice so hoarse and changed that it was not recognisable. "Does this brother of yours think I shall let him *marry* Lady Eudora? Speak, I say! Let me have nothing withheld, now you have begun to make confession!"

"Lady Eudora herself told me that she was resolved to marry Mark," Eda tremblingly acknowledged.

"Will she tell *me* so? Will she dare tell me so?" demanded the infuriated earl. And he was striding away to his daughter's chamber to arouse and interrogate her, when Lady Chessington, white as the *robe de chambre* she had wrapped around her, stole forward and threw herself in his way, with supplicating looks and gestures.

"Not to-night, dear John—dear husband! She is sleeping; do not awaken her with angry looks and words! She is our only child; let us have patience with her!"

"You do not know!" he gasped.

"Yes," was the sorrowful reply; "I have been here long enough to learn that a very great misfortune threatens us. Is this your doing, Eda?"

"Oh, madam!" was all the troubled girl could say; but the indignant protest her voice and look conveyed was sufficient to exonerate her, and the countess held out her hand, touched already with remorse for her unjust suspicion.

"My good girl, if I have done you injustice, pray pardon me!" she kindly said; and when the earl would have questioned Eda again, she whispered—"Spare her, John! The young man is her brother,

and she suffers terribly when she is forced to accuse him. Help me back to my room, for I am growing faint; and to-morrow Eudora herself shall confess the extent of her fault."

Eda timidly offered her assistance, but the offer was rejected by the earl, who still regarded her with distrust, and desired, in the sharp tones of ill-repressed anger, that she would confine herself to her chamber for the present, and not attempt to hold intercourse with any one in the house. She promised to obey, and then, with sinking heart, watched him as he sustained the feeble steps of his lady while she re-crossed the gallery.

When a closing door had hidden them from her sight, Eda went back to her chamber, but not to rest. Opening her shutters, and folding a shawl about her, she sat watching for the dawn of the morrow whose events would be so full of grave importance to herself; but when it came, and the sunshine flooded her room, she shrank from it, and would fain have hidden herself from every living creature. It was a relief that no one invaded her seclusion but the servant, who brought her some breakfast, and stayed to put things in order, looking the while extremely inquisitive as to the cause of her sorrowful silence.

Soon after mid-day the same girl came to beg Miss Granton to go to Lady Chessington in her dressing-room, and with beating heart Eda obeyed.

She found both the earl and countess awaiting her, and with them was Lady Eudora, whose stormy looks testified to the nature of the conference her parents had been holding with her. In the face of this great trouble the husband and wife appeared to have changed characters. It was Lady Chessington who was now the more tender and indulgent to her wayward child, while her lord—all his supineness cast aside—seemed bent on showing that he could be firm as well as kind, when an absolute necessity arose for stringent measures.

"Eda, my daughter has exonerated you from all blame in this sad affair——" the countess began to say; but Eudora impatiently broke in—

"Pray, mamma, don't take that doleful tone! I cannot consent to hear my engagement alluded to as if it ought to be grieved over. No objection can be offered to it but Mr. Granton's want of money, and that is one papa can remove, if he will."

The earl scarcely had patience to hear her out. "Are you expressing Mr. Granton's opinions or your own," he asked, "when you hint that I am expected to provide him with the means to consummate one of the greatest pieces of audacity an ungrateful girl and knavish young fellow ever contemplated?"

Eudora bit her lip, and reddened. "You express yourself very strangely, papa! Of course, Mark does not wish anything unreasonable, but would not refuse an appointment under Government, if you procured him one."

"To do which I must give him a recommendation setting forth that his conduct in my house has been praiseworthy, that I have the greatest faith in his honour, &c. Can I do this?"

Eudora fell back upon her former argument. "It is no sin for us to love each other! We have not done so wilfully. If Mark were a rich man instead of a poor one you would not withhold your consent; and surely, papa, my happiness ought to be of more consequence to you than money!"

"My dear child, what you say might have weight with me if I were sure that I should be furthering your happiness by consenting to this match; but at present you have failed to convince me that Mr. Granton is the kind of man to whom I ought to entrust my daughter."

"Because you are prejudiced against him. But Eda will tell you that his life has been a blameless one; that he has been the best of sons and brothers."

"Can Eda endorse this?" asked the countess. "Does she think that her brother has acted well? No, I can see by her looks that she does not."

"I wonder at you for appealing to her, mamma, after she has shown her bias by so meanly betraying us!" exclaimed Eudora, with an inconsistency that under other circumstances would have been ludicrous. "Mark has no friend here but myself; but I will be true to him—I will, I will!"

This declaration was followed by a burst of hysterical sobs; and the countess leaned back on her sofa, sad and weary, while Lord Chessington thoughtfully paced the room until his refractory daughter grew calm again.

"Eudora, it is no use to keep going over the same ground, or to dwell upon your deceit and disobedience. You are inflated with a false notion that you are behaving very nobly in keeping the promises you have made to this young man, and what we suffer in consequence you choose to ignore. Hush, child! you may as well spare me any protestations. The question is simply this: Will you obey me, and decline all further intimacy with Mr. Granton?"

"I cannot, papa!" she answered, excitedly. "I know that I committed a great error in entering upon this engagement without your sanction; but I cannot alter it now. As long as Mark is true to me, I will be true to him."

"But if he proves himself unworthy of you—what then?"

"He will not, sir!" she answered, positively. "You do not know him as well as I do."

"We shall see," the earl told her—"we shall soon see, Eudora, for I am going to put him to the test." And as Eda heard this, involuntarily she grew pale, and shivered. How would Mark pass through the ordeal to which he was about to be subjected?

(To be continued.)

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. FIRST SERIES No. 11. THE LAST OF ST. PETER.

Chapters to be read—Acts ix., xii. (parts of.)

INTRODUCTION. Ask which apostle had taken the lead hitherto. To whom has he first preached? Where had he been sent with John, and on what errand? (viii. 14.) Now, having finished his tour in Samaria, St. Peter visits all the Churches, and in the course of time comes to Lydda and Joppa. Show Joppa on the map, and describe it as a bustling seaport town, and Lydda a little country village. What work was there for St. Peter here?

I. ST. PETER'S MIRACLES. (Read ix. 32—43.) Describe the bedridden man Æneas: how long kept his bed? his anxiety whether the great apostle will come and see him; the visit and straightforward words. The same name powerful here as elsewhere, the name above all names (Phil. ii. 10). The same thing required of the sick man; the same effect produced in the place; the whole village stirred, and turned to Christ.

Now describe the death of Dorcas, and notice these points:—(1) *She was unselfish,* not thinking of her own loss, but of the wants of others poorer and more unhappy than herself. (2) *She was useful.* What did she do? Having much spare time, spent it in needlework, not merely for adorning herself, but in clothes for the poor. Remind of Christ's words about such in parable of sheep and goats (Matt. xxv. 36). (3) *She was beloved.* Like the widow of Nain, had many friends who mourned her loss. She was not disagreeable in the way she did good. Now question upon the miracle. St. Peter, like Elijah on similar occasions (1 Kings xvii. 19), must be alone. This special miracle required special prayer, and the widow was raised to life.

PRACTICAL LESSONS. (1) *The blessing of usefulness.* Let each child ask, What am I doing for others? Can imitate Dorcas, and make something for some poor child. Smallest deed done for Christ accepted by Him. (2) *The way to make friends.* Kindness, acts and words of love, sure to win friends. How pleasant to be missed when we are gone!

II. ST. PETER IN PRISON. (Read xii. 1—5.) (1) *The prison.* Ask how the father of this Herod had persecuted Christ (Matt. ii. 13). Now the son does the same to the Christians. Whom was he really persecuting? (Acts x. 4.) Which disciple was first killed? Remind of the question asked Christ by the mother of James and John (Matt. xx. 21), and how these two and Peter had been always singled out by Christ as if for special discipline. A break up in a family party always sad, this more so; one apostle dead, another in prison, and he the one they could spare the least, bold, full of faith, doing most wonderful miracles. What can his friends do? Entreaties no use, force no use—no, but One on High, mightier than all; so they can pray. Let as many Christians as possible meet at Jerusalem; at whose house? (ver. 12) and hold a meeting for prayer. (2) *The deliverance.* (Read 6—11.) Picture the scene: large stone building, surrounded by two sets of walls, each guarded by party of four soldiers; St. Peter in innermost cell, dark and gloomy, damp streaming down the walls, little light from narrow grating, lying on stone floor, bound by chains to two soldiers. How should we expect him to feel? sad, complaining, &c.? No; has said evening prayer, left his cause with God, and is sleeping quietly, like a little child. Now suddenly awoke; bright light in cell—what is it? the Paschal moon?—a light as of men come to fetch him for execution suddenly, like John the Baptist? Seems a soft bright light, and a bright face of some one speaking. Picture him, in answer to the summons, rising up quickly, the chains dropping off, putting on his clothes and sandals, fearful of disturbing the sleeping soldiers, stepping lightly over them, following the angel, half asleep and half awake, fancying it a dream, right through the gate, past all the sleeping soldiers, till finds himself at bottom of street, alone. (3) *The news told.* Where will he at once go? Of course, to tell his friends. Picture him hurriedly running to Mark's house; knocks loudly, stands waiting impatiently for the maid to come; knocks again; at last Rhoda comes; cannot believe her eyes; slams the door in his face, and goes in with the news. What did they say? And yet had been praying for his deliverance! St. Peter knocks again; door opened; they surround him, with questions; are told to be silent; he tells his story; sends messengers to different companies of Christians, and also goes himself. It *is* true, and Peter is safe.

PRACTICAL LESSONS. (1) *Need of faith in prayer.* They prayed and yet did not look for the answer. Children must pray for grace to overcome temper, check hastiness, &c., and must expect answer. (2) *God's care of His own people.* Had still work for Peter to do, so preserved him. James having finished work, taken to rest. So need not trouble about future; are all in God's hands; will be kept safe in life or death.

Questions to be answered.

1. What were the two miracles wrought by Peter?
2. Describe the character of Dorcas.
3. What lessons does her life teach us?
4. Describe Peter's deliverance.
5. How did he bear his imprisonment?
6. What practical lessons may we learn?

FANNY FORREST; OR, EVIL COMMUNICATIONS.

CHAPTER I.

THE sun was high up in the afternoon sky, a blue haze of heat was slowly creeping over the distant horizon, casting a vapoury veil over all its outlines, and blending them into one indistinct mass, as Owen Campbell, stepping out from beneath the linen awning in front of Mr. Howard's establishment, printer and stationer to the little town of Bentham, closed the door of the side entrance with a contented slam, and with scarcely a glance at the beautiful scene stretched below him, began with quick steps to ascend the steep and narrow street which formed the principal thoroughfare of the town.

In such a small and out-of-the-world locality as that in which Bentham is situated one is obliged, reluctantly though it be, to give up all idea of living a life unnoticed or uncommented upon by one's neighbours; indeed, on the contrary, one has to become indifferent to the fact that the smallest and most inconsiderable events of one's daily life are gathered together by our neighbours and speculated upon greedily by those whose engagements are not sufficiently arduous to keep hands and eyes busily employed on their own affairs, and who therefore pass their leisure moments in following the pursuits of their companions with gaping and often mischievous curiosity.

Thus it was that, as Owen appeared in the High Street of Bentham at such an unwontedly early hour of the day, betraying by his holiday dress and beaming countenance that business formed no part of his errand, many of the good townsfolk came from behind their counters, and stood in their doorways to watch him, as he passed along, whistling cheerily to himself; and more than one dame, as he nedded to her pleasantly on his way, wished him a good day, throwing out at the same time a jest or a compliment, to lure him on to conversation.

But, kindly as their intentions were, and innocent though their curiosity in this instance might be, Owen seemed in no way inclined to notice them, or dally on his way. Right up the narrow street he went, and from thence, by many a short cut through humbler entrances to the town, out upon the dusty highway; and it was not till this too had been left behind, and he had turned through lanes and meadow by-paths to a considerable height above the town, that at last he stopped, and, turning round, drew in with one long steady glance, the rare beauty of the landscape stretched before him.

Straight down below him now lay the little town of Bentham, nestling under its weather-beaten cliffs and old ruined castle, separated from him only by the meadow-lands through which he had just passed, in whose hedges trailed the graceful pink-and-white convolvulus and sweet-smelling eglantine. The spires of the churches, and the roofs of the quaint gabled houses, were glittering in the bright sunshine, and up the narrow almost perpendicular streets Owen could just distinguish the strong patient horses toiling along, with careful steps, beneath their burdens; and there to the right stood the bridge spanning with its graceful arches the river below, where fishing-smacks and trawling-vessels, and other craft of more ambitious make also, lay clustered together in picturesque confusion, the sun sparkling on them from off the rippling water, making each spar or mast, each red sail or fluttering piece of canvas, add its share to the general beauty of the scene.

But away to the left there was spread out a wilder view, and one which it would seem Owen enjoyed with even a keener appreciation, as, leaning forward, with his arm thrown round a branch of a tree beside him, he gazed out over the ever-widening river, to the broad expanse of ocean further off, where, even on this glorious summer day, the white-crowned waves were dashing themselves against the rocky shore, or breaking in long lines of surf upon the pebbly beach beyond.

It was not often that the lad had such an afternoon as this, which may account, perhaps, for the amount of pleasure it seemed to afford him. The town of Bentham might seem a sleepy enough locality to those accustomed to the traffic and roar and noisy bustle of our manufacturing towns; yet, for all that, business was rife within it, and holidays—or even half-holidays—fell rarely enough to the lot of those who, like Owen, held places of any responsibility.

It had come to him now as the well-merited reward of patient and untiring industry. After long summer days had been spent uncomplainingly within the shop, and long twilight evenings had been passed as uncomplainingly in other duties imposed upon him, he had been given at last this summer afternoon to himself, to wander out where he chose, and rejoice to his heart's content in the pure air and calm lengthening twilight. He had been given, too, to carry with him in his heart, and to add their sweetness to the rest, words of high praise and commendation, and expressions of confidence, from his employer; and it was now the remembrance of these words stirring within him which made Owen smile pleasantly to himself, as he withdrew his eyes at length from the scene before him, and turned his steps towards the more inland situation of his home.

It was a picturesque home certainly that to which Owen was wending his way, though humble enough as regarded either outward or inward decoration. It

was remarkable only for its curious irregular gables, its dwarfed chimneys and old-fashioned windows set far in under the sloping roof, its wooden galleries added in imitation of foreign style, its roses and sweet clematis, which, with clinging tendrils, had clambered to the very eaves.

Owen's father, and his father before him, had held the situation of head gardener to Squire Taunton, whose lands stretched far beyond Bentham to the distant downs; and here, in this rustic lodge, with its bright patch of flower-garden in front, its bee-hives, its little pebbly stream trickling through moss and ferns behind the house, Owen had spent all the earlier years of his life, till such time as, rather to his father's disappointment, he preferred to leave these rural scenes to join the more stirring life within the town.

Owen, as he walked along through the green oat-fields—where here and there the scarlet poppy thrust up its glowing visage, boldly asserting its right to attract the attention of the passer-by—pictured to himself over and over again the glad smile of astonished welcome with which his father would greet him as he opened the rustic gate and surprised him at his evening meal, the effusion with which his sister Ruth would fall upon him, and forgetting the should-be decorum of her years, half strangle him with her embraces; and as Owen thought of this, he could not but think too of the sweet face and gentle voice which, could they have been restored to him, would have hailed his advent with even a tenderer love, and have welcomed him with yet more loving gesture. But this could never be again; two or three years ago the last good-bye had been spoken between the mother and her son, the last embrace had been taken; and thus it was that, in the first outbreak of his grief, all contentment and satisfaction in his previous life seemed to have been taken away when she was taken too, till at last, with an effort scarcely understood or appreciated by any, he broke through all previous habits and associations, and exchanged for the country life of his earlier years the monotonous and weariful routine of a stationer's apprentice.

He was a pleasant-looking lad, any one, without even a parent's partiality, would have said, as he strode along—a lad with an open, smiling countenance, broad, rather high-shouldered figure, and easy, pliant limbs, giving him but little trouble to vault the stiles and low wooden gates which marked the fields from one another. There were not many more to cross now before the well-known lane leading with familiar windings to his home, and Owen's keen eyes were already on the watch on the chance of seeing a certain brown straw hat, with a face as bright and open as his own beneath it, peering, according to the wont of his sister Ruth, for visionary treasures amongst the wild flowers in the hedges or in the deep mossy ditches below them.

But as he laid his hand lightly on the rung of the last stile it was certainly not Ruth's cheery voice which fell upon his ear, in such pitiful cadence that Owen could not but stop to listen.

"Fanny, Fanny!" wailed a little child's voice close beside him, though the speaker was hidden by the thick green leafing of the hedge—"Fanny, where are you? Come back, do; you told my mammy that you'd bring me home quite safe, and now you've left me all alone, and I'm afraid!" And fresh sobs testified to the sincerity of the words.

Owen waited no longer; it was not in his nature to listen unmoved to such a complaint without coming to the rescue, and springing across the wooden stile, he found himself in close companionship with a little mortal whose tear-dabbled face and frightened gestures called upon Owen's charity for assistance.

But as he came suddenly forward the child, who had before made his complaint so loudly, failing to perceive in him a protector from his fears, now only crouched still further back beneath the hedge, and, with a still more piercing cry, again called to Fanny for relief.

(*To be continued.*)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

61. Of what people is it said that they could "sling a stone at a hair breadth?"

62. By whom was Jericho rebuilt, and what prophecy was then fulfilled?

63. Quote the passage in which Elisha calls Ahab a "murderer."

64. Who is it calls Jesus "the Shepherd and Bishop" of souls?

65. To whom does St. Paul write, "Prepare me also a lodging?"

66. What persons are mentioned as being able to use both the *right* hand and the *left* in hurling stones and shooting arrows?"

67. Where is Moses stated to have been a "very meek" man?

68. How many cities were given to the Levites for their use?"

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 144.

49. Thrice—1, St. Matt. xxi. 5—Zech. ix. 9; 2, St. Matt. xxvi. 31—Zech. xiii. 7; 3, St. Matt. xxvii. 9—Zech. xi. 12, 13.

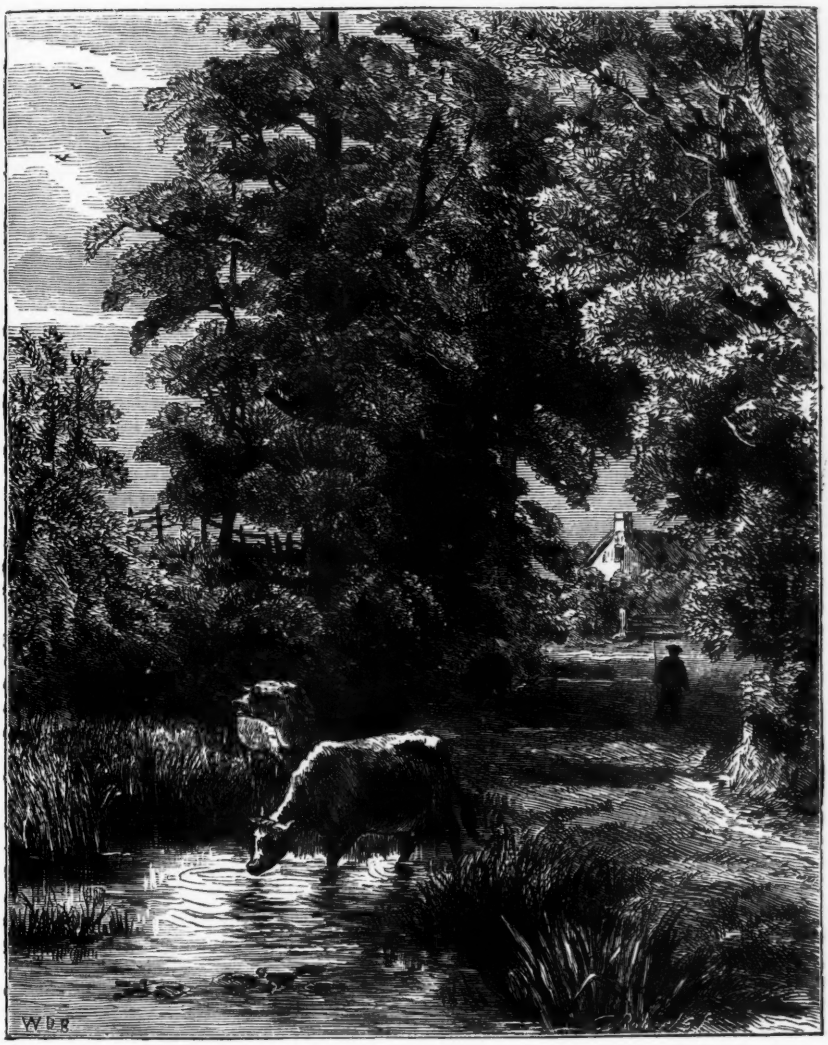
50. Ezek. iv. 2.

51. Isa. v. 7; Ps. lxxx. 8—15.

52. 1, When Jesus prayed for St. Peter (St. Luke xxii. 31, 32); 2, when He interceded for His Church (St. John xvii.); 3, when on the cross He prayed for His murderers (St. Luke xxiii. 34).

53. Because God had said to the Israelites, "Ye shall henceforth return no more that way" (Deut. xvii. 16).

54. In the purchase of the field of Machpelah by Abraham (Gen. xxiii. 16.)



(*Drawn by* W. D. Blatchley.)

TRANQUILLITY.

LYING far down 'midst sheltered vale,
A pleasant pool half-hid by trees,
Surfaced with lilies pure and pale,
Soft-rippled by the summer breeze,

With sedgy fringe of soughing reeds,
Protecting from the outer life,
Save where one well-worn pathway leads
To human labour, human strife:

A spot well loved by lowing herds,
So cool, so free from all unrest;
Save carollings of warbling birds,
Or chirpings from some little nest,
No sound disturbs the placid calm,
Or breaks the silence soft and low—
A scene that acts like soothing balm
On spirits torn by bitter woe.

As this fair spot on Nature's face
So are the lives of some good men:
Hid far away in quiet place,
Beyond the reach of this world's ken,
They live a calm and placid life,
In harmony of peace and love;
Far from the busy scenes of strife,
They contemplate the life above.
And thinkest thou that men like these
Have not *their* mission here below?
As flowers that scent the summer breeze,
They purify the deepest woe;
'Tis theirs to cheer the fainting heart,
To soothe the sad and weary breast,
And in their lives to show a part
Of the bright future's heavenly rest.

G. WEATHERLY.

EDWARD TURNER, CARPENTER AND BUILDER.

BY AGNES MACDONELL, AUTHOR OF "MARTIN'S VINEYARD."

CHAPTER XI.

LONDON AGAIN, AND A DAWNING HOPE.

"The day begins to break, and night is fled,
Whose pitchy mantle over-veiled the earth."

SO nearly six months went by. One evening, as I was giving the last orders to the men, and about to leave the workshop, I met Charlie Brereton in the doorway. He was changed since his long illness—thinner and paler. He was well dressed, and looked, I thought, just like a gentleman, as, after we had shaken hands, he stood leaning against the bench. Was it any wonder Barbara preferred him to a plain fellow like me?

"I am going up to Mr. Smith's to night," he said; "but I wanted to see you, Ned, and came here first. Cannot we sit down here a while? I have something to say to you."

"Come to my room," I answered, "it is but a step from here, and you can rest there, and we can talk easier than here."

"Yes," he said; "that will do. I am quite tired with walking up from the station. I am not up to my old mark yet, you see," he said, with a faint smile.

He raised himself, a little weakly, from leaning against the bench, and slipped his arm through mine. So we walked up the street together. He made no remark on anything by the way. I asked him how his uncle was.

"Oh, very well," he said; "but stop a bit till we get into the house; I cannot talk in this noise."

It was strange to hear Charlie Brereton speak in that way of the London streets. When I got to my room I lit the fire, and while I got some tea ready he sat in the easy chair, with his head lying wearily back and his eyes on the fire. I could see not only in his face, but by the look of his hands, as they lay on the arms of the chair, that he was worn, and bore the marks of his great suffering.

I thought something was on his mind, too, and I wondered what he had to tell me. I thought I knew what it must be; and all these months I had been making up my mind to bear it; but I wished he would speak out and not keep looking into the fire, as if I were not there. Suddenly he said, "Ned, I have come to tell you that I am going abroad."

"Abroad!" I said, thinking I had not heard him rightly.

"Yes; the doctor says I ought to have a sea voyage to set me up again, and so I've made up my mind to go to America, and I am going pretty soon."

"I hope it will do you good," I said. "I hope it will do you good with all my heart! You've had a bad shaking; but, dear me, I never thought to see you looking as well as this the last time I saw you!" I felt so confused with the strangeness of the news that I scarce knew what to say.

"Yes; the doctor says it is the best thing for me. I have got over the hurts and the broken bones; but the shock, you see, has left a sort of general weakness, which only a change of climate will clear off. Uncle has held back from the plan of my going for a good while, but he is content now, seeing the doctor speaks so strong about it; and the thing I came to speak to you particularly about now Ned, is a plan I've got. You see, uncle will want a partner in the shop at Birchfield in my place, and I want him to take you. In many ways you'll suit the business better than ever I should; all your experience here will tell finely down there."

"But you're coming back again to England," I said, still confused with the sudden change things seemed to have taken all in a few moments. "You'll be back before six months are over as strong and well as ever."

"I can't say, Ned, how that may be; I haven't made up my mind. I am going to start a fresh life in America. I have thought a great deal about this

while I have had to lie still and do nothing. When I was lying at the cottage, thinking I should never live to get up again, I saw things in a different light, and my own life in a different light, Ned; and, that's one thing I wanted to say," he said, and turned his face towards me, as it lay against the back of the chair.

"You have been very good to me, Ned. I don't mean only that you saved my life, you know. I heard all about how you got me out of that burning carriage the other day. I made Ann tell me, and she—she is as good as you are, Ned; well, but I mean you've been good to me in many ways, when you didn't know it, or mean it perhaps either, altogether. You kept me straight when I might have gone worse than I did——"

I tried to stop him by saying I took blame to myself in many things; and then I spoke again about his coming back to England.

"Yes," he said, "there are many things that will always keep my thoughts here, and never let me forget England; and if my health 's restored, well, you will find me back again, perhaps, to see if my old friends remember me."

"There'll be some that won't forget you," I said; and then I made up my mind to speak out plain, and let him feel that he might trust me as an honourable man, not to intermeddle, if there was anything between him and Barbara; so I said, "Charlie, I was looking for different news from you when you came in than this about your going abroad. And now, let me say, if there 's anything betwixt you and Barbara Milton, why tell me plainly; for her sake, and yours, and mine, it will be better."

I saw how his face flushed as he looked away, I think because his mind went back to that evening of our own quarrel, and said, "No, Ned, no. I was a fool then; half set on to act out my folly because I saw it vexed you. She 's pretty enough to make a man forget himself perhaps, but she 's good enough and clever enough to set him right too. She laughed, and was pleasant with me, but her heart was as cool to me as a winter's day."

I could not find any words to answer this. I wanted to be alone to think of all they meant; and Charlie, seeming shy too, began to talk about the Birchfield plan and of my going there, and as we talked I found, though old Brereton was willing enough to take me as his partner, the scheme was Charlie's in the beginning and the end. When I said something about seeing all this, he laughed in his old way, and said, "Oh, it will suit my uncle to a T to have you back again, and you will do my work again, you see, as you used to do, only you'll do it by the day now, and not by the piece, you see."

I got holiday for half a day, and went down with Charlie Brereton to the ship, and saw him sail. We parted almost like brothers, and the last words he spoke were, "There's nothing that will be so pleasant to me in the distant place I'm going as to hear of any good fortune that may befall you; and tell them at Birchfield that I'll never forget them—your mother and Ann, who have been like a mother and sister to me, and brought me through more than bodily illness. God bless them! I shall never think of Barbara any more except as your wife, Ned."

Those were the last words he said.

(*To be concluded.*)

"WITHIN THE VAIL."

BY THE REV. JAMES SPENCE, D.D., AUTHOR OF "HOURS WITH DANIEL," ETC., ETC.

"With Me in Paradise."—ST. LUKE xxiii. 43.

THESE words of our Lord, in answer to the prayer of the penitent thief on the cross, contain much that is instructive, and suggest more, regarding the life of the departed in the home of the blessed. What a wonderful transition from the environments, trials, and imperfections of time to the inheritance of the saints in light! To us on this side, notwithstanding the thinness of the vail between, the change is inconceivable; and the experience of the soul who, by the conquest of death, has passed through the gates into the celestial city, is that of which we can have no adequate idea. Yet, from the statements of Scripture, we get glimpses of the coming glory, well calculated to inspire and intensify our hope, to encourage us to live in the present for the future, and to throw back a glowing light on our pilgrimage through this world.

The sphere of this future life is here designated by the great Teacher as Paradise. This is a word of Persian origin, signifying a park or garden, and taken, doubtless, from the designation of the first beauteous and happy abode of man in Eden, from which he was banished on account of his sin. The term seems to be topographical, and to suggest the idea of actual locality; but, as we are not informed where the place is, it is vain for us to speculate about it. The earthly Paradise, attractive with the freshness and variety of its new-created verdure, life, and beauty, was but a faint type of the scenery and splendour of the promised land of glory. We may be well assured that "Paradise lost" was not to be compared with what "Paradise regained" will be. St. Paul tells us of one, doubtless referring to himself, who was caught up into Paradise, which he explains as being caught up into the

third heaven, where he heard "unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter" (2 Cor. xii. 2—4). There blossoms the tree of life, the fruit of which the Saviour gives to every one who overcomes in the conflict with sin; for it is "in the midst of the Paradise of God" (Rev. ii. 7). There need be no question, then, that by Paradise Christ meant the present home of holy and redeemed souls, where "the spirits of the just made perfect" dwell in the fullest felicity, and amid unfading resplendence.

It is to be observed, moreover, that our Lord's words to the dying thief, To-day *shalt thou be with Me in Paradise*, make no allusion to any future probation, and entirely exclude the idea of purgatorial fire. Even the penitent thief passed at once, through faith in the Saviour, and with a new nature, from the penalty and suffering of a shameful death to the beauty, repose, and perfection of Paradise. It is a state of conscious existence, and of holy felicity, where every cause of sorrow is ended, and every source of grief and misery for ever dried up. Truly, then, to the Christian death is but the gateway of life—the door of entrance to the land of perfection and glory. While to us on this side, from its outward appearances, it is called a sleep, the Divine declaration here clearly announces a state of consciousness, where all the powers are awake to activity and enjoyment. The spirit of man does not, of course, reach its complete and final condition of blessedness and glory until united to the spiritual body at the resurrection; but the place of "the spirits of the just made perfect" now "waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body" is a region of conscious being, where life is perfect according to its conditions, and with all its faculties in perfect and joyous exercise. For all practical purposes here, by a process of Divine foreshortening, Scripture often speaks of the future life—the intermediate state, and the condition after the resurrection as a completed whole. "Absent from the body," the saint is "present with the Lord." St. Paul says to the Philippians that he had "a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better." Victory is better than conflict, fruition better than hope, the rest of heaven better than the toils and trials of the pilgrimage, and home better than the way to it. We may look at life "within the vail," life in Paradise, a little more minutely, learning both from the intimations of Scripture and from the powers and possessions of our life here; for death does not change our human character, nor destroy our personal identity. It will be life in the absence of all that can depress its energy, or shorten its existence—life in the enjoyment of all that can minister to its glory and promote its triumph.

These words of Christ to the penitent thief—"Thou shalt be with Me," as well as the teaching of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, and the presence of Moses and Elijah at the transfiguration of the Saviour, clearly indicate that life "within the vail" is a state of full consciousness and perfect blessedness. Hence we are sure that the departed Christian has carried with him into the unseen all the powers and attributes of his redeemed manhood, to be exercised in perfection for ever. Humanity fallen and redeemed will have a glory and resplendence higher and brighter than unfallen and untried it could have had, and will have experiences and felicities in its victorious condition impossible to it if it had never been tempted and had never sinned. Look at some of the attributes of our nature here.

1. For instance: We are sensible creatures, having the capacity of receiving impressions from external objects. Here, in our present condition, this endowment is connected with our bodily organisation; but we cannot suppose that life in Paradise will be deprived of all instruction and impression from objects beyond ourselves. Even in the intermediate state there will be modes and means of conveying delight to "the spirits of the just made perfect," equivalent to the bodily senses here. We are related in time to an external world, which supplies us with many sources of enjoyment, and many means of improvement. What contributions of delight does the eye afford in the varieties of form, of colour, of motion; in the beauties of creation, and the grandeurs of the empyrean! How constantly and largely are we indebted to the ear for the pleasures of melody, the harmonies of sound, the utterances of eloquence and love! And shall we not see and hear in the Paradise of God? Assuredly we shall; of what avail else the sights of glory, and the songs of heaven, of which we read in Scripture? The saint in the fulness of the future life is not to be "unclothed, but clothed upon;" and "the body of this vileness," redeemed as well as the soul, is to be exchanged at last for a spiritual body, in which all the energies and exercises of our sensible nature will be perfected, all that is mortal and corruptible for ever left, and the soul amid scenes and circumstances where there will be nothing to clog its enjoyment, embarrass its action, or cloud its vision any more. "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. v. 1). What scenes of glory and beauty will meet the eye, what sounds of melody and song will greet the ear, what marvels of experience will thrill the soul, the future must reveal; but the capability of such enjoyments, free from all present imperfection and infirmity, will assuredly belong to us.

2. We are rational creatures, with the powers of

intellect and imagination, of thought and will; and these powers will go with us into the mansions of our Father's house above, there to be exercised in perfection, free from all that hinders and hampers them now. The frail and fleshly tabernacle in which the spirit now dwells will have for ever ceased to depress the efforts and aspirations of the soul. On earth, notwithstanding our infirmity and imperfection, thought and imagination are sources of high delight. Here, where often "the spirit is willing but the flesh weak," the pursuit of truth, the quest of knowledge, and the exercise of our affections, yield a sacred pleasure; and will there be no equivalent in the character of our life hereafter? Certainly there will. Our consciousness, and all our faculties of reason and intelligence, will belong to us then as now, but with a purity, a power, an elasticity, and a freeness, inconceivable by us in the present state. If here the pursuit of truth, and the exercise of reason, the power of reflection, and the glow of imagination, yield us high enjoyment, what must they be to us in Paradise, where all scales have for ever fallen from the mental eye, where no cloud bedims the intellectual vision, and where we shall see and know as we are seen and known? "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now we know in part; but then shall we know even as also we are known" (1 Cor. xiii. 12). It is reported of Sir Isaac Newton, that when, after years of laborious investigation, he was just about to reach a point in the discovery of truth where he could see things in the realms of science hitherto unseen and unknown, the joy of success seemed too much for him: he sat down and wept like a child! And if our intellectual powers can give us by their exercise such exquisite enjoyment here, what must it be hereafter, when we are beyond the reach of imperfection, darkness, and error? On what fields of truth, on what heights of knowledge, amidst what scenes of glory, reason, emancipated and clear, will there rejoice to roam, we cannot tell; but we may be well assured that the attributes, the works and the ways of God, will afford us ceaseless themes of study for fresh discoveries of truth, new experiences of delight, and multiplying sources of adoration and worship.

3. We are moral beings. This, in truth, is the great distinction of humanity here, and it will be the glory of our perfection hereafter. The instinct of many of the brute creation often approaches the reason of man, if it is not, indeed, to some extent identical with it; but "the spirit of man goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast goeth downward to the earth." There is no evidence of any moral quality in the beasts that perish; this is the distinction exclusively of manhood here. Our moral nature, damaged by sin, but redeemed by the blood and regenerated by the Spirit of Christ, we shall take with us into the celestial city, where its perfection will be our unfading glory. The effulgent glory of the Divine Being is His character—the glory of infinite goodness: so the highest glory of His people in their future life and home will be their moral perfection—"the glory which shall be revealed in us." Reason will no more be clouded by sin; inclination will no more war with judgment; imagination will no more be swayed by lust; and passion will no more contend with conscience—all the powers of our intellectual, moral, and emotional nature will be in happy harmony and joyous exercise. This almost surpasses our conception now; because so many elements of evil are within us and around us, but hereafter the Christian will be beyond the reach of sin and the range of Satan's dominion. Moral evil will no more have a place in his nature or a power in his life. Conscience will have perfect action; reason will have perfect light; and the heart will be filled with pure affection. To those who here fight the good fight of faith, and contend earnestly with indwelling sin, how glorious is the prospect! Into heaven there cannot enter anything that defileth, nor anything that worketh abomination, nor anything that maketh a lie. The "measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" has been reached, and the inhabitants, redeemed from the earth, have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. What a wondrous transition, what a glorious change! No error will then lead the intellect astray, no sin defile the heart, no impurity pollute the conscience. In the sublimest sense all old things will have passed away, and all things become new. The saints will be faultless before the throne of God and the Lamb, "not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." The pure in heart alone can see God spiritually here, and commune with Him: hereafter their purity will be perfect, their communion uninterrupted and complete; and "holiness unto the Lord" will be enshrined in their being, and encircle them with glory for ever.

4. Further, we are active creatures. Incessant activity is a characteristic of life—pre-eminently of human life. Man was formed for action, and there is, perhaps, no greater misery than condemnation to complete inaction. Adam tilled and dressed the garden in the earthly Paradise before he fell, when labour was not a toil, and had not a curse connected with it. Activity is essential to true happiness on earth; and can we suppose that there will be no fitting exercise or occupation for man's emancipated powers in the world to come? We cannot suppose so; there will be activity, significant, varied, and most blessed. It is true that

> "There the wicked cease from troubling,
> And the weary are at rest;"

but "the rest which remaineth" for the people of

God, though sure repose as contrasted with the vexation, trouble, and toil incident to this world, will not be inactivity. The angels ever are active, "ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation," consecrating all their powers to the service of the Eternal King; and shall not the heirs of salvation, when they have entered on their inheritance, be active? It must be so, although we cannot tell now what services we may perform, or what works we shall accomplish, or in what ministries we may be engaged. Doubtless the activity there will be varied as it is here—varied as are the faculties and talents of Christians upon earth—varied as are the exercises and engagements of the unfallen angels now. Every power will have its fitting employment, and every saint will have his appropriate service. The law of Christ's kingdom here is, "To every man his work;" and this is surely but in preparation for the untiring service and the unwearying employments of Paradise, where the saints "serve God day and night in His temple." As kings and priests unto Him there must be service for them to perform, and occupation to enlist their sympathies and exercise all their powers. But "it doth not yet appear what we shall be;" we can know little or nothing of that higher moral state; of "that consummate condition of the soul;" of that consciousness of the full and perfect activity of all the powers and feelings, which will so largely constitute our bliss above. In faith, in hope, in patience, we wait for it, cheered by the assurance that in Christ "now we are the sons of God." Not more wonderful is the change to the infant on its entrance into this world than will be the experience of the Christian on passing through death into the Paradise of God.

5. We are social beings, made for brotherhood, formed for association with others. Although selfishness is the curse of this world, yet there would be no field for its exercise were it not for the attractions and bonds of society. Protracted solitariness may depress all energy, induce misanthropy, and even dethrone reason. The love of society is an element of our nature, which yields us here, in its realisation, both elevation and delight; and since it is so amidst the entanglements and imperfections of this life, what will it be amidst the resplendence and perfection of heaven? Here on earth, society at best is mixed, and human fellowship, even where it is most cheering and stimulating, is more or less impure. But in Paradise our social feelings, redeemed from all impurity and selfishness, will have perfect exercise and uninterrupted scope. What a gathering there, in "the general assembly and church of the firstborn;" the goodly fellowship of the prophets, the glorious company of the apostles, the noble army of martyrs, an innumerable company of angels, in "the heavenly Jerusalem," around the throne of God and the Lamb. What a bond of union! what a sympathy of love! what a fellowship of souls, to be realised then! and what will it be to be there? This will be association in perfect unity—the communion of heavenly love, beyond the reach of fear, and envy, and jealousy for evermore. This will be to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with patriarchs and apostles, in our Father's house above. This will be the enjoyment and realisation of the inheritance of the saints in light. This will be the perfect, triumphant, and glorious life to come, for which the present is a sacred probation and an earnest preparation. This will be the consummation and the perpetuation of faith, and hope, and love, centred in that living Lord, whom to know is life eternal.

Shall we know each other there? Shall we recognise our friends, and will they recognise us in Heaven? I do not think it can be doubted. The idea of such recognition is in entire harmony with the genius and spirit of the Gospel. Moses and Elias had preserved their identity as they appeared at the transfiguration of Christ Jesus; and do not Peter and John and Paul know each other in the heavenly world? Shall we sit down at "the marriage supper of the Lamb," and mingle in the fellowship of Paradise, with patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, without the privilege of knowing them? How can there be the fulness of celestial communion and love without heavenly recognition? Knowledge here is essential to the happiness of true affection, and it must be so hereafter. The communion of saints cannot be perfect unless there be the recognition of one another. Then shall we know even as we are known, and the scope of our knowledge in this respect will be ever expanding, even as it does in time—an element of joy—a means of instruction—an exercise of interest and delight, as eternal ages roll on. Thus will the social element of our nature, perfected, be a continuous privilege and enjoyment "within the vail."

But the consummation of the felicity is suggested by the words, "WITH ME *in Paradise*." "I will come again," said the Saviour to His disciples, "and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also." (St. John xiv. 3.) To the same purpose are the words of His intercessory prayer:—"Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory." (St. John xvii. 24.) As if in response to these words, St. Paul says of his own prospective death, "Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better." (Philipp. i. 23.) And St. John says of the future life, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be

like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John iii. 2.) This will in itself be heaven to all His faithful disciples—to be with Him, to be where He is, to behold His glory, to gladden in His presence. To see Him as He is, and to be like Him, was St. John's highest ideal of felicity and glory. And well it might be. Christ Jesus will be the manifested Deity. Then He will be visible; then He will be known; then we shall hear His voice, gaze upon His beauty, be transformed into His likeness, and dwell in His presence for ever. What more is necessary to constitute the blessedness of Paradise than to be with the Lord, reigning, rejoicing, serving; our perfection derived from His, and our glory the reflection of His, world without end? Where He reigns there must be unclouded light streaming forth as from a resplendent sun. Where He dwells there must be boundless blessedness, springing as from a perennial fountain; and because He lives His people shall live also—a life to know no end. Such will be life "within the vail." Verily, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." Light and love, felicity and rest, intelligence and triumph, gladdening and untiring service, spotless purity and spiritual perfection, scenes of grandeur, tones of delight, and visions of glory, make up the presentation to us now of the Christian's life in his future home above. And all this is going on now "within the vail," and is a matter of experience to those who have crossed the river of death, and passed through the gates into the celestial city. "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as He is pure."

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THERE was a short pause, and even Eudora's faith in her lover did not prevent her breath coming a little faster, as she eagerly waited for the earl to explain himself.

"I shall put Mr. Granton to the test," he repeated. "I have had some conversation with him this morning, and I came away from the interview convinced that it is for the advantages he would derive from the connection, more than any affection for my child, that he woos her."

Eudora indignantly defended her lover. Mark had told her again and again that he wished she was as poor as himself, that he might prove the disinterestedness of his affection.

"He *shall* prove it!" her father answered, in sterner tones than he had ever before used to her. "I hoped that the entreaties and remonstrances of the best of mothers would have prevailed with you; but you are obstinate: you will not see that a marriage entered upon in such a disobedient spirit must be an unhappy one. As you will not listen to me, I must try what can be done with Mr. Granton."

"But you will not be harsh to him, papa! You will not forbid him to see me again! We will submit to any probation you stipulate for. We will——"

But here the earl's uplifted finger stopped her. "I shall make no stipulations. I shall tell this young man that if he renounces all pretensions to your hand I will pay into my bankers, to his account, the sum of two thousand pounds!"

"He will reject such an offer with scorn!" exclaimed Eudora.

"We shall see," the earl replied. "I shall also tell him that if you persist in marrying him, I cannot prevent it; but I shall make him clearly understand that he will never reap any benefit from the match. I have always felt that there was injustice in the will that separated the title and the estates, and I should not be acting fairly by my nephew Eustace if I permitted him to succeed to the earldom a poor man, while the property that should be his went to enrich an adventurer."

"Mark is no adventurer!" Eudora interposed.

"I shall therefore, if you determine on this marriage, give my lawyers directions to settle upon you, for your own private use, the sum of two hundred pounds per annum. More than this you shall never have from me. For myself, I shall break up my establishment here, and for the future reside abroad. The change of air and scene may benefit your mother, and enable both of us to forget our ungrateful daughter."

"Would you consent to such an arrangement, mamma? Would you cast me off for ever?" asked Eudora, who had never contemplated such severe measures. She had assured herself, as well as Mark, that her father's annoyance would be fleeting, and that for her sake he would reconcile himself to the husband of her choice.

"My child," the countess mournfully replied, "it is you who leave us. I may regret your father's decision; but I must look to the necessity for it."

The rebellious girl stood for some little time

struggling with conflicting feelings, her parents anxiously watching her the while; but it ended in her saying, "Then, so let it be. I will not break my promise. Mark wants me worse than you do, papa, for you have everything you can wish for, while he has nothing but my love."

The earl shook his head, but he did not make any comment upon this assertion, and was quitting the room, when, moved by an impulse of which she was half ashamed, Eudora flew to detain him.

"Oh, sir, either let me go with you, or promise that you will not unfairly exert your influence to induce Mark to give me up!"

"This passes my patience!" the earl exclaimed, angrily. "I might say with truth that Mr. Granton deserves no consideration from me. He has behaved with a duplicity that warrants me in calling him a scoundrel—a thorough scoundrel! But I shall not waste many words upon him. I shall merely tell him what I have told you, and let him do as he pleases. I certainly shall not stoop to entreat your high-minded lover to accept my terms. I feel more inclined to let you both take the course you have chosen, and abide by the consequences."

He went away, and Eudora was left with her mother and Eda, who, miserably humiliated by her brother's disgraceful conduct, had retreated to a distant window. No one spoke, for the countess had long since given up the contest in despair, and now lay on her sofa, secretly echoing her husband's self-reproaching exclamation—"Oh that we had made our child bear the yoke in her youth, instead of suffering her to grow up headstrong and unchecked!" It was no use to tell themselves that they had erred in love; they were beginning to distinguish between the weakly indulgence that will let a sore canker till past remedy, and the affection that can probe a wound with firm hand if it be to cure it.

"Papa has no pity for me!" Eudora complained presently; for she was not at peace with herself, and longed for some one's sympathy. "He has no pity, or he would see that it was the most natural thing in the world for me to become attached to Mark Granton, and that it breaks my heart to find my love and duty at variance!"

"You forget," said her mother, "that if you had kept within the limits of the latter, you would not have been drawn into clandestine proceedings."

"But one does not think of these things until it is too late," she confessed. "And I have always felt so sure that papa would forgive us; and he would if—if Eustace pleaded for us," she added, in lower tones.

"Could *you* ask your cousin to do this?" the countess reproachfully demanded; for the look of surprise and anguish with which Mr. St. Orme had received the tidings of his cousin's secret engagement was still before her eyes. "Do you deserve any favour at the hands of one whom you have so shamefully deceived?"

"Mamma," said Eudora, her bosom heaving, her lips quivering, "I never consented to marry Eustace."

"But you knew our wishes, and how dearly he loved you. His has been faithful affection indeed; and we all hoped that you were beginning to appreciate it. Could he, could any of us, think that the graciousness of your manner during the last few weeks was only assumed to hide the treacherous game you were playing?"

Eudora's head sank in her hands. "Don't speak as if you despised me, mamma! Yet do, if you will, for I deserve it! I never have been worthy of Eustace's love. He will see this now, and congratulate himself on his escape."

Lady Chessington was silent, and her daughter, after roaming about the apartment till her restless movements became almost more than her mother's excited nerves could bear, went and stood beside Eda at the window. From her she had been so accustomed to receive attention and sympathy, that she forgot how incensed she had been with her for bringing about this *éclaircissement*, and looked for a consoling glance or whisper. But Eda's thoughts were with her brother, although she was afraid to conjecture how he would behave. Which ever alternative he accepted entailed upon him a degradation that stung his more conscientious sister acutely; and when the door opened, and she heard the earl's returning footstep, she let her face droop on her bosom, as if she were to blame for what had happened.

Even Eudora felt chilled and guilty, and oppressed with a consciousness that all the devotion Mark could lavish upon her would not compensate for what she would have to renounce in wedding him; and, running to her mother, she kissed her fondly again and again. But when she raised herself, and saw that her father was gazing at her with unfeigned compassion, she tried to force a smile.

"It can't be helped, papa; when hearts are given away, there's no reclaiming them just because the gift was a rash one. In a few years, when Mark has fought his way to the van, you will be as proud of him as I am!"

"Proud of him, you poor mistaken child!" the earl ejaculated, so sorrowfully that Eudora retreated, and caught hold of Eda's arm to steady herself.

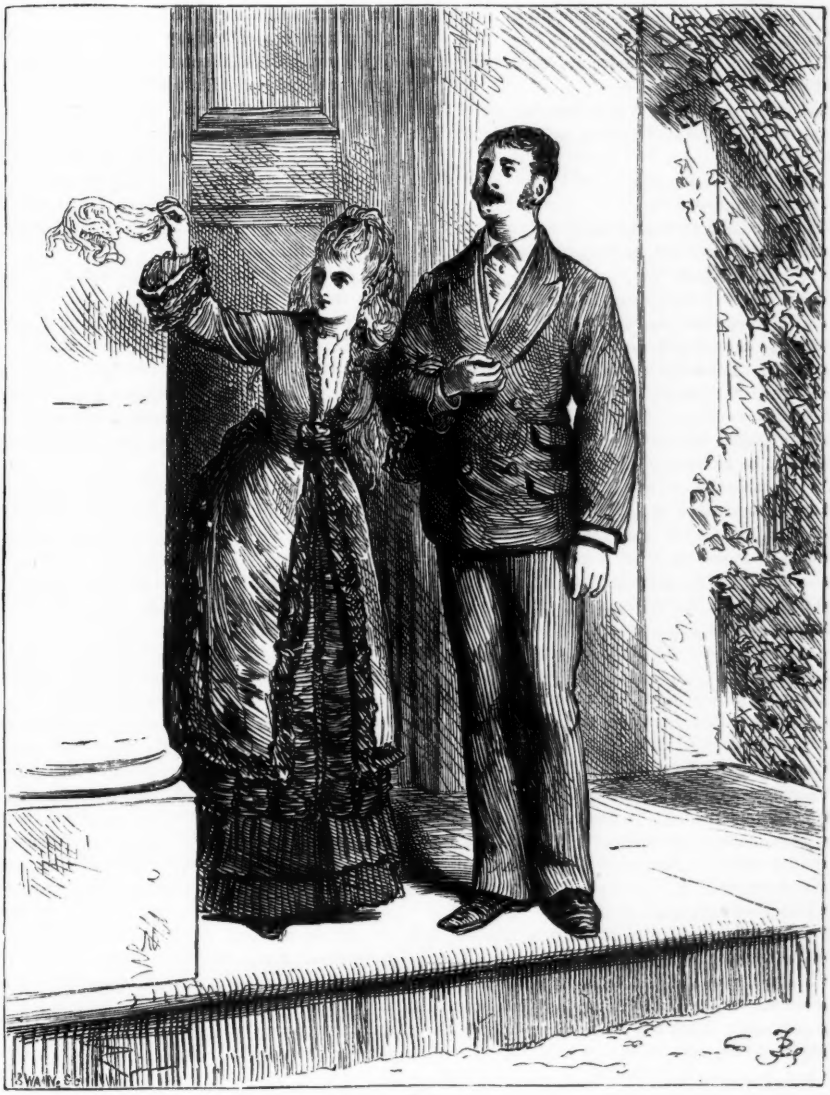
"You haven't parted us, papa!"

"I have done nothing more than I told you I would; set my intentions plainly and clearly before Mr. Granton."

"Go on, papa," she murmured, breathlessly. "Mark said——"

"That he considered you had deceived him, for you had led him to believe that my personal property was yours by inheritance, and that I could not deprive you of it."

She grew very pale, for there returned to her memory sundry questions put to her by Mark one day, which—little dreaming how much importance



(*Drawn by* F. Barnard.)

"Waving her an affectionate adieu."—*p.* 187.

he attached to them—she had answered at random; but she signed to the earl to proceed.

"Mr. Granton declines to be burdened with a wife whose income would be barely sufficient for her own private expenses. I am giving you his own words."

"Is this all, papa?"

"Yes, except that he has decided on leaving here within the hour."

The young girl looked incredulous. Alas! it is always so difficult to believe that we have trusted to a broken reed.

"But—but—he must have said more than this! Tell me all, papa—all!"

"He asked me to convey to you his regrets that circumstances have rendered this line of conduct inevitable on his part."

Eudora pressed her palms to her brows, and her anxious mother arose, and softly approached her.

"But the money you spoke of, papa—he did not accept *that!* Don't tell me that he gave me up for a bribe—a paltry bribe!"

The earl looked at Eda, and was silent; but Eudora stamped her foot in her impatience, crying—"I must be answered. Forgive me, papa; but I don't feel able to believe that he would do this! Perhaps you pleaded with him that you could not resolve to part with me; that it would grieve mamma; or that such a marriage would be lowering to me: and so, in his generosity, he set me free. Am I not right? Oh, sir, am I not right?"

The earl, all displeasure forgotten at the sight of the anguish depicted on her face, caught her to his bosom.

"My poor girl, I wish I could say that you are; but I cannot. I have written the cheque, and—Mr. Granton has accepted it."

"Let me hear it from his own lips!" she feverishly entreated. "I do not feel as if I could credit it till he himself tells me that he has renounced me. He must have some other reason for what he has done; he cannot mean to give me up for the sake of two thousand pounds! Let me hear his own account of your interview—oh, papa, pray do!"

The earl demurred a while, then rang the bell, and bade the servant who answered it tell Mr. Granton that Lady Eudora wished to have a few minutes' conversation with him. After an interval that seemed terribly long, the man came back with a note for her ladyship, which she tore open, devoured with her eyes, and then, dashing it on the floor in a frenzy of scornful rage, threw herself into her mother's arms. It was too true: her love had been less precious to Mark than the large sum of money with which the earl had dazzled him, and she was forsaken.

"We have been very foolish, dear little friend," Mark wrote, "to imagine that our pleasant intimacy could continue after Eda played the informer. Lord Chessington has offered me conditions which my gratitude for his great kindness ever since I have been an inmate of his house compels me to accept; but I cannot trust myself to the parting interview you demand. All that I dare say is—forget the unfortunate M. G., and be happy!"

Mark made no attempt to see his sister before his departure, but she crept down into the hall to say good-bye, and ask him whither he proposed going. His eyes gleamed angrily at her, but he made no comment on what had occurred, and talked loudly, as if to show that he was quite cool and comfortable.

"For the present I shall go to an hotel," he said, in answer to her inquiry; "so if you should have occasion to write, you had better address, 'Poste Restante, Strand.'"

"Try and think that I have acted for the best, dear Mark!" she whispered.

"Oh yes, yes! of course, one cannot doubt the goodness of your intentions; but just at present I don't feel at all grateful for your propensity to meddle with what doesn't concern you. There, don't detain me, for the fly is waiting, and I am too sick of this dull hole to care to stay in it a minute longer than I am obliged."

Eda would have entreated him to give back the earl's cheque, but at the first word on the subject he was gone; and she went back to try and gain admittance to Lady Eudora, who had locked herself in her own room, and was giving way to such transports of mingled anger and grief, that her mother was beginning to be seriously alarmed.

However, the impetuous girl neither pined herself into a decline, nor had an attack of brain fever; but she caught a violent cold through pacing the terrace bareheaded on the evening of Mark's departure, and it was attended with such severe rheumatic pains, that her bodily sufferings prevented her from dwelling as much as she might have done on the loss of her unworthy lover. It was some weeks before she was able to leave her bed, where she lay during the greater part of the time, crippled in every limb, and quite dependent on the loving ministrations of her mother and Eda. No sharper trial could have fallen on the active healthy girl than to be forced to lie there through the soft sweet autumn days, too ill to read, or work, or turn herself on her pillows without assistance; and yet in after life Eudora looked back on those hours of pain and helplessness with a thankful sense of the change they wrought in her. It was then she really learned to value the affection of her parents; to feel remorse for the anxiety she had cost them; to hide her burning face, and wonder at herself, when she remembered how readily she would have left them for the specious Mark Granton; and to frame good resolutions for the future, which, as they were made in deep abasement of spirit, she was enabled to keep.

As the family physician declared that neither the countess nor her daughter must risk the inclemency

of an English winter, it was resolved that they should spend some months in the South of France; and as soon as Eudora was well enough to travel, the day was fixed for their journey. But now Eda sought an interview with Lady Chessington, and expressed her wish to remain in England. She knew that, kind as her friends were, they had only tolerated her since the discovery of Mark's treachery. Unpleasant recollections were revived by the very sound of her name; and though she had endured this as long as she was useful in the sick-room, she was eager to depart as soon as Lady Eudora was well enough to do without her.

Nor did the countess oppose her wish. "I think it will be better for all of us that the connection should cease," she said; "but you have served us so faithfully, and behaved so well under very trying circumstances, that I shall not let you go until I can hear of something for you."

She kept her word, and interested herself so much on Eda's behalf, that before she quitted England she was able to obtain a situation for her as governess to the two little daughters of a Mr. and Mrs. de Courcy, who were anxious to secure a superior and trustworthy young person, and were therefore glad to accept the services of one so highly recommended by the Countess of Chessington.

When the hour for parting came, every one at Chessington Hall was surprised to find how much they should miss the unobtrusive Eda. The earl ceased to remember that she was the sister of a young man he detested, and as he shook hands with her, bade her apply to him in any difficulty. Mr. St. Orme, with whom she had always been a favourite, insisted on her acceptance of a beautifully-bound edition of Milton; and the countess kissed and blessed her as if she had been a daughter; but the words that fell sweetest on her ears, and were remembered longest, were those spoken by Eudora.

"Dear Eda, I shall never forget what you have done for me—never. You not only saved my life, but ever since you have been at Chessington you have been, perhaps without knowing it, teaching me how I ought to use the life you preserved. Tell Mark, from me—you see I can speak his name now without a pang—that you were a better friend to both of us than we once thought you."

Eda rejoiced to hear her say this, and told her so.

"I shall write to you often," Eudora added; "and I hope to be able to send you word that I am emulating your steady adherence to duty. See here, dear; you must wear this ring for my sake. Eustace chose it, and to please me, he has had the words engraved inside which I mean to call your motto, 'Whatever betide, for the right!'"

And when Eda caught her last glimpse of Chessington House, Lady Eudora, leaning on the arm of Mr. St. Orme, was still standing under the portico, waving her an affectionate adieu.

CHAPTER XXIV.

EDA had stipulated for a few days' liberty before taking up her abode as governess at Mr. de Courcy's handsome residence at Tyburnia; and therefore it was to the house of the Ingles that she went on reaching London. Nothing was altered there, except that the father of the family was, if possible, more besotted, and his hard-worked spouse more worn and haggard with her labours, while the much-tried 'Ria had got a place, and resigned her home duties to a younger sister.

The little chamber that had once been Mark's was unoccupied; and from thence Eda wrote to her brother, acquainting him with her arrival in town, and begging him to come and see her. She was longing to know what he was doing; to learn whether his disappointment had had as wholesome an influence on his mind as on Lady Eudora's; and to hint her wish that he would let her share his fortunes, be they at ever so low an ebb. Her influence over him was very small, she knew; but if she were in a position to exercise it more frequently, it might sometimes induce him to renounce, or at least pursue less selfishly, the ambitious dreams of wealth and fame which had already led him astray.

He answered her note directly, and appointed a rendezvous in the Temple, excusing himself for giving her the trouble of coming so far by saying, "You know how much I dislike the people you are with; and so you cannot feel surprised that I do not choose to throw myself in their way."

Eda thought that his reluctance to come to Pimlico might be attributed less to a distaste to the Ingles than to an unwillingness to revisit the spot where their beloved mother had bidden them an eternal farewell. Had all her dying prayers for his well-doing been breathed in vain? Would he never begin to seek after the true riches of which she had tried to teach him the inestimable value? These were questions on which Eda could not dwell, though they were troubling her, as she walked across the park and up the noisy Strand to meet him.

He had forgiven all her offences, and greeted her so lovingly that her eyes filled with joyful tears. "And so you have left the Chessingtons?" he observed, as he drew her arm through his own, and they paced along one of the quiet courts. "And Eudora will marry her cousin the prig, after all, thanks to you, eh? Nay, don't look uneasy! I was very angry with you at the time, but I can see now that I am well out of a foolish affair. What are you going to do with yourself in London, Eda?"

She told him of the situation Lady Chessington had procured for her; but added that she would cheerfully resign it if he would accept her services as a housekeeper.

"Not yet, my dear; I am in chambers at present; but I am in treaty for a very pretty little house at

Hampstead; if I secure it I shall be delighted to have you with me!"

"Then you are doing well, Mark?"

He smiled hopefully. "I think so. I have obtained an excellent berth as secretary to a new company, in which I have taken some shares, and expect to make an excellent thing of it."

"But these new companies sometimes fail," she reminded him.

"And sometimes prove splendid successes; so why should not ours? Don't croak, Eda; I should not have risked my cash if I had not convinced myself that there was every chance of trebling it in a very short time."

But the mere mention of the word failure had clouded his brow; and Eda's was shadowed too, for she was asking herself what good he could ever expect to do with money obtained as the sum had been to which Mark alluded so pompously. Perhaps the sigh she breathed gave him a shrewd guess at the current in which her thoughts were running, for he looked at his watch, and declared that he was due at the office, and must leave her.

"You must let me know how you like your new home. You are such a dear little contented thing that I don't think it troubles you to go among strangers, as it would some girls."

Eda could have contradicted this, but she did not, for Mark was in the habit of taking things for granted, and apt to be annoyed if an attempt was made to convince him that he was in error.

"If you should want anything, be sure you write to me," he added, as he bade her adieu. "I'm not very flush of cash just at present, and shall not be till some of our ventures turn in; but I'll contrive to find enough for a new dress or bonnet for my little sister."

"But you will come to Fitz William Square and see me, Mark? Don't let us drift apart again!"

"Only for a little while, my dear; do you forget the house at Hampstead? As for calling upon you, I think I had better wait till you have ascertained whether you can receive visitors. You wouldn't like me to ring the servant's bell, and wait in the kitchen till I was permitted to see my sister the governess, would you?"

Eda made no reply; and in this unsatisfactory manner they parted. After Mark had walked briskly away, she blamed herself for not having spoken more boldly the thoughts and wishes that were in her heart; and she was returning to Fleet Street grieving over a lost opportunity, when she ran against a gentleman, who answered her apology with a smiling inquiry—"Have you forgotten me, Miss Granton?" and she saw that it was Mr. Allonby.

(*To be continued.*)

TO WINTER: A SONG IN SEASON.

HE comes when the flowers have gone to their rest,
When the earth is in tears and the trees are all bare,
And many a snug little tenantless nest
Stands revealed, tender record of instinct and care!
He comes to our shores with a laugh and a shout,
He gives the pale student a pat o' the cheek,
And, straight, health's bright roses are hurrying out,
And the muscle grows firm that was flaccid and weak.

Then join in my song,
With smiles let us meet him,
And cheerily greet him,
And lovingly treat him—
He will not stay long.

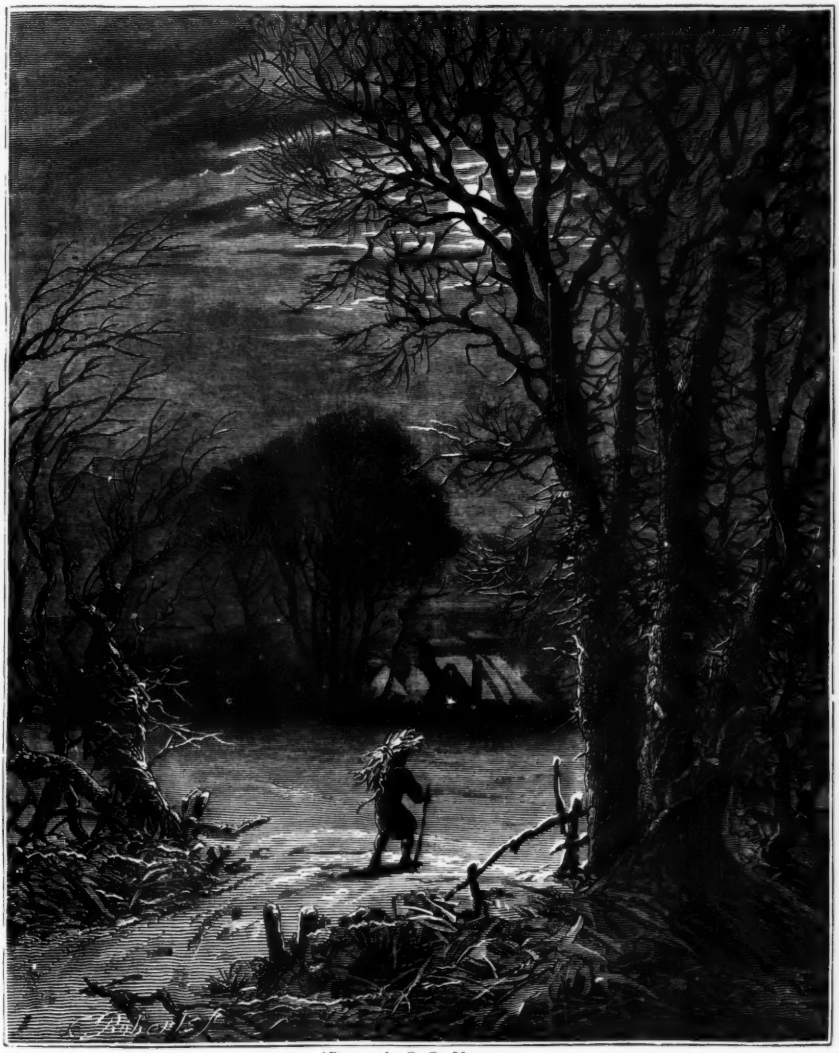
The husbandman marks his appearance with joy,
For he maketh secure with his strong iron hand,
From insects which fret and from damps that destroy,
The good grain of plenty which blesses our land,
Secure in his keeping the seed will remain;
He will nurture the sap in the roots of the trees,
Until warned to his old Arctic palace again
By the musical voice of the soft Western breeze.

Then join in my song,
With smiles let us meet him,
And cheerily greet him,
And lovingly treat him—
He will not stay long.

His touch may be known by the dainty device
Left wherever it falls, or on lattice or eaves;
It delights him to hang with his jewels of ice
Those branches that autumn hath stripped of their leaves.
'Neath the mantle of white he'll so lovingly spread,
Exhausted Dame Nature will find sweet repose,
Till spring shall a crocus-crown set on her head,
And bid her awake and new beauties disclose.

Then join in my song,
With smiles let us meet him,
And cheerily greet him,
And lovingly treat him—
He will not stay long.

JOHN G. WATTS.



(*Drawn by* C. O. MURRAY.)

"When the earth is in tears and the trees are all bare."

"*TO WINTER: A SONG IN SEASON.*"—p. 188.

THE REDEEMER.

BY THE REV. E. K. KENDALL, M.A., VICAR OF ST. MARK'S, NOTTING HILL.

"Thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer."—ISAIAH lx. 16.

THE word *Redemption* is often used by the Apostles in the New Testament to denote the work of Christ in the salvation of men. Christ is not actually called by the name of Redeemer in the Epistles, yet perhaps He has no more familiar title, and certainly none which speaks more directly to the Christian's heart. It is a title to which we have become accustomed; it is one which, perhaps, we should not have invented.

When we say that God *created us*, or that God *sanctifies us*, we use plain words to describe the work of God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. But when we say that God the Son *redeemed us*, we use a figurative expression, which, however significant, is far less forcible and instructive to us than it was to a Jew of the days of St. Paul and St. Peter. We have read in history of ransoms paid for the restoration of captives. We speak of redeeming certain rights or charges by a present payment, and of recovering a pledge on repayment of the debt for which it was security; yet the notion of redemption which we thus derive falls far short of the religious idea, and teaches us but little about the doctrine of Jesus Christ as our Redeemer.

But to a Jew the notion of redemption was most familiar, and was full of doctrinal significance when he became a Christian. If the word Father naturally expressed the love and power of the Creator, the word Redeemer as naturally signified the love and power of the Saviour.

Every Jew had his redeemer. His next kinsman—his brother, or his uncle, or his uncle's son, or whoever was his next kinsman—was, by virtue of this relationship, invested with duties, privileges, responsibilities, and obligations. What, then, were the duties of the next kinsman?

1. *In regard to a man's inheritance.* Every family in Canaan held the land assigned to it as direct from God. It could not be alienated lawfully for ever. Yet, if a man were waxen poor, his land might be seized, or he be compelled to sell it, until the year of Jubilee, to satisfy his creditors. He might thus be destitute the remainder of his days, his inheritance having passed out of his hands.

Here, then, the redeemer stepped in. It was the duty—nay, the privilege of the redeemer to buy it back. No man could refuse to sell to the next kinsman, however unwilling he might be to part with that which he had acquired.

2. *In regard to a man's liberty.* An Israelite might, from stress of poverty, sell his strength to a stranger, and become a slave. Until the Jubilee came to set him free, he might be a hopeless, miserable bondman. Even if not treated with cruelty, his will was subject to the commands of his master, and he could earn no wages for himself. But he had a redeemer, and he was not without hope. If the kinsman were ready to pay the price, no man could pluck him out of his hand. Nor did the rescued bondman only change his master; he changed also the nature of his service. From henceforth he belonged to the redeemer, to whom he owed himself; but he served as a free man, not as a slave—as a hired servant, to whom wages were paid, not as one who was ruled with rigour—as a brother beloved, not as a stranger and an alien. The second duty, then, of the kinsman-redeemer was to purchase liberty for his brother, to restore him to his place among the people of God, to give him back himself.

3. *The redeemer was the avenger of his brother's blood.* "Blood for blood" is the common rule among all nations of rude and primitive habits, where law is weak and passion strong. The manslayer might wander from tent to tent over the desert, hide himself in the fastnesses of the rock, or take refuge in other lands—years might pass away, and the deed of violence seem almost to be forgotten—but the avenger was never satisfied until blood was rendered for blood.

The vindictive spirit which might relentlessly pursue one innocent of murderous intent was repressed by special ordinances, in the case of the Hebrew avenger. There were cities of refuge, by residence in which he who was not a murderer of malice and design could escape, until, by a legal and dispassionate inquiry, he were acquitted of deliberate crime. But the redeemer was still the guardian and avenger of his brother.

Such was the next kinsman, the *goël*—the redeemer of inheritance, of liberty, of life. He was the man's second self: if he were in need of his aid, he was one better than himself—one to whom he might owe all that he had; the guardian of his inheritance, of his liberty, and of his life; the husband of his wife, the father of his children, the avenger of his blood. These things were an allegory, even before the advent of the true Redeemer. Yet there might be no occasion for the service of the kinsman; or he might be poor, cold-hearted, or feeble, and unable or unwilling

to perform his duties as such. Moreover, he was but God's agent, who, even in regard to a man's estate, was his true Redeemer.

Thus, then, was Messiah revealed before He came as the Redeemer. There were those, we read, who looked for "redemption:" they looked for Christ the Prophet, Priest, and King, but also the Deliverer, the Redeemer. They looked for one in the form and nature of man, their next kinsman of the seed of Abraham and the house of David; but yet—though this they seem to have overlooked—the same Scriptures which foretold the advent of the human Redeemer revealed as clearly that, whether collectively as a people, or individually as men, their true Redeemer was divine—our "Immanuel"—God with us. So truly did the law of redemption by the next kinsman shadow forth the redeeming love and restoring work of Jesus—so fully, though so briefly, did it announce that the Church of God should be purchased, as St. Paul expresses it, "with His own blood."

And now let us briefly trace the propriety of the figure as applied to the redemptive work of Jesus. First, He is our Kinsman—He took on Him the nature of man. "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself took part of the same, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." His office, too, was threefold—shadowed forth not obscurely by the office of the Hebrew *goël*. He made the atonement; He restored to man the inheritance which by sin was forfeit, the liberty of those led captive by Satan, the life of those who were dead. He is our Substitute. By a bold figure He is spoken of as paying the price of man's redemption by His blood.

1. *In regard to the inheritance.* It is, perhaps, not possible for us rightly to estimate what we have forfeited by Adam's sin and by our own. We cannot conceive what the world would be if there were no sin, no pain, no death—if all were holy and happy.

The philosopher and the moralist in every age have deplored the present condition of man. How bitterly must we feel that the best of men are not so virtuous as they might be—that the happiest of men are not what their longings lead them to hope, and their knowledge of themselves and of their capacities for enjoyment lead them to think that they could attain, if only they could shake off the condition of imperfection, and make their own that which is too real to be a dream. And what shall we say of the foul crimes, of the abject misery, of the sensual, degraded habits, of the miserable selfishness, of many even among so-called Christians? Is it not enough to mako angels weep, to witness so hideous a perversion of that which was once innocent, loving, and noble—a man? And if such be the present unhappy results of sin, what shall be the eternal consequences? What a holy and blessed inheritance is forfeited by those who know nothing of spiritual joy and peace! Do we not need the "faithful saying," even while we admit that we do not enter into its depth of meaning?—"We trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe." The figure of the kinsman-redeemer, however significant, fails to shadow forth the almighty power, the abounding love of the true Saviour. He has obtained "eternal redemption" for us; the inheritance is purchased, and we may have it partly as present possession and partly as future heritage. Through the Spirit we are enabled to live holier, happier lives—lives of growing sanctity and increasing blessedness—lives of approach to the eternal light "which shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

2. *With his inheritance of innocence and happiness, man's liberty is forfeit likewise.* Not to quote the sayings of those who have but given expression to the experience of every intelligent man who has cared to look within his own soul, just consider that wonderful chapter (Romans vii.) which sets forth so vividly the workings of a heart in bondage, "carnal, sold under sin." "What I do" (is the bitter experience of the struggling sinner) "I allow not; for what I would, that do I not, but what I hate, that do I. I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin."

How real the conflict of mind, and how joyous the glorious conclusion! "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." And so the Apostle leads up to the wondrous doctrine of the adoption, with its triumphant and glorious conclusion—the complete and final deliverance of those who are "more than conquerors."

3. *But while we dwell on the love and pity of the Redeemer, there is yet another aspect under which He must be viewed. The next kinsman is also the goël-avenger.* God hath "given Him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." He himself has described the last dread assize—the grouping on either hand of the sheep and the goats; the loving invitation to the children of His Father to receive the inheritance reserved for them from the foundation of the world; the dismissal of the accursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. Those become the foes of the Redeemer who have been the enemies of His brethren. Satan, the great adversary, the great slayer of the souls of men, shall at last, though the time of vengeance seem

to be delayed, be cast into the place reserved for him and his evil angels, who have conspired with him against the Most High. Others, too, will endure the wrath of the Atoning Lamb:—those who have not claimed their kindred with their great Redeemer, but have been adversaries to Him and to His brethren. In "that day" Christ's kinsmen—some of them, perhaps, knowing it not—listening to the voice of conscience within them, careful to walk by faith, even though their knowledge is small and their opportunities few, "minding not their own things, but the things of others"—ministering to the needy, the weak, and the prisoners—those shall be on the right hand, eleventh and first hour labourers, to whom the Judge will equally be good, of the fulness of His grace and lovingkindness; and on the other hand there will be ranged the adversaries—found liars in that day—those who would not that He should reign over them; those who prefer poverty to wealth, bondage to freedom; those who shut themselves up under a hard cover of selfishness which will never win souls.

He who is mighty to save is mighty also to avenge. But the kindred of the Redeemer, even very much people, join to ascribe "salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God, for true and righteous are His judgments . . . . *He hath avenged the blood of His servants.*"*

FANNY FORREST; OR, EVIL COMMUNICATIONS.

CHAPTER II.

BUT something in the frizzled yellow locks and sunburnt face seemed to come back to Owen's mind, and after another look to make his suspicions more secure, he advanced still nearer to the hedge, and drawing the little boy from beneath it, he raised him in his arms, and tried to brush away the tangled hair from across his face.

The child seemed somehow to have yielded at once to a feeling of security when within those strong arms, for the cries ceased, and with fat, almost baby fingers, he too pushed away the curls, so as more clearly to view his new-found friend, trying to squeeze away at the same time the last remnants of the tears still standing in his eyes.

"Ah! I thought so," said Owen, somewhat to himself, as he now gained a good view of the queer little creature in his arms. "You are Robbie, are you not?—poor Robbie Leonard; and you live at Squire Taunton's gate-lodge, don't you, wee one?—far away down by the rookery there."

The little fellow turned half round, to make sure of the direction in which Owen's finger pointed, and then nodded confidently, although showing at the same time, by a kind of half sob, that he had not yet forgotten his recent trouble.

"And what brought you here, my man?" asked Owen, kindly, yet as if half afraid of raising the cry of alarm again by his question; "why are you not at home with your mother, instead of cutting about here this way, alone?"

"She brought me here," replied the child; "she took me to the post wi' her, for she's afraid to go alone. She said she wouldn't leave me, but she did; and when I cried she beat me, and she said if I cried again she'd beat me worse, and eat me up, too, she did."

The red mark on the chubby arm raised close to Owen's face, showed that this was no vain complaint, and with an angry voice he demanded to be shown where "she" had gone.

Robbie was almost in tears again, and could only point across the grass to a clump of poplar-trees whose stems, standing close together, would completely conceal any one who might be in hiding beyond. So, holding the child more closely in his grasp, Owen stepped across the path on to the soft grass, and with a couple of quick springing steps came suddenly and unexpectedly upon the person he was in search of.

Robbie would have returned to his former plaint at the first glimpse of Fanny if Owen had not hushed him summarily, as he watched with some curiosity the figure of the girl before him. She seemed to be of nearly the same age and height as Ruth, but instead of his sister's fair glossy hair, masses of short black curls hung, in rather corkscrew fashion, beneath a hat adorned with more than one tawdry artificial flower, while a coloured veil, rent and torn almost to ribbons, floated behind her in the wind. The greasy, sun-brown velveteen jacket, and the flounced and flimsy gown below it, finished the costume—intended, evidently, to produce a great effect; yet now, as Owen watched her, it was not of this effect that she was thinking: all her interest seemed to be centred on something which she held between her fingers, turning it over and over with a restless and prying gaze.

One step nearer, and Owen could see a yellow envelope, with printed letters on it, such as had more than once brought tidings of importance to his master in Bentham. He could also see the annoyance it caused the girl that the covering was too thick to betray any inkling of its contents, even when held

* The reader is recommended to use a concordance and a reference Bible, and to compare the texts in which the word Redeemer occurs, or the office is alluded to, in the Old Testament.

up longingly to the sun; he could see that the furtive fingers had now even crept searchingly round the fastening of the letter, when, turning a stealthy glance to the direction where Robbie had been left forsaken, the girl suddenly discovered Owen's tall figure, with Robbie in his arms, his countenance expressing undisguisedly his contempt at the dishonourable act he had detected her in.

In an instant the swarthy cheeks had flushed up crimson, as, with a hasty gesture, the letter was crumpled up, and thrust into the depths of her pocket. For a moment she hesitated what course to pursue so as best to cover her discomfiture, and then, without apparently a twinge of anxiety as to what Robbie's fate might be, she sprang over a low wooden paling close beside her, down into a field of furze and purple heath, and in less than a moment the tawdry hat and flimsy gown were out of sight.

Owen could easily have pursued her, if he had been unfettered by the child within his arms; but, much perplexed at Fanny's strange conduct, Robbie, at the first attempt on Owen's part to put him down, began to utter such piteous cries, and clung to his neck with such a tenacious grip, that at last, with a half sigh of resignation, the lad took him up once again to his old position, and tried with gentle words to quiet his alarms.

"Hush, Robbie! There, there, that's a good man! Loosen your hand a bit, my boy, and I'll not try to put you down again. I'll leave you safe at home at Squire Taunton's gate, if you'll be good."

Much comforted and consoled by Owen's voice and words, Robbie loosened his fingers somewhat, though still keeping his arm confidingly round Owen's neck, and the two went on their way together, Robbie pouring all his confidences into his companion's ear, till the lodge at Squire Taunton's gate was reached, and Owen had placed the boy in safety within his mother's arms.

"She's a bad lot, she is!" replied the good woman, in answer to Owen's account of the manner of his finding the child—"a bad lot every inch, she is, from top to toe; I may say it without blame, to whom she is neither kith nor kin. But if I had had my way Fanny Forrest would never have darkened these doors of mine."

"Who is she, then?" asked Owen, more to gratify Mrs. Leonard, who evidently expected the question, than from any ardent curiosity on his own part.

"She's Fanny Forrest, a daughter to a cousin of my husband's; and as the poor woman her mother, a quiet, kind creature herself, has been in trouble this good bit back, and her eldest boy gone off to sea, why, my husband would have it to get the girl down here, to lighten the load in her home a bit. But it's the last time he'll ever get me to do it—the very last!" And Mrs. Leonard, with renewed thanks for Owen's timely aid, carried off the now sleepy Robert within the lodge.

Owen continued his walk alone, and gave but little further thought to the episode just past.

The road seemed to have grown dustier, and the air more oppressive, as he turned round the corner of the lane, and saw before him the brown wooden palings so familiar, and the bright scarlet flowers within. But as he came in sight of these Owen could not but start, for there, at the low wooden gate, with her arms crossed upon it, and her head stretched peeringly in front of her, stood Fanny Forrest—he could not be mistaken in either face or figure—while just within the gate stood Ruth, holding within her hands the letter he had previously seen in Fanny's possession, while, with bent head and half-averted face, she listened to her companion's words.

Owen could not hear what these words were, but in that moment's glance he felt sure that no good advice was being given by that voluble tongue—no honest design was portrayed in those glittering black eyes.

He felt more than ever convinced of this when, at the first signal of his approach, the swarthy face flushed up as it had done once before that afternoon, and waiting only for a moment's hurried whisper to her friend, Fanny's flimsy gown whisked out of view beyond a sheltering hedge, and Ruth, as though ignorant of her brother's approach, folded the letter absently within its cover, and turned away in the direction of the house.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

69. Give some passage showing that "sheepskins and goatskins" were used as clothing.

70. What character is given by St. Paul of the people of Crete?

71. What judgment fell upon the two eldest sons of Aaron, and why?

72. The word *reverend* is used only once in the Bible. Give the passage.

73. Mention any verse from which it would seem to have been customary to track people by "footprints."

74. Where in the New Testament is it stated that "a thousand years in God's sight are as one day?"

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 160.

55. On the "Day of Atonement" (Lev. xvi. 4, 32).

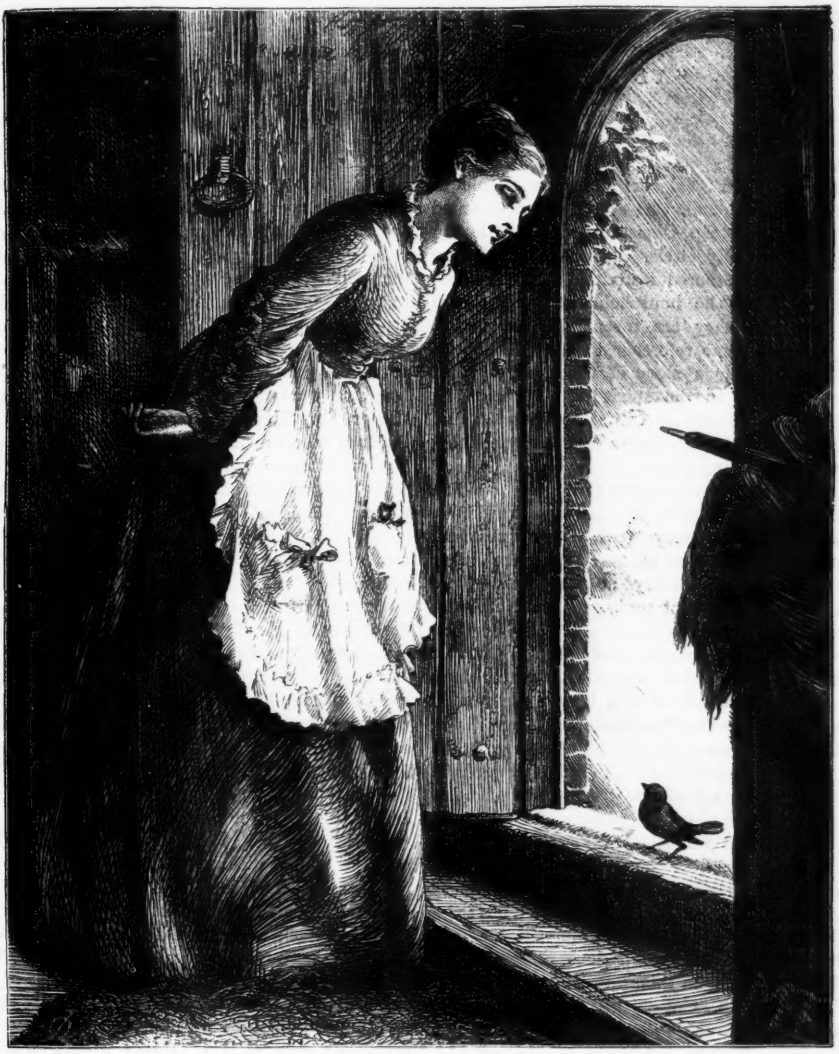
56. Doeg the Edomite (1 Sam. xxii. 19).

57. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (James ii. 8).

58. At Lystra—by the people when they saw St. Paul heal the "impotent man" (Acts xiv. 12).

59. From Hobab the father-in-law of Moses—at the defeat of Sisera by Deborah and Barak (Judges iv. 11, 21).

60. The descendants of Korah are mentioned as "keepers of the gates of the Tabernacle" (1 Chron. ix. 19).



(*Drawn by* M. Ellen Edwards.)

THE ROBIN.

A STARVING robin sang to me,
With round black eyes, with bosom red,
With plaintive grace of restless head,
Still peering here and there to see,
The white, expected crumbs of bread.

And these, in sport, I still withheld:
So sweet it was to hear it sing,
So sweet to watch the hopping thing,
With those quick eager eyes compelled
To looks of curious questioning.

But is it wise to make pretence?
The seeming false is often fair;
For love is love, tho' love should wear
The mask of feigned indifference:
But what of unforeseen despair?

O cruel heart that could withhold
The crumbs on such a bitter day!
For still the bird was fain to stay,
Half perished with the freezing cold:
A moment more—it flew away!

J. R. E.

"ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."

BY THOMAS ARCHER.

"WITH THE HALT AND THE LAME."

I SUPPOSE there are few people in England, who are at all accustomed to keep Christmas amidst a loving family circle, who have not during the sacred festivities of the season, and all the household sentiments with which they are inseparably associated, made some reference to the "Christmas Carol," that famous story of the great novelist whose presence in the spirit of his books has brightened so many a Christmas hearth, and moved so many gentle hearts to kindly thoughts and words of loving cheer.

Amongst all the well-known characters to which Mr. Dickens introduced thousands of readers—characters who, to many of us, became realities, and were spoken of as though they were living and among our ordinary acquaintances—there have been none, except perhaps little Nell, who have evoked more sympathetic recognition than Tiny Tim, the poor crippled child of Bob Cratchit—the child, the sound of whose little crutch upon the stair was listened for with loving expectation—the shadow of whose vacant chair in the "Vision of Christmas," gave to the humbled usurer as keen a pang as any sight that he saw afterwards in that strange dream of what might come to pass. So completely do we share the anxiety of Scrooge in this respect, that we can all remember giving a sigh of relief when, at the end of the story, we learn that the poor crippled boy remains to bless the fireside where even his afflictions were felt to be a hallowing influence to soften animosities, and to draw close the bonds of family love.

"Somehow he gets thoughtful, sitting by himself" (says Bob Cratchit), "and thinks the strangest things you ever heard. He told me, coming home, that he hoped the people saw him in the church, because he was a cripple, and it might be pleasant to them to remember upon Christmas Day who made lame beggars walk and blind men see."

If I needed an excuse for so long an allusion to that pathetic story, which has stirred so many hearts throughout England, I might find it in the passage I have just quoted; but I seek none. I refer to the "Christmas Carol," because in it the figure of the crippled boy, occupying so small a space, yet is such a living, touching influence as to be one of the household fancies that associate themselves with our thoughts of Christmas-tide in poor homes; because there are so many little crutches the sounds of which are heard—though fewer than there used to be before *orthopædic* surgery became a special branch of study, and hospitals were founded for its practice; because, though Tiny Tim may represent so many crippled children who are the helpless members of poor families, where they are tended with as kindly care as working fathers and mothers can find time for—there are hundreds of other deformed or maimed lads whose lot is made the harder because of the want of sympathy and ready aid that would lift them out of utter helplessness, or give them such light labour to perform as would diminish their sense of dependence. Finally, because I desire you to bear me company to one place in London where this last need is recognised, and where forty crippled boys, suffering from various incurable deformities, which yet have left them the use of their hands, are not only taught a trade, but are encouraged, fed, and nurtured for the three years during which they are inmates of the home—"The National Industrial Home for Crippled Boys."

Alighting from the railway carriage which conveys us from Mansion House Station to the pleasant old High Street of Kensington, we are close to the place that we have come to see, for the building, itself a quaint old house, with a central doorway between two projecting deep bay-windowed fronts, and built of the reddest of red brick, stands at the end of Wright's Lane, looking us full in the face as we approach it to read the style and title plainly painted across its upper storey.

The house has good reason for looking the world thus bluffly in the face, for it is an independent building, bought and paid for; hearth-stone, roof, tree, and chimney, freehold, and without debt or mortgage. Till this was done all thought of considerable extension was put aside. The question was how to provide, out of voluntary subscriptions

and contributions, for the fifty inmates who could be admitted within those sheltering walls. It must be premised, however, that ten pounds a year has to be paid for each boy who is accepted, during the three years that he remains there, to be taught in the evening school and in the workshop, not only how to read and write and cipher, but to become a good workman at tailoring, carpentering, or die-engraving and colour-stamping. These are at present the only three trades taught in this truly industrial home, but they appear to be very admirably suited to the cases of those who are deformed or crippled in various ways; and they are taught well, as an inspection of the work accomplished will prove. For the workshops are real workshops, where the boys do not play at work, but are taught their trades in a way that will enable them when they leave the institution to gain a decent livelihood, or even, if they can save a little money, to go into business for themselves. This has been lately done, in fact, by two youths, who, having thoroughly learnt the relief-stamping process, have contrived to buy a press and the materials for their trade, and are now in partnership in a country town, and earning a respectable maintenance. Of sixteen lads who left during the last year, twelve were doing well as journeymen at the industries they had learnt; one had set up in business for himself (the relief-stamping gives the greatest facility for this); and two had returned to their friends because of ill health, while one had not reported himself. But during the same period forty of the former inmates had been to visit the old home, and gave a very encouraging account of themselves. Let us add, in a whisper, that amongst these visitors were a "team" of old boys, who had come to accept the challenge of a "team" of the new boys, to play a match at cricket. Yes, and that these teams of cripples have, over and over again, carried off their bats against opponents who, if they expected an easy victory, found themselves to have been most amazingly mistaken. I don't think this is mentioned in the Report, but it is well to know it, because it serves to prove how truly beneficent a work is being done here, in removing boys from a too often almost "hopeless" condition to one of useful, intelligent, skilled labour, and to healthy self-forgetfulness and association in the ordinary duties and recreations of their fellows. It must be remembered that every boy there is, in a certain sense, incurable. After having been nominated by the person willing to contribute the annual payment of £10, the medical officers of the institution (or if in the country, some qualified practitioner) examine the candidate, who must be above twelve and less than eighteen years of age, and neither blind, deaf and dumb, nor without the use of his hands. The name of the candidate is then added to the list of those waiting for admission—of whom there are now, unfortunately, above seventy—and when there is a vacancy, and funds are sufficient to maintain the full number of inmates, these candidates are taken in succession, without voting, by order of the Committee of Management, of whom the President is the Earl of Shaftesbury, and the Honorary Secretary Mr. S. H. Bibby, of Green Street, Grosvenor Square. There is also an efficient Ladies' Committee for the household management and for advising as to the education of the boys, the visits of the friends of the inmates, and the domestic affairs of the Home generally. There are some severe cases of deformity here—club-foot, spinal curvature, and various distortions of the legs—and in many cases instruments are worn, but the Institution does not profess to provide these. Frequently they are procured by special contributions, and among the latest gifts of this kind is a serviceable wooden leg or two, which have had the happy effect of relieving their recipients from the necessity of using crutches; but it is distinctly insisted on that the Home is not a hospital, and is only curative in the sense of improving the condition of those who, having been pronounced incurable, are yet capable of greatly increased activity and strength by means of nourishing and regular food, interesting occupation, and healthy exercise with companions who themselves are to be numbered among the halt and the lame, and yet are, in a very certain sense, made to walk and to leap and to praise God. For see, at the very moment that I am speaking, a little figure darts out of the passage yonder and scampers across the large open green space at the back of the house on his way to the new range of workshops that are now nearly completed, and are also paid for. Is it possible to apply the term cripple to such an elf, who is out of reach before one can ask his name? Yes; that very elf-like look is the result of a deformity which stops growth, though it leaves the limbs as active as you see them. But come up-stairs to the first of the present workshops, and you may note among the colour-stampers, sitting on their high stools before the dies and presses, cases of more decided deformity or of crippling by accident. These boys follow an artistic, pretty business, and visitors may do worse than give a small or a large order for note-paper and envelopes, stamped with crest, motto, or quaint design. So well is the work executed, that the Home has orders constantly in hand for the trade, and some of the dies are really beautiful examples of engraving. I think that in this long pleasant upper room, with its high bench running along the window, fitted with the presses and implements for the work, there are more severe cases of deformity than will be seen either in the tailors' department on the same floor, or in the carpenters'

shop below. One reflects on the numerous accidents to which the children of the poor are liable, such as falls down flights of stairs; to the inhuman neglect of old women who are paid as "minders" by mothers compelled to go out to work in neighbourhoods where no infant crèche, no babies' cradle home, has yet been established, or in country towns where such institutions have scarcely been heard of. One remembers with pity the scores of poor little creatures who have to nurse and tend children almost as big as themselves, so that they and their charges too often become deformed together, the nurse with lateral curvature of the spine, and the baby with vertical curvature or with deformities of the feet or legs. One thinks, in short, of the many perils to healthy life and well-formed limb that beset the children of the poor, and then coming back to the figures of this National Home, which yet, with careful management and due economy, can only receive forty or fifty crippled boys—wonders how long it is to be before the ruddy old house in Wright's Lane will expand its broad bosom and stretch out long arms on either side to embrace three-score more lads, taken from present neglect and want and probable ill-usage, to be fed and taught and nurtured for three years, during which the whole future will be changed for them, and their lives redeemed from the degradation that had threatened them just as their bodies expand with renewed health and strange developments of unsuspected strength, and their souls are lighted with hope and the sympathy of loving words and hearty manly encouragement.

A beginning has been made already; for that munificent anonymous benefactor, whose thousand-pound cheques have helped so many of our deserving charities, has shown his or her usual nice discrimination by taking a walk in the direction of Wright's Lane. The result of this has been the erection of these long workshops which extend across one side of the wide green area, with its ornamental trees, at the back of the building—an area which is a good part of the acre on which the property stands, and forms a capital recreation-ground, without quite leaving out of sight the pleasant kitchen-garden beyond, or the little building in the further corner, which is intended as a cottage-infirmary in cases of sickness. There are the workshops, quite ready for another contingent of lads, such as are now busily at work in the tailoring department, where they are sitting on the board in the proper tailor-fashion, sewing away at one or other of the many private orders for gentlemen's clothes, or "juvenile suits," which are the better appreciated because they *are* hand-sewn, instead of being made with that machine, at the end of the room, to learn the working of which is, however, a necessary part of the modern tailor's trade. Quite ready, also, for our friends the relief-stampers, and for an additional crew of young carpenters to join those who are now busy below amidst a fine odour of fresh deal and the cheery sound of hammer, chisel, and plane. One of our young friends of the wooden legs—a strapping fellow of seventeen—is just deftly finishing off a very attractive chest of drawers, which will only need to be taken to the painting and varnishing rooms that are to form a part of the new building to be a very capital example of the workmanship of the establishment. For it cannot be too strongly insisted on that the customers of the Industrial Cripples get value for their money, whether it be in ornamental stationery, in plain furniture, packing cases, boxes, and general carpentry, or in "superfine suits" to order, or "own materials made up and repairs neatly executed." It is no sham industrial school, but a real practical working establishment, and when the new buildings are quite completed, and the dwelling-house has that other wing added to it, in order to provide proper dormitories and a school-room, dining-room, and lavatory, at all in proportion to the number of boys who are waiting anxiously for admission——

Ah! but the question is, When shall this be? Not till another £5,000 is added to the funds, I am told—about as much money as is sometimes spent in some public display which lasts three or four hours, and going to look at which probably half a dozen men, women, or children are lamed and crippled in the crowd. Judging from the present arrangements, with very little room to spare, and a not very conveniently-adaptable space, the money would be carefully spent; for there is no tendency to undue luxury, and the present household staff would still be sufficient for providing meals and looking after the family needs of these robust and independent young cripples. That it would be a work all the more beneficial, because of this very independence with which it is associated, it needs few arguments to prove; but, should reasons be asked for, let us take the three last cases for which the benefits of the Home are earnestly sought, and they will speak in suggestive accents of the need of that extension for which an appeal is being made. I need not tell you the names either of those who nominate the cases or the boys themselves; but be assured that the former would be sufficient guarantee of the need which it is sought to relieve:—

No. 1.—"The father is paralysed, and can do no work. The mother is not a very satisfactory person. Family consists of—

1. The eldest, a boy of twenty, who does odd jobs.
2. The cripple.
3. Boy, works, and gets 5s.
4. Boy, sells lights in the City.

There are four little girls at home besides.

The cripple is in a very wretched state from want of food, but he has the use of his hands."

No. 2 (EDINBURGH).—"Was never at school more than a year in his life, and never attended regularly two months together. He can neither read nor write, and has been neglected and often half-starved by his dissipated parents. His mother pawns everything she can get to buy drink, and the boy has little benefit from the wages he makes, which are about 5s. per week. Their house is miserably dirty, Mrs. —— (the mother) being always drunk or incapable on the Saturday and Sunday. The boy works at Mr. B——'s Pottery, P——. He is honest and industrious. He is more miserable at home of late since he is left alone with his mother. It would be a great advantage to the boy if he could be admitted to the Industrial Home at Kensington, where he would be well trained, and where he would be quite beyond his mother's reach."

No. 3 (recommended by a Clergyman).—"Has been very regular at our school, and has been attentive and got on very well. His mother, a widow, lives with her sons, all of whom she has brought up well. She is an industrious, honest woman, and receives no help from the Board of Guardians excepting an allowance made for the maintenance of the cripple, and which, in case of his being accepted at the Home, they have promised to continue to pay for his maintenance. I may add that the Board, when he was called before them the other day, gave great praise to his mother for the cleanliness and respectability of his appearance."

Poor, depressed, starved, neglected, hopeless, crippled boys, how long will it be before they come here for shelter, for hope, and renewal of life? I should ask the question—though the answer could only be a guess—but I am suddenly diverted by the tremendous ringing of a hand-bell, on which one vigorous young cripple is ringing a peal, which is almost loud enough to announce to all Kensington that it is "tea-time." The sound has the effect of bringing all the forty from their work—a contingent of young carpenters staying behind for a little while to dispose of some waste shavings which have been swept out of some corner where they may have been in the way. Then they come trooping into the big room, where they present so strange a variety of height and appearance, and also so remarkable a diversity of twist and lameness and distortion, that we are impressed at once with the melancholy fact that every boy there is in reality a cripple, and yet with the cheering reflection, inspired by some of the lively smiling faces, that there are vast mitigations of such afflictions—mitigations that come so near to cures as to make our neglect of them a very serious evil, when the means lie near at hand.

In this big room, which is neither dining-room, nor kitchen, nor refectory, but a homely combination of all three, there is no ornament, no sign of luxury, or of unnecessary expenditure—plain deal forms or stools at plain deal tables, on which are arranged a regiment of full-sized mugs of good sound tea, and plates, each containing a substantial half-pound slice of bread from a homely two-pound loaf, spread with butter or dripping. For breakfast the same quantity is provided, with the substitution of coffee for tea; and dinner consists of a half-pound of roast or boiled meat, with plenty of vegetables, and dumplings, pies, or puddings; while bread and cheese, or bread and butter, is served for supper. For it must be remembered that these are working lads, and that they require to be substantially, and, from the nature of their bodily affliction, even generously fed, so that these supplies of pure plain diet are not by any means excessive; and they are such as one very ordinary kitchen can supply—a kitchen, by-the-bye, which will probably be superseded by a more convenient one when the new wing shall be built. Yet there is something in these unadorned, bare, almost too plainly appointed places, which brings with it a reassuring conviction that the institution has never been pampered. The dining-room, which has to do duty for a school-room also—the play-room, which is a rather dim kind of retreat on this November evening—and the plain, rather bare, but still clean and airy dormitories (especially those in the big bay-windowed front rooms of the old red brick house), are evidences that the place does not belie its name; that it is really a home, but essentially an industrial home, where work goes on as a part of each day's blessing, and the title to play freely and with a light heart is thereby ensured.

COMFORTABLE WORDS.

SHORT READINGS FOR THE SICK ROOM. BY THE REV. GORDON CALTHROP, M.A., VICAR OF ST. AUGUSTINE'S, HIGHBURY; AND SELECT PREACHER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

"I am Thine: save me."—PSALM CXX. 94.

"THINE by creation; though that is not much; for evil angels and bad men—fallen and perverted as they are now—came forth from the creative hand of God. Thine by redemption, too; though that is not enough—for the sacrifice of Christ reaches over many who live in neglect or in defiance of it. But Thine in a higher sense, by a truer and more tender tie; Thine by adoption and grace; Thine by Thy loving acceptance of love, and by my glad surrender to Thy will and service." Such is the meaning of the former part of the text. The soul is conscious that an actual personal transaction of a spiritual nature has taken place between itself and Christ. There has been a transfer, an exchange, a passing into the region of the ownership of Christ; and to this the man makes his appeal.

That this is true of every Christian need scarcely be said. There are many gradations of spiritual attainment, many stages or levels of the spiritual life, some higher, some lower; but in one point all Christians are alike, in the fact of having quitted self — self-trust, self-dependence, self-love — for Christ. "Once I was my own, or at least, I thought so," the Christian may say: "now I am Thine;" and that he is such, is a cause of the deepest and most adoring gratitude.

On this relation the Christian builds that plea which is the second part of the text; not, be it remarked, that he puts forward the fact that he has accepted Christ. No! that would be too much like making a claim on the ground of his own merit. The sisters do not say, "Lord! he who loves Thee is sick," but they say, "Lord! he *whom Thou lovest* is sick." There you have the delicacy of the Christian instinct. There the true position is taken. Not the fact that Lazarus loves Christ (though that would be true), but the fact that Christ first loved Lazarus, and so drew forth *his* love, is the foundation of the earnest sisterly appeal. So, in our text: "I am Thine. Thou hast made me such. Thou hast drawn me by Thy Spirit; won me by Thy love; united me to Thyself by a faith which is Thine own gift: *therefore*, save me." It is an appeal to the Saviour not to forsake the work of His own hands—not to leave incomplete what He has Himself begun.

Now as to the words "save me." What do they mean? Certainly they do not refer to saving from perdition. That kind of salvation is already secured. "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus;" and one who can truly say, "I am Thine"—is in no danger of the frightful penalty which will be exacted from impenitent Christless sinners. But the Christian desires to be saved from the power, from the influence of sin; and it is to this that the prayer is directed. A lady of whom we have heard was attacked with acute and agonising disease. When almost worn-out with incessant and protracted suffering, her chief anxiety was that she might not be tempted at any time to murmur against the will of her Heavenly Father. Probably enough she may have prayed for the removal, or at least for the mitigation of her anguish. It would have been unnatural not to have done so. But still, what she desired most was to be kept from the rebellion of impatience; to be preserved from the risk of dishonouring her Lord by complaining of the lot which He had appointed for her. What she said was, in effect, this—"I am Thine: save me from the sin of rebelling against Thee."

It may be well, perhaps, for us to attempt to conceive distinctly how it is that Christ saves us. Let us take a simple illustration for the purpose. We are deeply in debt. We owe thousands, which never, by any possibility, we can hope to pay. Our condition is desperate. Then a wealthy and compassionate friend steps forward to our relief. He pays our debts: he pays them down to the uttermost farthing, we contributing absolutely nothing to the liquidation—and we are free. Feeling the relief, now that the burden is gone, we pluck up courage, and fancy that we can get along for the future ourselves, with perhaps a little occasional help from our generous benefactor. But he says, "No; that cannot be. You must look to me for ready money to pay your way henceforward, just as you looked to me in the first instance for money for the liquidation of your debts. And you must look to me only. I do not consent to share with any one, not even with yourself, in meeting your daily expenses. Draw upon me to what extent you please; but only on condition that you draw upon no one else." You will easily see how this applies to spiritual things. In our prayers for help in the conflict with sin, we frequently ask—do we not?—as if we expected the Lord Jesus to add His strength to our strength, that we might accomplish the work conjointly with Him. But surely this is a mistake. There is something erroneous in supposing that we have an independent supply of strength of our own. We have really nothing apart from Christ. "Without Me," He says, "ye can do nothing." And our business is just to acknowledge and realise our own strengthlessness, and to leave ourselves without reserve in the hands of Christ, that He may work in us and through us in the conflict with indwelling sin.

But—are we not to look into ourselves, that we may watch against sin, detect its first risings, and crush them? Well, perhaps; but more, far more, to look out from self to Christ, and certainly not to try to crush sin ourselves, but to leave it to Christ to do the thing for us. There is a close resemblance, as we have already hinted, between the manner of salvation from the penalty of sin, and the manner of salvation from the power of sin. In the former case we are taught by the Spirit to resist our natural tendency to try to do something for ourselves. We just lie back in the Saviour's hands; we just rest upon His work; not a single jot or tittle of our own do we dream of adding to it. It is complete in itself. We are only too thankful to have such a perfect dependence to cast ourselves upon.

And in the latter case the Spirit teaches us to leave ourselves with a similarly entire and unreserving trust in the Saviour's hands. The struggle spoken of in Scripture is a struggle with our own Christ-resisting tendencies; with our own self-will; with our desire to contribute our own share to the victory. But we really win the victory *when we leave it to Christ to win it for us.*

Saved from that hell which is the separation of the soul from the living God, we have yet much else to be saved from—from pride, for instance; from self-seeking and self-exaltation; from impatience; from discontent; from irreverence; from worldliness; from unbelief; from the power of old habit: aye, and from many other outbreakings of that "old man," which is crucified, but not yet dead. And who is to save us? Jesus alone—Jesus allowed to work in us *alone*, without the obstruction of the help which we officiously offer Him. We look to Him to do it; we expect Him to do it. And thus looking and expecting, He *will* give us the victory.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 12. Enemies and Friends.

Chapters to be read—Acts xi., xii., xiii. (parts of.)

AN Enemy's Death. (Read xii. 19—25.) Our last lesson ended with the release of St. Peter from prison. From xii. 19 show how enraged Herod was with his escape, and how he vented his fury on the prison warders. He would feel completely beaten and humbled by the failure of his attempt. Cannot endure to remain in Jerusalem; where does he go? Remind the children how the same Herod Antipas (son of Herod the Great) had kept a "set" day once before. When was it? (Matt. xiv. 6.) What had happened there? His enemy beheaded, and he exultant. Now another similar day kept; probably many of the same people there—lords, captains, &c., of Galilee (Mark vi. 21). What does Herod do? and how do the people receive his speech? Does he stop them or reprove them? Contrast with conduct of Paul and Barnabas on similar occasion (Acts xiv. 13, 14). Describe the dreadful scene. The king in royal robes on his throne; courtiers, attendants, soldiers around; the hushed silence; the king's speech, the shout of applause; the king's sudden illness, doctors hastily summoned; the king carried out; the awe of the multitude; the speedy death. What effect would it have on the people? Who now were triumphant, the Christians or their enemies? So the Word of God grew, *i.e.*, numbers were added to the Church. Now two apostles return. Where had they been? Must turn back and see.

Practical Lesson. *God's power over His enemies.* May perhaps be disposed to ask, Why was John Baptist beheaded, and Peter delivered from this same Herod? God's ways not as our ways. Can see, at any rate, how Herod was storing up vengeance for himself, and now God's power triumphantly shown in his destruction. So will finally all God's enemies be destroyed. May hold up heads and prosper now, must finally be punished. Let children put question, Am I God's friend or enemy? working for God or against Him? No middle course.

II. A Mission of Succour. (Read xi. 27—30.) Show Antioch on the map, as the headquarters for the present of the Church. Why had they left Jerusalem? Now receive a visit from some prophets, or teachers (xiii. 1). Who predicts the famine, and how could he? Remind how often we read of famine especially severe in Palestine. Thus Abraham avoided one by going into Egypt (Gen. xxii. 1, xxvi. 10). What was the first thought of disciples? to store up grain in case *their* supplies fell short? No; at once to send relief. Point out how evidently now the plan of having all goods in common had been abandoned, and each sent according to his ability and willingness. Who were selected to take the alms? These two, still friends, living and working together. How welcome they would be in Judea! how warmly received by brethren there as showing that they and their wants were not forgotten! This help would bind Christians together more closely. Pity not expended in mere words. For rules as to almsgiving see Matt. vi. 3, 2 Cor. ix. 7, James ii. 16. To whose house in Jerusalem would they probably go? (Acts xii. 12.) From this house they gain a new and active worker. Who is he, and what relative to Barnabas? (ver. 25; Col. iv. 10.) So the three—uncle, nephew, and friend—return to Antioch.

Practical Lesson. *The unselfishness of religion.* What is the Gospel rule as to our love to our fellowman? (Rom. xiii. 8, 9.) Therefore must have same care and regard for them as for ourselves, only it must proceed from love and not compulsion, or is worthless (1 Cor. xiii. 3).

III. A Mission of Enterprise. (Read xiii. 1.) The Church now well established, large number of Jews converted, a proselyte baptised. Who was he? A Gentile centurion and his company instructed and baptised. Enemies for the time put down, and rest in the Church. The time come for extending their work. All nations are to be taught (Mark xvi. 16). Still, no impatience; quietly wait for instructions, like Noah when world was dry, Abraham in Canaan before birth of son, Moses in Midian before sent to Pharaoh. God's time for work always best. At last summons came. Notice (1) *The Call.* Who gave instructions? Evidently Holy Spirit spoken of as a person. His great work in the salvation of the world, convincing of sin, &c., now begun. Comparing "I

have called" (ver. 2) with ix. 15, where Christ is speaking, will be strong proof of His equality with the Son of God. (2) *The preparation.* Such very solemn and important work as of going to unknown lands, preaching to heathen, needed special preparation. Taught this by Christ (Matt. xvii. 21). (3) *The ordination.* As Christ laid hands on apostles (Luke xxiv. 50), so they on these two missionaries. A solemn and touching scene. Barnabas and Saul probably elected apostles in place of James and some other who was dead, so as to keep up the original number, twelve. Picture the two friends, with John as their servant (ver. 5), embarking at the port of Antioch, called Seleucia (ver. 4), the "prophets and teachers" (ver. 1) seeing them safe on board, the farewell greetings and good wishes expressed, the mission party full of eager hopes of the triumphs they should win.

PRACTICAL LESSON. *Obedience to God's call.* Though not given directly now, still His call often unmistakable. If we were called for such a work should we be ready? But are called to daily work for God to those around us. How are we doing it?

Questions to be answered.

1. Describe the death of Herod.
2. What practical lesson does it teach?
3. On what mission did Barnabas and Saul first go?
4. Lay down some clear rules for almsgiving.
5. Describe their second mission.
6. What practical lesson does it teach us?

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER XXV.

EDA permitted herself to be led back to the quiet precincts of the Temple, that she might answer the artist's inquiries for the Chessingtons more at her ease than in the roar of the busy street; and she contrived to steer clear of any mention of her brother while she answered his questions respecting the countess's health, and her own reasons for being in London.

"I am sorry to hear that Lady Eudora has been ill; though I could fancy that such a trial of temper and patience would prove beneficial to her," Mr. Allonby observed. "She only wanted a little softening—toning down, to speak technically—to make her a very charming woman."

"You are right, Mr. Allonby," was the warm response, "she was always very lovable, in spite of her impetuosity, but she is doubly so now a touch of sorrow has passed over her head."

"Did you know that I succeeded in finishing my sketch of her ladyship while I was at the Hall?" he said, presently, "and have worked it up into a portrait, of which I should much like to hear your opinion. Will you let me have the pleasure of introducing you to my womankind? We live in one of the streets turning from the Strand towards the river; and I have talked of you so often to Doris and Gran, that they will not look upon you as a stranger."

Eda hesitated a minute, then accepted his offered arm, and walked with him to the street he indicated. It was a very quiet but respectable one, and she could not help being struck with the spotless hue of the blinds and curtains at the windows of that part of the house in Mr. Allonby's occupation. The sitting-room into which he led her was very small, but equally bright; and though the furniture was scanty and common, the exquisite neatness with which it was arranged, and the beauty of the ferns that filled the windows, gave it a very pleasant aspect.

A handsome but precise-looking woman, about thirty, who bore a strong resemblance to Mr. Allonby, started up as he opened the door, and ran to meet him; but instead of throwing herself into his arms, as Eda thought she intended doing, she stooped down to remove, with a duster she held in her hand, the dust his boots had gathered during his walk.

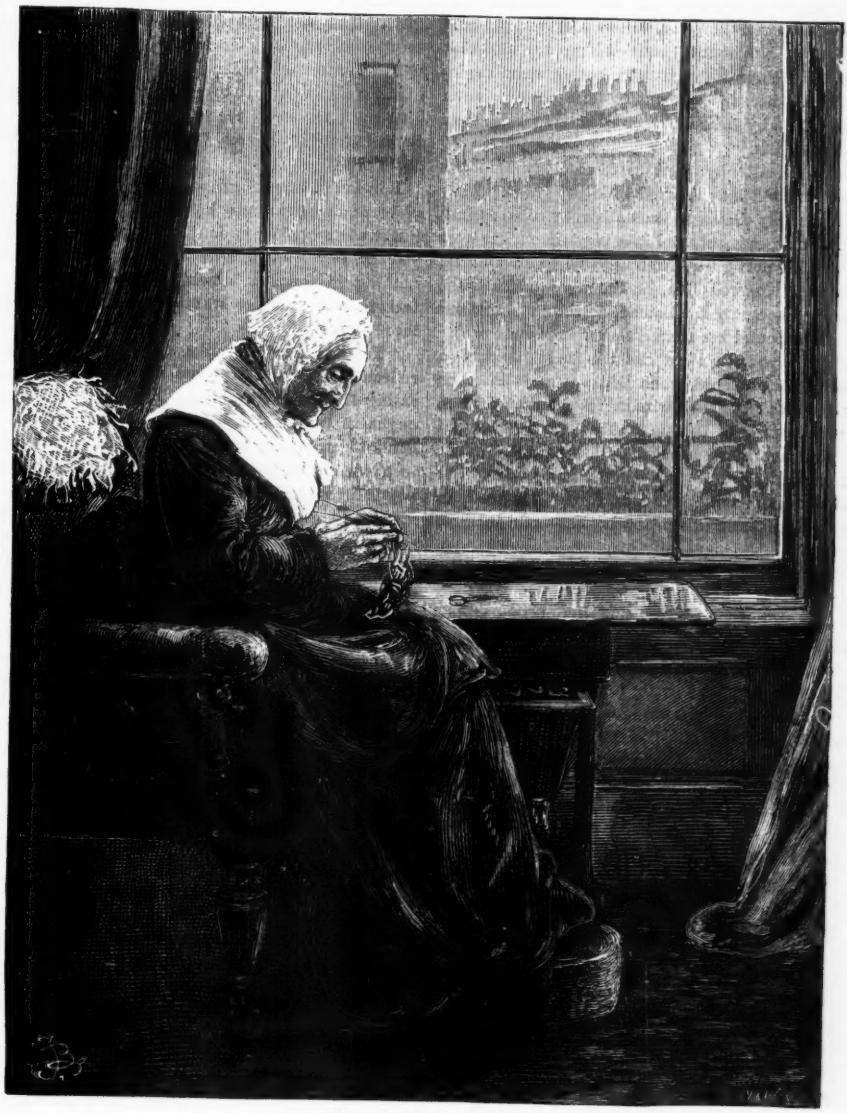
"Now you'll do, Fritz," she said, with a smile, as she arose; "only don't drop that glove you are holding, nor bring your hat into the room, *please!* But you are not alone!"

"No, Doris; this is Miss Granton. Is Gran in the humour for company to-day?"

"Gran's always pleased to see any one who doesn't talk rubbish and stuff," said a quavering voice from within, "so bring in your visitor, and let's see what she's like."

"Don't let Gran's plain speaking frighten you," said Mr. Allonby, laughing at Eda's doubtful look. "The truth is that some of my brother painters, who give me a call now and then, shock the dear old lady by discussing the heathen gods and goddesses in her presence, and going into raptures over the Venus de Medici and Apollo Belvidere. It so scandalises Gran that Christian men and women, instead of painting historical subjects or saints and martyrs, will perpetuate the old superstitions, that she has forbidden me to bring her such guests."

He led Eda forward to where, by the sunniest window, a very old lady, dressed with Quaker-like simplicity, was reclining in a well-stuffed arm-chair. She was knitting—or rather trying to knit, for her palsied hands frequently dropped stitches undetected by the eyes that age and tears had dimmed. But Doris Allonby was always ready to rectify this, and



(*Drawn by* F. Barnard.)

"She was knitting—or rather trying to knit."—*p.* 200.

no one would have liked to disturb Gran's pleasant fancy that she was still of some use to those she loved.

When Mr. Allonby brought Eda towards her, she leaned forward doubtfully, in a listening attitude, and wrinkled her brows till the soft voice of the visitor fell upon her ear, when she nodded and smiled, as if the sound gratified her; for now that all Gran's senses but that of hearing were beginning to fail her, she was apt to form her opinion of strangers less by their looks or what they said, than *how* they said it.

While Mr. Allonby went to fetch Lady Eudora's portrait the old lady chatted with her guest. They were insensibly drawn to each other by some assimilation of temperament, and in a very short time were talking with a freedom from reserve quite unusual in the shy reserved Eda, or the aged woman who was more frequently the listener to the conversations carried on around her than a sharer in them.

"Fritz says you have no relatives left but a brother," she observed, when Eda was established on the ottoman at her feet, winding some yarn for her. "Is this brother in London? Then it's just as well that you have come here too. Young men always want a home; or if they cannot have that," she added, fancying she heard Eda sigh, "it's good for them to have some one near who has their interest at heart."

"But unless a brother and sister are actually living together, what can they do to prove that they have that interest in each other?" and Eda sighed again, for she could not help thinking how small a part she had in Mark's life.

"I am not sure that living together is always best for young people," Gran responded, after duly considering the subject. "When they grow up, they are apt to get in each other's way."

"Gran means that their tastes and wishes often clash," Doris Allonby explained; and she nodded assent.

"Yes, that is it, and it leads to their bickering and worrying each other over what really isn't any one's fault. Fritz and I saw this with our boys; and we let them all take wing as soon as the nest grew too small for them. Yes, one after another went their way, and we never had reason to think that it was a mistake."

"I was not aware that Mr. Allonby is the head of so large a family," Eda remarked.

"There are ten of us," said Doris, who was trying to efface a spot she had found on a sideboard. "I have a goodly flock of brothers and sisters."

"Yes, and they have all left home but Doris herself," Gran went on; "but we don't let them forget us, or think that we forget them because they are not just at one's elbow."

"Tell me how you contrive this," said Eda, eagerly. "I do not ask it out of idle curiosity, I assure you."

"Nay, dear, it's simple enough. Just a little letter—postage is cheap now, thank goodness—or a loving message, or even a newspaper or a cutting from one that treats of some subject that interests them, will do it as well, perhaps better, than costly gifts. They can't get either of these without saying to themselves, 'Ah! Gran has been thinking about us,' or 'Fritz has recollected what we said about that affair, and sends this to show that we were right.' Just such trifles as these, and a hearty prayer for them every night, keeps them together, God bless them all!"

Eda found herself struggling to keep back a burst of tears, and her tones betrayed this as she asked, "But what would you do if he—if one of them kept you at bay, not unkindly, but as if there were nothing in common betwixt you, and so made you feel that he neither wanted your help nor—your love?"

"Tom Allonby was like that once," said Gran, reflectively; "and I proposed to give him a good rating for it, and ask him if this was the way he ought to behave to the brother who had kept the home together, and toiled night and day to make up to them all for what they had lost. But my dear boy Fritz was wiser than I; he bade me let the lad alone, and give him a double share of love and pity, as he was doing; and so I held my tongue, even when I was sorely vexed—held it till one night I came in here rather suddenly, and found Tom with his head on his brother's shoulder, telling his troubles. I never asked what had been amiss; I was satisfied to see that the lad was himself again, and all the stronger for having overcome temptation. But, bless me! how I am talking. You should have stopped me, Doris, my dear."

"There's a window open somewhere," Doris rather irrelevantly answered. "The house is full of dust. I can see it settling on yonder table."

She scarcely spoke again while Eda was there; she was too fully engaged in rectifying the mistakes of her brother, who now entered with the picture. He had neglected to wipe the frame, which had to be carefully rubbed before he was permitted to bring it beyond the threshold; then a sheet of thick paper must be laid on the table before it was set down, lest a scratch should be made on the highly-polished mahogany; and then Fritz contrived to kick up a corner of the crumb-cloth so often, that Doris ran away for hammer and tacks; and by the time she came back he had, in resting his arm on the mantelpiece, deranged so many of the old-fashioned ornaments, that their mistress was in despair till he moved, and she was able to restore them to order.

Eda could scarcely attend to what Mr. Allonby was saying while his sister fidgeted round in this manner; and she drank the wine and ate the slice of cake so hospitably pressed upon her, in fear and trembling, lest she should let fall any crumbs on the

well-brushed carpet. Gran, despite the dimness of her eyes, suspected this, for she laid her hand on her guest's, and said, a little quaintly—

"Don't mind Doris's ways, my dear; she's over-careful, but I tell her she had better be too precise than a sloven; and we all reaped the advantage of her neatness when there were six great boys at home, and each with a hobby that would have made us no end of mess if she hadn't been at hand to help them clear up."

Doris smiled good-humouredly when she discovered that her own precision was on the *tapis*. "My brother should have told you, Miss Granton, that I am sadly old-maidish. It's foolish, I know; but I cannot help being on thorns when I see anything out of place. However, Gran and Fritz are very patient with me."

"But I'm afraid," said Mr. Allonby, snatching up a pamphlet he had drawn out of his pocket with his handkerchief—"I am afraid I do not keep my part of our compact as faithfully as Doris fulfils hers. You must know, Miss Granton, that I pledged myself never to interfere with her arrangements, on condition that she allows me to be as untidy as I please in my studio. There disorder reigns—doesn't it, Doris?—to such an extent that I think it advisable to carry the key in my pocket, lest my sister should peep in when I am absent, and not be able to resist a soap-and-water frolic at the expense of my comfort."

"You'll come again?" said Gran, as Eda rose to bid her adieu. "You've neither told us any scandal, nor talked about the last new fashions, so I shall be glad to see you."

"Gran's invitation is not very elegantly worded," Mr. Allonby remarked; "but she will be sorry if you do not accept it, and so shall I. Will you pay us another visit, Miss Granton, and soon?"

Eda was just thanking him, when impatient fingers beat a tattoo on the door, and then opened it a little way, that a soft pleading voice might say, "It's only poor little me! Are all my faults forgiven, and may I come in? Gran won't stick her knitting-needles into me for behaving so badly the other night, will she?"

"Come in, Flossy, and don't be so childish!" said Doris. "Are you alone?"

"Am I ever alone?" and the speaker permitted a very pretty face to be seen, surmounted with extravagantly large coils of reddish-brown hair, and an Alpine hat. "Don't you know that I am such a coward I daren't walk along the streets without some one to protect me?"

"But who is with you?" asked Doris again; and the new-comer laughed coquettishly.

"Oh, *somebody*; and I've left him in the hall hunting for my glove. Who's this young lady? Aren't you going to introduce me?"

The owner of the pretty face tripped into the room, shaking into place the frills and trimmings of her dress, and laid a hand on the artist's arm with a very bewitching gesture, that expressed a little bashfulness, a little innocent helplessness, and an appeal to him for his care and kindness, that Eda thought very charming; and when she learned that this pretty dressy little creature was a cousin of Mr. Allonby's, she decided in her own mind that she was something nearer and dearer still than even a cousin to the young man to whose side she was nestling.

"Gran, dear, may I come and kiss you?" asked Miss Flossy Devon, when she had made two or three civil little speeches to Eda. "May I, Gran? Say yes! I have been on my best behaviour for these three days."

"Only because it suited you," Gran answered, sharply, but permitting and even returning the caress. "You're a selfish little thing, and never do right without a reason for it."

"But I'm very good-tempered, am I not? Every one scolds me, and I always forgive them. Don't I, Fritz, dear?"

He smiled down into the soft eyes that were raised to his own, but it was rather gravely.

"Don't appeal to me, Flossy; I gave you over to your own devices long ago."

She began to pout, looking still prettier in her wilful mood than before. "If you talk of me in that strain before Miss Granton, she will think—there, I don't know what she will think of me! and only because I cannot be as sober and precise as dear old Doris there. But here comes *somebody*. Has he been searching all this while for my glove? I forgot to tell him that it was in my own pocket."

"I hope you have not brought a stranger with you," whispered Doris, twitching the brown-holland cover off a cushion.

"No, indeed; I daren't go to such lengths as that, dare I, papa Fritz? You are only tolerant of my old admirers, are'nt you? while as for Gran——" a saucy laugh pointed the sentence. "No, Doris, it's only Richie—Mr. Atwood, I mean;" and she tripped to the door, to mock him with the sight of the glove she had duped him into searching for.

CHAPTER XXVI.

INVOLUNTARILY Eda's lips had repeated the words "only Richie," and then she shrank behind Doris to conceal her agitation. She had been secretly wishing to see the young man, but not with other eyes taking note of their meeting; not with the gay thoughtless girl standing by with whom he seemed on such familiar terms.

But she had scarcely time to think these thoughts, for already Richie was in the room, playfully reproaching Flossy for her treachery. He broke off, however, in the midst of a sentence, for his quick, bright glance had swept round the room, and Eda was recognised.

One moment of embarrassment, so transient as to be scarcely perceptible, and then he was clasping her hand, and inquiring after her health and welfare with such tenderness, that Mr. Allonby slipped his hands into his pockets and walked away to the furthest window, while his fair cousin's brow wrinkled, first with surprise, and then into something very like a frown.

A little constraint began to steal over every one, and Richie, perceiving this, offered his arm to Eda.

"You were just going away when I came in? Then you must let me walk with you, that I may ask all the questions that are on the tip of my tongue without boring our kind friends here."

"But Miss Granton," interposed Flossy, demurely, "are you *quite sure* that you shall not bore *her?*"

"She will forgive me if I do," he replied. "She knows that I am anxious to know all the latest news from the old home. I do not see one of my boyhood's friends every day."

But although he said this, he had no sooner led Eda away from Mr. Allonby's door than he sank into silence, replying to the few remarks she forced herself to make with a brevity oddly at variance with his general manner.

"Let us go through the enclosure," he said, when they had entered St. James's Park; "it is pleasanter there."

She consented, and they paced along one of the most secluded paths, still silent, till suddenly, pressing her arm closer to his side, Richie exclaimed, "Dear Eda, we love each other dearly. If we have never said this in words, it is none the less true. When, then, are we to be married? No, don't shrink from me—don't look as if you thought me too hasty; you don't know how badly I want you! If I had such a dear, sensible, prudent little girl as you are always near me, I should be as steady as old Time himself! I don't drift into folly because I like it—I don't, indeed!—but for want of some one to help me to do better. You shall be my teacher, my guide, Eda, and make me as good and religious as yourself."

"You are bewildering me," she stammered, when she could collect herself to reply to the ardent entreaties for her consent to their immediate union that he kept pouring out. "I did not expect——"

"I know what you are about to say," he interrupted; "that of late I have been neglectful. I have written less frequently, I confess it; but my heart has never wavered. I have always felt that if there was one woman in the world who could not only make me happy, but arouse whatever good there is in me, it was Eda Granton. Without you I shall never be anything but an indolent, careless fellow, floating wherever the current carries me."

"But this is not right, Richie."

"Don't I know it, my dear? Isn't it for that very reason that I am so anxious to win the wise little woman who would stand between me and my evil impulses? As for your going into another situation, it is all nonsense! I want you worse than any one else can do—worse than you think."

She began to regard him anxiously. "You frighten me, Richie. What could I do for you that you cannot do for yourself? You overrate my influence. Mark's example," she added, sorrowfully, "ought to have shown you how little I really possess."

"Very little with him, I dare say, for he is too self-absorbed to care for any one but himself. Forgive me, dear—I did not mean to speak unkindly of him; but you must not gauge me by Mark. Let us talk only of ourselves. You will be my wife, Eda, and at once—will you not?"

She hesitated a while, and then answered him with a very gentle and yet decided "No, Richie, I cannot. You have taken me by surprise, and—and I must have time to think over what you have said before I can give you any answer at all."

"Yes, and then you will consult Mark, who, with all his faculties bent on making money, never has time to be as weak and foolish as other young men; and he will tell you that I am careless and dissipated. He will; I know it. He has gone the length of accusing me of selfishness, at the very time he was stepping on my shoulders to climb into the better position that ought to have been mine."

"Have you quarrelled with Mark?" she asked, with much anxiety.

"Quarrelled? no, no, dear—only told each other a few wholesome truths. We are civil when we meet. But here we are, at the gate, and you have not given me my answer."

"I have none ready for you, Richie. Do not distress me by urging your wishes in this way!"

"And yet, Eda——" he began; but she checked him. She had had time now to compose herself a little, and draw a few deductions from his speeches,—deductions which were certainly not those he had intended her to make.

"Stay, Richie; before you attempt to say any more, let me ask what you would think of me if I consented to marry a young man of whom I know so little as I know of you?"

"My dear girl, we have been friends from our childhood!" he expostulated.

It was an unfortunate reminder, for it recalled to her recollection that her mother had distrusted him; and she resolutely withdrew her hand. Her heart—or it might be more correct to say her girlish romance—pleaded for him as forcibly as his own impassioned entreaties; but Eda—would that it were so with all of us!—had learned to carry all difficulties to her chamber, and there pray to be directed how to act.

"It is not generous to strive to induce me to make so rash a promise," she told him.

"But if we love each other better than the whole world?"

"But do we?" Eda interrogated, in her turn; and Richie's handsome face crimsoned with mortification.

"You doubt me because I have suffered myself to be beguiled into dancing attendance on that arrant little flirt, Flossy Devon. But if you knew how she twists and turns a fellow——"

Again Eda stopped him, and this time with real displeasure in her tones. "I had rather not hear any more, Richie. I have made no charges, so you need not defend yourself. I am nearly home, so I will bid you adieu."

"But you do not forbid me to write to you? You will think over what I said? Dear Eda, if you could but understand how thoroughly all my hopes are centred in you, I don't think you would refuse me the boon I crave."

She broke from him more agitated than he imagined; nor was it till in solitude she sat recalling all he had said that she could think of his pleadings calmly. It was then she sought in vain to find amongst them one expression of the protecting love every woman hopes to receive from her husband. She was to be his guide, his guardian angel, to lead him aright and help him to conquer all evil inclinations; but what was he to be to her? Apparently Richie had not taken the marital obligations into account at all.

(To be continued.)

FANNY FORREST; OR, EVIL COMMUNICATIONS.

CHAPTER III.

OWEN could not but feel perplexed, and more than a little annoyed, at this strange conduct on his sister's part. That Ruth had seen him he felt no doubt, from the sudden start with which she had turned her head in his direction at Fanny's evident confusion; and yet she seemed no way inclined to rush upon him, half strangling him in her delight, as he had, perhaps foolishly, pictured that she would do; nay, it was not till he was quite within the gate, and had given his peculiar whistle—a well-known signal retained from the old pleasuring days together—that Ruth at last turned round and advanced to meet him.

"Why, Ruth, old girl," he said, as he threw his arm round her after the first greeting, "have you no sort of a heartier welcome to give a fellow than this?"

"I'm sure I don't know what you mean!" replied Ruth. "Of course I'm delighted to see you! I never knew any one talk such nonsense as you do sometimes! Only, as I had not the slightest idea you were coming, of course I could not be on the watch for you." And Ruth suddenly stopped, as she felt Owen's eyes were scanning her face closely.

"No, of course you could not," said Owen, in so cordial a voice that she felt, somehow, wonderfully relieved. "It's all right, and I was only joking; only, now that I am here, old girl, clear off that thundery look, and let us be merry together: and when I've just gone in to see father for a moment, I will come out to you again, and you must tell me all the news."

"Father!" echoed Ruth, her brow clouding over again; "why, father's not come back—nor isn't likely to do so for some time, to judge by that," and she tossed the envelope in her hand across the flowerbed at her feet to the place where her brother stood.

For a moment Owen trembled. Could there be any bad news in concealment for him to hear? could this be the cause of Ruth's strange manner? and could the paper in his hand contain intelligence to darken this bright summer day, and turn his pleasure into grief?

He must have asked the question pretty plainly by both eye and cheek, for Ruth seemed touched, and quickly answered, with a laugh, "Why, it is all right, you goose! I thought I had written to tell you—only I believe, after all, I forgot to do so—that the squire, who went up to London last week, took father with him, that he might see some wonderful flower-show or other there was going to be held this week."

"Did he, really?" answered Owen. "Poor father! so he has got the desire of his heart at last, and is glorying, no doubt, in roses and carnations to his heart's content. I say, Ruth, why did you never tell me this before?"

"I said just a minute ago I intended to tell you, only I forgot," answered Ruth, sharply. "Of course, it's all very delightful for father, I've no doubt," she continued; "but I think you might look at both sides of the question, and consider that it's not quite so agreeable for me to sit shut up here the whole day long, with not a soul to speak to but old Hannah."

Ruth spoke very quickly, and although Owen caught her by the hand, and tried to draw her down beside him, she pulled herself away, and went on, as quickly as before—

"And there, that is a telegram which has just come to say he is going to stay another week, so as not to lose some other show of some kind; and not even a word to say he is sorry for me, or anything like it even. I must say I think it is a little hard—I do, indeed!" and Ruth turned away her head, that Owen might not see the tears that were in her eyes.

"By the way, Ruth," he broke in, suddenly, "who

was that girl I saw you talking to at the gate just now, as I was coming up? I don't much fancy her appearance, somehow, and I think the less she has to say to you, or you to her, the better it will be."

"Why?" asked Ruth, stopping suddenly short. "What do you know about her? I should like to hear. I scarcely thought the stories they have got up against her had travelled as far as Bentham yet."

"No stories about her have reached Bentham yet—at least, as far as I can tell," replied Owen, in some amazement at his sister's vehemence. "All I know about her I learnt this afternoon, on my way here; and I cannot help saying again that I do not think you will gain any advantage from her companionship." And Owen in a few words related his meeting with Robbie, and consequent search for Fanny.

Ruth listened with unwilling ears; and at the conclusion of the story, although her heart told her Owen was not altogether wrong in his judgment, the strong feelings within broke out without control.

"I don't care!" she cried, angrily; "even if there is some truth in what you say, it would not have signified a pin if she had seen what was in the telegram, every word of it. She only fetched it for me from the post to save the boy the trouble of coming out here with it. It is very easy to make up a story about a person, once there's a prejudice against her. Besides, it is always the same way; it was just the very same with father. No one ever thinks how lonely I am here; and just because I made friends with her a little when she came, and once or twice when father came back in the evening and found her here, he was quite furious, and when she had gone he scolded at me more than he had ever done before!"

Owen would fain have taken an opportunity of putting in a word now to soothe his sister, but she would not allow him.

"Yes," she continued, while the tears dropped thickly down upon the frills of her black lustre apron—"yes, I should not have minded anything but that. He might have had some confidence in me, I think; but before he went away he talked to me as much about leaving me alone as if he thought I had no sense at all, and ended up by telling me he forbade me while he was away—yes, forbade me! to ask Fanny inside the house till he came back, and even said he wished me to be content with Hannah's company, and not to walk about with her at all."

"Come along, old girl," Owen said, at last, with rather a heavy sigh; "you must give me a bit of supper, and then I must turn my steps to Bentham again. I don't want to say anything to vex you, dear," he continued; "but don't you think that father is more often right than wrong in what he thinks? and even if it seemed a bit hard to have to give up your new friend for a while, you may be quite sure in the long run you'd find he was right. I thought, once upon a time, when first I went away from here, that most of the advice he gave me was, to say the least, unnecessary, and that I knew the ways of the world quite well enough, without so many sage directions; but the days have come, and temptations have come, which I could never have pulled through, if it had not been for these very words of help. And somehow I think, if you had only just the heart to try, you'd find it the same with you."

But Ruth had not the heart—at least, she would not show it, if she had. She walked on into the house, and prepared the meal, as Owen had asked her to do, but she vouchsafed no bright smiles or cheery words with it. Indeed, it was not till Owen rose again from the table, and took up his hat from the seat beside him, that, with a pouting look, she asked him what chance there was that he would come again, to while away only one evening until her father's return.

"None, Ruthie—none, I am afraid," he said, as he kissed her and said good-night. "We have a lot of very hard work coming on next week, and I could not ask for another holiday till it is over. But cheer up, old girl, and let me have a line sometimes, to tell me how you are getting on." And with as bright a smile as he could muster, Owen left the cottage.

The stars were shining clear and bright above him, and as he turned into the meadows the smell of the new-cut hay came sweetly upon the air, but although everything looked, if possible, lovelier now than when he had gone along the same road before, to-day there was no sound of cheery whistling in the air, no bright light of hope accomplished in his eye. No, as he walked along, his thoughts lingered in the home he had just left, and the troubled face of the sister he loved still kept before his eyes, till he found himself again within the little town of Bentham, and the holiday so long anticipated was over.

The two or three days which passed after Owen's visit were dull enough, it must be confessed, for Ruth. Hannah, the only servant, who tyrannised over the household generally, was even more than usually captious, and, as Ruth expressed it, in a word of her own coining, did nothing but "barge" at her the whole day long. The hours seemed to pass very wearily without her father's visits to and fro to look forward to, and many an hour was spent by Ruth leaning idly out of the window of the little sitting-room, her eyes wandering aimlessly over the garden hedge, to the road beyond, her spirit chafing inwardly more than a little at the interdict laid upon her friendship with Fanny Forrest.

That Owen had sided with her father did not change Ruth's mind a bit. She was determined that in this case her judgment should be proved to be the correct one, and each and every day she whispered to herself that her father would yet be sorry for the injury he had done her friend. She did not dare to disobey him by inviting the girl within the house, much as she longed to do so. No, she would keep to the letter of the law, hard as it seemed to her; but with a longing gaze she used to watch for the first

glimpse of the straw hat, and the dark face beneath it, as each evening it came sloping along under the garden hedge. Then, when Hannah's portly frame had been seen wandering off towards the extensive poultry-yard placed by the squire's wife beneath her care, the garden gate would be pushed softly open, and the intruder, as she somehow felt herself to be, would come along the garden walk, with the same sly, cat-like motion, till she reached the window where she knew Ruth was certain to be found in patient, or rather impatient, waiting: and as they talked together, and Fanny, with insatiable curiosity, drew from her companion all the minutiæ of her daily life, the glittering eyes were all the time taking in the scope of every article within the room, and measuring with curious accuracy their value.

Mrs. Leonard had not been very far wrong in her judgment when she described Fanny as a bad lot. Bad, in so far as being wild, daring, and utterly unscrupulous, she certainly was; and with these characteristics it was not strange that her advent generally brought confusion in its train wherever she went. Now, in her evening conferences with Ruth, she seemed to revel in giving free vent to her imagination; and plots and plans for excitement and amusement came ripely from her lips, joined with commiseration for Ruth's quiet pent-up life, and temptations to break through all rules and regulations—so wild and impossible that it was only the look, almost of terror, in Ruth's sober eyes, that checked her companion's speech.

It seemed to her an incredible thing that such a holiday-time as Ruth was having now—so free from authority and control, with every hour of the day to be spent exactly as she pleased—should be allowed to pass without some adventure to mark it out from other times; and over and over again, with every wile that she was mistress of, had Fanny petitioned the girl to throw decorum to the winds, and join with her in striking out some plan by which her love of adventure could be carried out.

And Ruth listened and laughed, and hushed the voice of conscience by saying to herself that it was all a joke—that Fanny did not really wish her to do anything wrong; and yet, while she laughed, she sometimes almost trembled as she felt how great an influence, almost a power, her friend had gained upon her. As far as gratifying her curiosity went, it had amused Ruth not a little to spread out before her on the window-sill each pretty little trophy or ornament with which the sitting-room was adorned, listening with some pride to Fanny's admiration—which, whether genuine or not, was at least loudly expressed.

"I cannot show you anything more now, Fanny—I cannot, indeed!" said Ruth, at length, one evening when, with even more than ordinary boldness, Fanny had succeeded in getting the contents of a certain old-fashioned cabinet brought out to view. It had not been done without some trouble and much persuasion, and Ruth had flushed and fidgeted with her keys for long before she consented to her friend's request. "Father would not like it—I know he would not. And there is nothing more that you would care to see—there is not, indeed." The scruples of conscience she had been feeling all the evening were now asserting themselves loudly, and the inward misery growing stronger as she spoke, Ruth's voice grew more in earnest.

"Nay, then I'm sure there is not, if you say so; and I'm sure you've been awfully good to show me what you have," replied Fanny, in a wheedling tone. "But just stop for a second—do, there's a dear; just let me have another peep. What's hidden there—in there—right away back in the corner yonder?—that queer little leather case, I mean, with the scrap of crackly paper sticking out. That might be something worth one's while to see. Don't put it away, then, Ruth, for a moment; 'twill do no harm to take a spy at it."

"That? There's nothing in that, I assure you, Fanny, that you would care for one pin; nothing but some old things—old treasures of father's; and I know he would not have us touch them—I know he would not." And Ruth withdrew the pocket-book beyond her companion's reach, grasping it firmly in her hand.

"Oh, very well!" retorted Fanny, with well-assumed anger, drawing herself away from the window-sill, across which more than half her body had been stretched; "put it away, of course—put it away. I understand you very well; there's nothing in it, as you say, but treasures—money, I suppose; and when it comes to that, I am not to be trusted. I thank you for the good opinion you possess of my honesty—very much indeed!"

"What do you mean, Fanny?" asked Ruth, in bewilderment at this sudden attack. "I never said anything about money, did I? That was not what I meant at all. Indeed, you are unkind; you could not tell what I was thinking of!" and Ruth stretched out her hand and plucked at Fanny's sleeve to draw her back into her old position again.

"I don't know what you mean? Well, perhaps I don't; but this I know, that though I never have had the handling of many a bank-note in my life—and more's the pity!—if that's not the corner of one that's sticking out there, my name's not Fanny Forrest! And when you'll show me everything else but this, why, it is not very hard to put two and two together, and guess the reason why."

"That—that," said Ruth, looking down, and now perceiving Fanny's drift—"that is a note, of course; I never said it wasn't, did I? I know father told me he put it in here in case I wanted it while he was away; but I never thought of it again. That was not what I meant when I told you I could not show you what was here."

"Then what did you mean?" asked Fanny, her curiosity inflamed by words conjuring up she knew not what visions of what might possibly be concealed within the case. "I like plain speaking, girl, I tell you; and if you don't trust me, just say it out, and that's all about it. I am more than ready to take the hint."

"I do trust you. Oh, Fanny! why are you so unkind?" cried Ruth, in anguish at the implied unfaithfulness to her friend, and yet held back by some inward force from a greater unfaithfulness still. "There is nothing in it but a few old keepsakes—nothing. But there," she cried, in despair at the unmoved expression upon Fanny's face—"there, you may look yourself: it does not make much matter, after all; and you shall never say again I doubted you." And the yellow pocket-book was yielded from the steady grasp in which it had been held.

Fanny's greedy fingers quickly seized upon it, her greedier eyes gloated over the expected treat, while Ruth could only cover up her face in her hands that she might not see the act of sacrilege.

The black eyes twinkled with a strange delight as, first of all, she drew the crisp note from its hiding, and lovingly she fingered it, and smoothed its creases out upon her knee, before she dived a second time to try what there was further to disclose. Not much, certainly, to judge by the exclamation of disgust and disappointment as, deliberately turning the leathern envelope inside out, its contents fluttered to the ground at Ruth's feet. Not much, indeed—nothing more than a few tokens of a love of long ago: lost, it might be, but not forgotten; treasure, indeed, but only the token of a treasure not now on earth, but stored in safer keeping yet—a few withered flowers, bound together with a scrap of faded ribbon; a fold of hair, still soft and fair as when it had been laid away; and this was all.

A mocking laugh, followed by mocking words, echoed through the room, as Fanny tossed the shabby-looking cover back within the cabinet.

There was a longer silence than usual before Fanny, with a long-drawn sigh, began again: "Oh, golly! I say, Ruth, if only I were you, and you was me, and this here note were mine, instead of yourn, we'd have a spree, we would. I'd treat you to it, fine and handsome, so I would, and no mistake! Oh dear! oh dear!" and another long sigh brought the sentence to a close.

But no answer being made to this speech either, Fanny shifted her position just a little, and continued: "I say, Ruth, what's wrong? You've gone to sleep, I think. Just hearken for a moment, till I tell you what I'd do if, as I said before, the tables were turned, and you were me, and I were you. Well, let me see; this is Wednesday—Wednesday evening; and your father don't come home till Saturday, eh? and Friday afternoon old Hannah, bless her, goes to meeting—don't she—and takes a cup o' tea after, with a friend, don't she, eh? Well, then, on that very Friday afternoon I'd dress myself up as smart as smart could be, I'd take this money in my hand, I'd walk to Bentham, and I'd take the train from there to Upton, where all the shows are being held this week; and if I wouldn't see the tents and the fireworks, and listen to the band to my heart's content, why, my name isn't Fanny, as I said before!"

"And what about treating me if I were you?" asked Ruth, who, against her will though it were, could not but realise the picture thus imagined.

"Why, that's of course," replied Fanny, now taking up the wheedling tone again. "And you'd do the same, wouldn't you? you wouldn't leave poor Fanny from the fun, would you, supposing you went to it yourself?"

"Of course not," answered Ruth, absently. "But there's not much good in supposing anything about it. I never got the chance of seeing such a thing in all my life, and I don't suppose I ever shall: and besides—— Here, give me that, Fanny; it is time to put it all away and say good-night. I only wish we had not touched the cabinet at all. Father would never forgive me if he knew," and Ruth sighed disconsolately.

"Do you just think it over, and I'll call to-morrow, Ruth, early—so be on the watch; and we can finish our chat out then." And in another minute the garden gate had closed upon her retreating figure, and Ruth was left alone.

(*To be continued.*)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

75. Of whom is it recorded that "he went down and slew a lion in a pit on a snowy day?"

76. Give two passages where mulberry-trees are mentioned.

77. What present did Saul purpose to make to Samuel when he went to inquire concerning his father's asses?

78. Who was the father of St. Peter?

79. What place is said to have been a "Sabbath day's" journey from Jerusalem?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 176.

61. Of seven hundred of the tribe of Benjamin (Judges xx. 16).

62. By Hiel the Bethelite, fulfilling the prophecy of Joshua (Joshua vi. 26; 1 Kings xvi. 34).

63. "See ye how this son of a murderer hath sent to take away mine head" (2 Kings vi. 32).

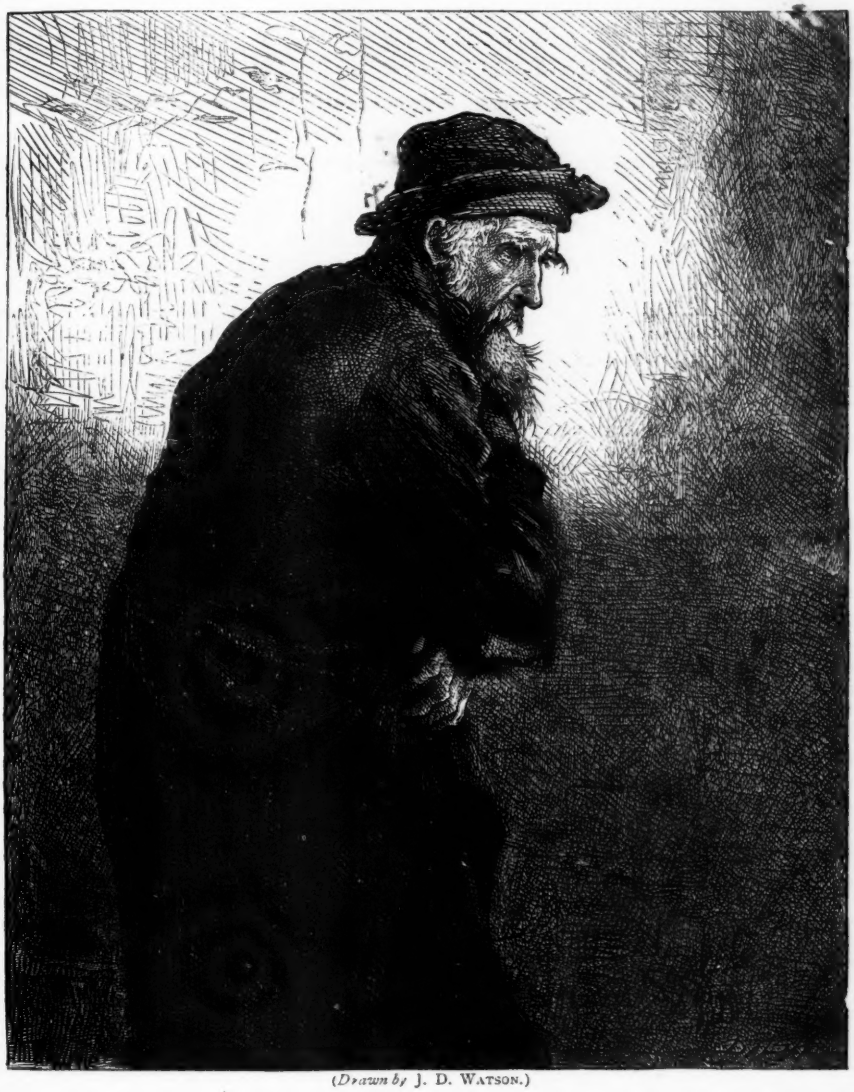
64. St. Peter (1 Peter ii. 25).

65. To Philemon (Phil. xxii).

66. The mighty men who came to David at Ziklag (1 Chron. xii. 1, 2).

67. Numbers xii. 3.

68. Forty-eight (Josh. xxi. 41).



(*Drawn by* J. D. WATSON.)

THE OUTCAST: A PORTRAIT.

A PAIR of earnest piercing eyes,
A grandly-outlined face,
And noble brow, whereon there lies
Stern thought's deep-furrowed trace,

Yet more—for ever and anon,
A restless look of care
Flits o'er to tell that hope has gone,
And left but grim despair.

With not a single earthly friend
To offer kindly love,
Scant faith in life that has its end
In happiness above;

He shudders as his locks grow grey,
Scarce knowing what he fears,
And thus, without one cheering ray
He stumbles through the years.

G. W.

THE TRIPLETS OF THE BIBLE.

BY THE REV. J. HILES HITCHENS, AUTHOR OF "THE FURNACE," "THE FACE OF THE KING," ETC.

II.—THE THREE HEBREW MARTYRS.

"And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace."—DANIEL iii. 23.

THE arbitrary King Nebuchadnezzar conceived the project of erecting a gigantic figure as a new deity. The image, which was outwardly covered with gold, and which, inclusive of the pedestal, stood ninety feet high, was erected in the plains of Dura, in the province of Babylon. A day was specified for its dedication, and an imperial mandate was dispatched to the influential men throughout the province, summoning them to attend the ceremony of dedication—a ceremony in which a new god was to be sanctioned and established. Forthwith from their various districts these representatives of the people gathered. With great rejoicing the idolaters inaugurated the proceeding, and we can believe there was not a scruple in the breast of one of them. They were accustomed to worship idols; and to bow heart and head before a new god was a gratification in no sense opposed to their creed and practice. But there were three men among the numbers assembled who acknowledged but *One* God—and who, loving and trusting that One, felt it would be a violation of the fundamental principles of their holy religion if they consented in any form to render homage to another. They had assembled with the rest at the dedication of the golden image, because they felt it to be their duty. They heard a higher mandate than that of Nebuchadnezzar. They felt within the summons of a nobler Being than any earthly monarch. They could not allow the imposing ceremony to pass off quietly and triumphantly without a word being spoken, or an act performed on behalf of the Supreme God. They were Hebrews—children of the men who had witnessed the omnipotent power, unerring wisdom, and matchless sympathy of God, again and again—and could they now, though in captivity, allow judgment to go against the Hebrew faith by default? No! The light of Heaven had been deposited with them, and they felt responsible for its diffusion and defence. Their obligations to the Eternal were not changed because they were in a minority. Though seemingly powerless among a multitude of opponents, yet their conviction of duty was irresistible. Doubtless they called to remembrance the command of God given to Moses on Sinai, and the wondrous vindication of the claims of Jehovah made by the Prophet of Horeb before the priests of Baal; and, with a burning zeal for the glory of the Lord of Hosts, these three men obeyed the call of Nebuchadnezzar that they might have an opportunity of protesting publicly against idolatry, and exalting the Infinite One.

The whole company being assembled, the herald, with a loud voice, read the proclamation, "That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: and whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace." Now had arrived that moment of trial which must call into play all the power of principle, all the strength of character, all the vigour of faith—a moment that must leave these three Hebrews either stronger or weaker, either honoured of God or wholly unworthy of Divine favour—a moment that should print itself upon the world's history—a moment pregnant with vital consequences and far-reaching influences. What a crucial moment was that when life and death hung in the balance! Such seasons occur sometimes in our career when our decision must tinge not only *our* future, but the future of multitudes closely identified with us. How important, therefore, that we should seek the constant and unerring guidance of Heaven!

Soon the music sounded, and prostrate fell the great men and wise men of the empire. All—all were in the dust, doing homage, except three men who still retained their standing attitude—these three were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They were quickly observed. Keen suspicious jealous eyes noted all their ways, and nimble steps conveyed the accusation to the king. The accusers, with malicious cunning, stated the case in such a manner as to stir most deeply the feelings of the monarch. The impiety of these Jews was not so prominently placed in consideration as their

disloyalty. The king was reminded of his royal favours towards them, and plainly told that by their conduct these men did not regard him. This was enough. Naturally of most violent passions, Nebuchadnezzar was excited to rage at the thought of this positive disobedience and palpable ingratitude. He commanded that the three men should be brought into his presence. Whether it was out of respect to the trio themselves, or to Daniel, at whose request they had been first placed in office, we cannot say; but from some reason the king did not order these Hebrews to be immediately slain, as he did the magicians who could not interpret his dream. He signified his wish to overlook the past, if they would consent for the future to bow down to the god he set up. There was the possibility of saving their lives if they would conform. They might retain their offices in Babylon, and enjoy the favour of the monarch, if they would sacrifice principle and stultify conscience. But if not, then the decree of royalty must be enforced, and "Who?" asked the monarch, with an air of haughty independence and vain-glory—"who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" Then out spoke the heroic Hebrews. They conferred not with flesh and blood. They feared not one who could kill the body, but, after that, had no more that he could do; they feared Him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell. There was no necessity for delay. They needed not to deliberate.

> "On each glance of thought
> Decision follow'd, as the thunderbolt
> Pursues the flash."

Their purposes were fixed. There was no vacillation. Come life or death, they were resolved not to bow before any other than the living Lord. Doubtless there was a natural clinging to life in the breast of each, but there was no change in the countenance, no tear dimming the fire of the eye, no tremulousness in the tones of the voice indicating emotion of heart. With an unimpassioned, collected, and undaunted air, they spake before the royal patron of idolatry: "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thy hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." Unprepared for such a bold and determinate stand, and for their direct refusal to re-consider their position—interpreting their adherence to principle as none other than obstinacy—the king grew furious, and gave orders for the furnace to be made as hot as possible. He might have thought that men so resolute, so passive, so willing to suffer for conscience' sake, would offer no resistance to the servants commissioned to execute the king's decree. But he ordered them to be bound just as they were, and the sentence to be executed forthwith. "And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace." It is impossible for us to dissect or describe the feelings of those servants of God at that moment of their fall. The surprise, the joy, the gratitude, the triumph which filled their hearts, when they found themselves surrounded by a devouring element, and yet unhurt, baffles all attempt at description. We can better read the feelings of the great men of the empire, because we can interpret them by the feelings and actions of men since. Some, unquestionably, expressed their surprise that the three Hebrews should be willing to sacrifice so much for what they deemed principle. Others laughed at the folly of three men setting themselves against the decree of the king and the legislature of the State; whilst, probably, some rejoiced that the nation was rid now of such fanatics. But Nebuchadnezzar was not easy. That "tremendous power," which is

> "A master-self that loves to domineer,
> And treats the monarch frankly as the slave,"

was at work within him. He had banished the three Hebrews from his court, but could not from his conscience. Restlessly he approached the furnace, and there, to his utter amazement, beheld the three men, unbound, walking in the company of a fourth—none other than the Angel of the Covenant. Instantly he bade them come forth. Though they were in company far superior to any they could enjoy in the Babylonish palace, they obeyed the call, and were presented to the princes and governors without the slightest indication of contact with the flames. The very smell of fire had not clung to their garments. They had been miraculously preserved. Providence had clothed them as in an asbestos robe. Then Nebuchadnezzar "blessed and adored" the God whom they worshipped, promoted the three heroes to positions of influence and honour, and made a decree that none should utter a word against the God of gods—the God of Israel.

Now, looking at this deeply-interesting and impressive narrative, a host of lessons crowd upon the mind. But there are two or three thoughts in particular which we shall do well in these days seriously to consider.

1. In the conduct of these three Hebrews we have *an illustration of the power of true religion.* Here were three comparatively young and inexperienced men, captives in a strange land, with no powerful friends to plead their cause, called by their monarch to the performance of an act of worship of which their consciences disapproved, threatened with a terrible death if they refused to comply, standing firm to their principles and professions—honouring God in spite of opposition;

and, like Moses, choosing rather to suffer affliction than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. How calmly they stood in the presence of the wrathful Nebuchadnezzar!—the king and his attendants agitated by a thousand emotions, but *they* self-reliant, patient, brave!—the accusers, maddened with malice, the princes and governors wild with surprise, the monarch's brow darkened by an ominous frown, but Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego peaceful and unmoved! Whence came such marked quietude of spirit? How was it they were so self-possessed? What occult gift so marvellously sustained them? I answer—they had faith in God. They had learned to leave consequences in the hand of Him who called them to duty. They were not influenced by caprice. Theirs was not the sensitiveness of an effeminate and uninformed conscience. Sterling principle guided them—a principle by which they were prepared to sacrifice all rather than sin against God. They recognised the sovereign authority of the Eternal Spirit. They felt that He neither could nor would act inconsistently with his absolute perfections. They believed that though clouds and darkness may overshadow His dealings, they had no title to question Him concerning His ways. The conviction that Jehovah never forgets His word, never fails to watch over His children, never ceases in His sympathetic care, was a source of strength. They possessed a piety of the noblest and most royal order—a religion of principle and not of mere impulse—a religion that would weather the bitter storm, and not simply flourish in the calm sunshine.

Theirs was a religion based on the Divine word, and marked by an intelligent view of duty, and a resolution to pursue the path of duty at all hazards.

Such, dear reader, is wanted now. Wanted now, do I say? Yes, wanted always, but needed now in an especial manner. Do you remember the words of John Bunyan, when describing the army of Diabolus just prior to the final triumph of Immanuel? Surely the spirit of prophecy seized his mind and guided his pen! Surely he was privileged with visions of the future when he says there were "Ten thousand Doubters and fifteen thousand Bloodmen, and Old Incredulity was again made general of the army." Such is the aspect of the present age. *Practical* evil, with its brazen brow, stalks abroad in multifarious robes. The hydra-headed monster forces his way into every circle. The sinfulness of sin is toned down to the minimum, whilst the advantages of sin are magnified to the maximum. That which in its true character is revolting is gilded over and rendered seductive. *Theoretical* evil is poisoning the minds of multitudes. Romanism still nurses the same spirit of bitter hatred to Protestant truth. Our Bible Societies it proclaims to be a "pest." The right of private judgment it condemns; whilst the chief representative of the Pope in this country says to his co-workers, "It is yours, right reverend fathers, to *subjugate and to subdue*, to *bend* and to *break the will* of an imperial race." Formalism is crying "Peace, peace," to thousands whose consciences are chloroformed into quietude by mere letter and rule. Rationalism is banishing fear from men's eyes, and obligations from their hearts, by its dismal iconoclasm. Everywhere men seem restlessly ready to accept "some new thing." It needs vital godliness—godliness after the order of that possessed by these three Hebrews—to keep to the old paths and walk therein. Oh, brother, there is no safeguard like that of true religion; from practical and theoretical error it will preserve you.

The grace of God reigning in the heart will hold both your mind and body, both your will and emotions with a giant grip, and exercise upon your whole being a blessed talismanic influence.

2. In the miraculous interference of God we see *the deep and constant interest Jehovah takes in all that passes on in the experience of His saints.* He witnessed the fidelity of the three Hebrews, noted the strength and firmness of their faith, weighed all the circumstances of anxiety in which they were placed, bestowed upon them the needed confidence and hope, and ultimately delivered them.

Thus His merciful favour and mighty interposition are extended to the righteous in every age. The experience of His children under all its countless forms is most intimately known to Him. There is not a care, however lightly it presses upon the mind, but He feels it. Let the lot be ever so varied, complex, or evanescent, it comes within the range of His loving observation. There is nothing, whenever or wherever it transpires, His omniscient tenderness does not embrace. This He has taught us not only by the experience of the saints of the Old Testament economy, but by the exceedingly great and precious promises recorded by the Holy Spirit—promises which have encouraged His followers in all ages. They were men like us, those patriarchs and prophets and apostles, who cast their care upon the Lord, and committed their way to Him with serene contentment. They were men like us, those brave spirits who, when the clouds gathered and the thunder pealed, could calmly sing, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations;" "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty;" "I will both lay me down in peace and sleep, for Thou only makest me dwell in safety." The interposition of God on behalf of His faithful ones is sure; it may not be of a miraculous nature; it may not be

signal; but it will be certain. The Lord can and does influence the minds of men so as to accomplish the deliverance of His own. The Lord's arm is not shortened. Still He watches over us, as tenderly as a mother over her babe, and delights to help and comfort His own. Aye, and before deliverance is wrought out, even when the furnace flames play about us, and sorrow's chains severely gall us, there is for us the companionship of Jesus. Yes, we may draw as freely on the consolation afforded by the covenant of God in our pains and perplexities as did the martyrs when imprisoned and impaled. We sustain the same relationship to the Almighty that they did; and God has the same grand purpose in view in our afflictions that He had in their persecutions. The suffering in its source, its nature, and its extent, may be changed, but the Divine support is the same. All the consolation and strength the three Hebrews derived from the promise and presence of the Infinite One we can claim in Christ Jesus.

3. In the subsequent conduct of the king and nobles toward these three Hebrews, we see *the blessed influence of fidelity and consistency*. These men were promoted to worldly honour, and far wider influence than any of the nobles possessed; whilst—which to them was their greatest joy—that God whom they loved and served, obtained glory at the hands and from the lips of those who formerly hated and denied Him. It is a matter for deepest joy that there have trod this earth men of colossal faith and unflinching adherence to the right, men who could rise superior to all earthly considerations, men who would rather die than deny Christ, rather burn than turn from the path of honour! On the lives of such men the most vile cannot fail to look with pleasure. Even the scoffing world is impressed by an unmoved adherence to principle. For a little season a course of deceit, stratagem, cunning, change, may be a prosperous path, but it will not long continue so. Nothing endures like integrity, consistency, truthfulness, and transparency. The man who, like the chess-board bishop, always moves obliquely, needs to be narrowly watched, and is seldom trusted or loved. He may evince great skill, but that will not conceal his immoral stains. But he who moves straight forward, whose first aim is to please God, who is "constant as the northern star," who will not swerve from truth for the purpose of gain, soon wins the approbation of Heaven and earth. Such a man's strength is as the strength of ten men, because his heart is pure. Such men are always welcome, and welcome to all like the flowers of your garden, because, like those flowers, the colour and fragrance of their lives are life-long. Thus was it with the apostles. Thus has it been with a noble army of men since. Polycarp of Smyrna, Irenæus of Lyons, Wycliffe, Huss, Jerome of Prague, Luther, Melancthon, Zuinglius, Knox, Latimer, Ridley, Bunyan, Baxter, Howe, the Waldenses, Albigenses, Huguenots, Lollards, Covenanters, and many more, braved the gnashing teeth and imprecating voices of enraged multitudes, and endured untold privation and pain for conscience' sake. These are luminous examples, upon which our children's children will look with deepest admiration, and most fervent gratitude. Ah! many a Cardinal Wolsey has asked, "What is expedient?"—has been influenced by passion, and hence died a melancholy man, to sink into deserved contempt. But others, like the men just mentioned, have simply asked, "What is right?"—have been guided by principle, have passed away triumphantly to an eternal reward, and are now honoured by countless thousands. Thus shall it ever be. Let this be our first work—to seek, find, love, and serve God. Let Jesus be all our trust and plea. And, having found life in Christ, let us unhesitatingly cleave to the right. Banish all thoughts of departure from the line of duty. Expunge the word vacillation from your vocabulary. Let your course be ever upward and onward, in the strength of God.

> "Nay, never falter; no great deed is done
> By falterers who ask for certainty.
> No good is certain; but the steadfast mind,
> The undivided will to seek the good,
> 'Tis *that* compels the elements, and wrings
> A human music from the indifferent air.
> The greatest gift the hero leaves his race
> Is to have been a hero. Say we fail!
> We feed the high traditions of the world."

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 13. Mission Work.

Chapter to be read—Acts xiii., 4—49.

To the Teacher. It is not intended in these lessons to go through the whole of St. Paul's missionary journeys connectedly, but rather to pick out certain interesting portions, which may seem suitable for lessons.

I. The Visit to Cyprus. (Read 4—12.) Ask a few questions upon the last lesson, to see if children thoroughly understand the starting-point. Who formed the missionary party? What have we heard before of Barnabas? (iv. 36.) Of what place was he a native? So proposes should first visit Cyprus. Notice how, his name coming first (vers. 2—7),

seems to indicate that he took the lead. Still, under whose direction were they starting? (ver. 2.) A work so well begun must surely prosper. Now ask the nature of their work—to preach the Gospel, *i.e.*, message of salvation to every creature. No more exclusiveness; no more shutting out of the Gentiles; the time come for all to hear, obey, and be saved. How they would stand on the deck of the little coasting vessel during the few hours' passage, and while watching the approaching shores of Cyprus, discuss how the missionary work should be begun. Where did they begin? (ver. 5.) Show position of Cyprus on the map, and explain how from its position it was likely to be frequented by Jews as well as Europeans; so, as always, these Jews begin with their own countrymen. Are they to stop there? No, must push on across the island. Whom do they find at Paphos? Let the teacher draw a contrast. (1) *The Believing Governor.* What is the Roman governor called? and what description is given of him? Evidently was seeking after truth; must have heard of God from numerous Jews. Wants to hear more of Him. Sends first for Elymas. Could he help him? Then hears of strange Jews. Sends for them; they come; preach to the Governor. Who stands by? What does Elymas do, and how is he punished? What effect had this on the deputy? Notice that he was persuaded both by the *works* and by the *doctrine* of the apostles. Remind how often this was the case with Christ. All the apostles believed in Him after seeing the first miracle—what was that? (John ii. 42)—while Samaritans believed after hearing His words (John iv. 42). This Governor, like merchant seeking goodly pearls, found pearl of great price (Matt. xiii. 46), and was satisfied. (2) *The Unbelieving Sorcerer.* What did he do? Not only would not believe himself, but tried to prevent deputy. What could be worse? Had some knowledge of God; used it for bad purpose. How was he punished? What a convincing proof of reality of Saul's doctrine. See how his unbelief overruled for good. The conversion of Governor sure to have good result.

Practical Lessons. (1) *Mission work begins at home.* Children wanting to work for God should begin with brothers and sisters, schoolfellows, &c., then may extend work. (2) *Opposition over-ruled.* What weapons did they take for their work? (Eph. vi. 13, &c.) Same weapons ours still, and equally powerful. Learn to use them more.

II. Visit to Antioch. (Read 13—16; 42, 43.) *The first Sabbath.* Where did they go from Paphos? (13). Asia Minor, a directly heathen country; still, many Jews there. Travel on to Antioch, in Pisidia, will spend Sabbath there. Would be much fatigued by journey, glad to enjoy the Sabbath of rest. What trouble of mind have they had? Count the party now; who has left, and why? Must have joined too hastily, out of mere attachment to his uncle. But now Mark shrinks from the work. Do they detain him unwillingly? No; must be a cheerful giving of self as well as of money, or else gift valueless. So he returns to his mother at Jerusalem. Will Paul and Barnabas keep quite quiet this Sabbath? Copy their Master, work while it is day. So, like Christ in synagogue of Nazareth (Luke iv. 16), stand up to expound. Notice the change of Saul's name, perhaps out of compliment to Sergius Paulus, perhaps to mark the commencement of new life and work, like Abram became Abraham when son promised. The sermon itself need not be read; the children can be told the outline, viz., the settlement of their ancestors in Canaan, according to promise made to them; their request for a king; who was granted? The new line of kings. Who was descended from David? How was He to be king? to deliver from Romans? No; from sin. For this He died and rose again, and so all the promises fulfilled, only in much better way. Notice the application. Salvation is offered, but if despised will cause them to perish. Picture the breaking up of the congregation. Some at once offended; seed of Word caught up and produces no fruit (Matt. xiii. 19). Others, both Jews and proselytes, hear eagerly, and are cautioned to continue in grace of God. Now the news of the strange sermon by these foreigners is spread. Who want to hear the tidings? (ver. 42). Here is an opportunity! are invited to come on next Sabbath. (2) *The second Sabbath.* (Read vers. 44—49.) Would apostles be idle during week? Went about visiting everywhere. With what result? Synagogue crowded, many scarcely get in. What effect has this on the Jews? like elder brother in parable (Luke xv. 28), jealousy leads to anger, that to perverse disputings. Would rather none were converted than that Gentiles should be. This rouses indignation of apostles. What do they say? (ver. 46.) See how eagerly Gentiles, heathens hitherto, receive message. Not had half opportunities of Jews, but make right use of them. So the word sinks into heart, grows and expands; "published through all that region."

Practical Lessons.—(1) *The danger of envy.* Hardly any sin so common or so dangerous. Remind of Cain, Joseph's brothers, &c. Ask for large heart to rejoice in good of all. (2) *The importance of decision for Christ.* Same message preached. Jews refused, Gentiles accepted. Which are we doing? How does it appear in our lives at school, &c.? For Christ or against? Now is accepted time.

Questions to be answered.

1. Describe missionary party and their first start.
2. What can you say about Sergius Paulus?
3. Describe sin of Elymas, and how was he punished?
4. Who deserted the party, and why?
5. Describe the first Sabbath spent at Antioch.
6. Name any practical lessons taught by the story.

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER XXVII.

EDA could scarcely have decided whether she was sorry or glad when three or four days passed away after her interview with Richie, without ever hearing from him. She divined, correctly, that some motives or impulses, to which she had not the clue, had hurried him into the course he had taken; and if she could have forgotten how earnestly he declared that by becoming his she would enable him to lead a better life, she would have been both hurt and angry that he attempted to woo her so cavalierly. But the spirit of self-sacrifice was strong in Eda's nature, and she found herself often debating whether she had done right in sending him away. If he drifted into evil, would she not be to blame for it?

The thought was such a harassing one, that she was glad to put it aside, and busy herself with preparations for her removal to Mr. de Courcy's. These preparations involved a few purchases, and one morning, as she came out of a shop on the Queen's Terrace, she encountered Mr. Allonby.

He looked rather confused when she expressed her surprise at the rencontre, but was too honest to leave her in error.

"I had business in Pimlico, Miss Granton, but I promised Gran and myself that I would contrive to see you before I left the neighbourhood. These people to whom you are going are strangers, are they not? and you told Gran that you have no relatives in London."

"Only my brother."

"Then there may be times when you will feel depressed and lonely. Gran was speaking of this last night, and I was to ask you to try and remember always that you will be a welcome visitor at our house, whenever you feel disposed to come; and then the dear old lady thinks she could send you away cheered and comforted with her old-fashioned sayings."

"I will go to her gladly, thankfully," said Eda, with quivering lip.

When Mr. Allonby left her at Mrs. Ingle's door, she found herself looking after him, with the thought, "He is a better man than Richie Atwood; he can stand alone and do right—not because another prompts him to it, but just for the right's sake!"

The next minute, however, she was accusing herself of injustice. Mr. Allonby had no such temptations as beset Richie: he had a happy home, instead of London lodgings, and was not courted and flattered for his pleasant looks and social qualities. Had Richie appeared just then, and urged his suit, it is a chance if Eda's remorse had not stood his friend, and won him the wife he sought.

But a hurried note, complaining of her unkindness, and pleading business as an excuse for not writing earlier, was all she had heard of him when she once more bade adieu to the Ingles, to take up her abode as governess in the palatial mansion of Mr. and Mrs. de Courcy.

She had scarcely entered it before she was made to feel the difference between the quiet well-ordered household of the Earl of Chessington and the more pretentious but less carefully regulated one of her new employers. A very smart housekeeper came forward to receive her, but it was ungraciously, and she was kept standing in the hall while the woman commented on her arrival.

"The governess, I suppose? Dear me, you're very young!—no offence, miss," she added, as she saw Eda's colour rise. "It's high time those children were taught behaviour; but I thought Mrs. de Courcy would have looked out for some one they would be obliged to mind—some one, you know, much older, and more stricter than you're likely to be!"

"But I hope to make my pupils obey *me*," was the good-humoured reply. "Will you let a servant show me my room?"

"Well, that's just what puzzles me," the woman acknowledged, wiping her heated brow. "Mrs. de Courcy forgot to tell me you were coming till half an hour ago; and where I am to put you, with a house full of company and a dinner-party on, I'm sure I don't know! It's all very fine to be told, 'We leave everything to you, Mrs. Wells—we leave everything in your hands;' but one pair of hands cannot do everything, as well I know it."

Eda waited till this harangue was ended, and a footman, who came to ask for some directions, had been snappishly rated for stupidity, and sent away; then, pointing to her luggage, she reminded the harassed Mrs. Wells that it could not be left in the centre of the hall.

"No, of course not, miss; something must be done. There's the nursery—but I suppose you would not like to be put there for a night or two?"

"I should certainly prefer a room of my own."

"Then I suppose you must have one somehow," said the housekeeper, not very civilly; "but you really must wait till I have arranged the dessert."

"Wait here?" asked Eda, finding that she was bustling away.

"Lor', no, miss; if you'll come into my parlour, one of the maids shall get you some tea. I'm sure it's my wish to make every one comfortable; but when there's so much to do, and not a creature but

one's self to do it, it's dreadfully trying. Mr. de Courcy makes nothing of saying, before he goes away in the morning, 'Mrs. Wells, there will be eight or nine gentlemen to dinner to-day; make your arrangements accordingly;' and he doesn't forget to look as black as thunder if there's the least thing amiss, though he gives one no more time than I have just told you. It's rush here, and rush there, and hurry and drive, till it's quite a job to get a decent steady servant to stay in the house, and I'm almost worried off my legs."

"Perhaps I can give you a little assistance in arranging your dessert-dishes," said Eda.

Mrs. Wells's heavy face brightened. "Will you now, miss? Then I'm sure I shall be for ever thankful! and here's the épergne—if you could put a few flowers into that it would help me wonderfully, for it's a task always gets over me. Some ladies like to do these little things themselves, but Mrs. de Courcy isn't one of that sort. Now, Miss Rose, I cannot and will not have you here!" she cried, sharply, to a pretty child who had stolen in at the door, and was standing on tiptoe admiring some beautiful peaches. "Go back to the nursery *directly*!"

"No—shan't!" said the little girl. "Rose don't like to stay there by herself."

"Then that tiresome Manon is in the kitchen gossiping, as usual!" muttered Mrs. Wells. "Where's Miss Violet?"

"In papa's room, cutting pictures out of a book."

"There's mischief!" groaned the housekeeper. "A house full of servants, and a French *bonne* paid on purpose, and yet no one to keep these unruly children out of harm. Go, there's a darling, and tell your sister she must not spoil papa's books."

But Miss Rose positively declined to go, unless the housekeeper filled her lap with peaches; and the fruit being too rare just then to be bestowed upon her at all, there were symptoms of a tempest impending, when Eda interfered.

"Rose is not to have any of the peaches, for Mrs. Wells cannot spare them; but if she likes to sit quietly here beside me, and hand me those leaves as I want them, I will tell her a story."

"A true one?" queried the child; "I don't like to hear about ghosts; they frighten me."

"That's Manon's doings," Mrs. Wells explained, in a whisper. "I know she tells the poor little things all sorts of horrors when she wants them to lie still at night."

Eda readily promised that there should be nothing frightful in her narration; and the child sat a quiet listener while with deft fingers she piled the fruit on the silver dishes and converted the basket of greenhouse flowers beside her into a tasteful centre ornament for the dinner-table. She had just finished her task, and was enjoying the housekeeper's thanks and some tea, when a loud-voiced Frenchwoman flounced into the room, dragging with her Eda's other pupil, whose depredations in the library she had but just discovered.

Violet de Courcy, a tall handsome child about seven years of age, stoutly resisted her *bonne's* endeavours to force her into the presence of her new governess; and little Rose, who was wont to join forces with her sister in all affrays, slipped away from Eda to pinch and kick Manon, who slapped both her charges in return with right good will. Mrs. Wells shrugged her shoulders, and went away, telling Eda that she would soon grow used to these scenes, and the only plan was to let them fight it out; while no one else appeared disturbed by the noise, although the two children shrieked, and their nurse scolded, at the top of their voices.

It was a promising commencement of Eda's first essay as a governess, and for a while she stood by, dismayed and doubtful; but when the coarse language of the woman grew coarser, and little Rose began to gasp and grow purple with fury, she summoned courage to interfere.

"Stay!" she said, laying her hand on Manon's upraised arm. "Does your mistress give you authority to strike her little daughters?"

"They are not children—they are demons!" stormed Manon, in her native language, displaying the marks of Violet's nails in her flesh. "Some night they will be flown away with in a shower of fire and brimstone, wicked ones that they are!"

"Give me that jug of cold water," said Eda, imperatively. "Miss Rose is going to have a fit, and I must throw it over her!"

Violet ceased stamping and shrieking, to witness the operation, and her sister hid her face on Eda's dress, crying "No, no!"

"But I certainly shall, unless you leave off screaming in that violent manner. You can go away, Manon. When the children are ready to be undressed, I will recall you."

The woman, awed a little by the sharp tone in which she was addressed, hesitated a moment, then thought it best to obey; and the younger child, exhausted with passion, suffered herself to be lifted on to Eda's knee; but Violet stood sullenly aloof, eyeing the governess, with whom she had been threatened every time she did wrong, until led to regard her as a *bête noire* who must be defied and resisted as obstinately as Manon. But when Eda, eschewing all comment on the scene she had just witnessed, began to tell simple tales and verses to the little one on her lap, the other gradually edged nearer, till, finding a hand extended towards her, she too ventured into her new friend's embrace.

Mrs. Wells bustled in and out without disturbing the group, though she sometimes raised her hands in astonishment at the cordiality that reigned there, until little Rose's eyelids began to grow heavy, and Eda brought her last story to a close.



LINES ON A CAGED LARK.

POOR little thing!
Whose straining neck and bosom quivering
With meaning eloquent,
Mourn the imprisonment,
That stays thy ardent wing:
How earnestly does thy sweet throat impeach
Thy gaolers, for the breach
Of courtesy and gentleness,
That works thee such distress.
Poor little thing!
Thank God, I pity thee thy fettered wing;
Thank God, for that compassion in my heart,
That bleeds for every smart;
Thank God, I am not hardened yet
To see without regret,
Even a grief like thine:
For if we shut our eyes,
To gentle sympathies,
And lowly sufferings remain unfelt,
The heart will by-and-by refuse to melt,
For any sorrow, human or Divine.

ALEXANDER HUME.

"It is time you went to bed," she said. "We will ring for Manon. Are you going to ask her pardon, Violet, for your behaviour?"

"No! She slapped and shook me first!" And Violet began to look rebellious again.

"She found you doing what you are quite old enough to know that you should not do. What will your papa say when he finds that you have spoiled some of his books?"

"He can buy more," the child carelessly replied.

"Does that excuse your naughtiness? I dare say he will be vexed when he sees such mischief. Surely you love papa too well to wish to vex him?"

"I love him when he gives me anything," said Violet. "It doesn't hurt Manon if I cut up the books; she should mind me better. If papa says anything, I shall tell him she went away to gossip, and I had nothing else to do; and then mamma will laugh, and say 'What a spirit the child has!'—that's all."

How Eda was to enforce the obedience of the Misses de Courcy, if this was the manner in which they were reared, she could not imagine; but she waived all further discussion of the topic, and raising the sleepy Rose in her arms, asked Violet to show her the way to the nursery. The little girl obeyed, piloting her through the busy servants, and past the open door of the handsome dining-room, with great dexterity; but as soon as they reached the nursery, where Manon, with sullen looks, was awaiting them, she began to evince a disposition to be restless and tiresome.

"Mamma receives after the dinner. I will be dressed, and go down," she cried.

Eda looked at Manon, who said, promptly, "Madame gave orders that *les petites* should not appear in the drawing-room to-night."

"I don't believe it; I will go and ask her," Violet exclaimed; but her nurse stepped nimbly to the door, locked it, and put the key in her pocket, as if she were accustomed to enforce her authority in this manner when arguments proved unavailing.

There would have been a repetition of the struggle that had taken place below; for Violet flew at her nurse, who was not slow to repay the kicks and pinches showered upon her; but Eda promptly interfered, and insisted that Manon should leave the room.

"If you cannot control these children without violence," she said to her, firmly, in her native language, "your presence here is worse than useless. I will myself put Violet to bed."

When the nurse had disappeared she seated herself by the fire, and steadily, sorrowfully eyed the passionate child, who, finding her rage elicited no comment from her quiet governess, gradually subsided, and began to look ruefully at the knuckles that were swollen and bruised with beating against the locked door.

"It was only out of spite that Manon said that I must not go down-stairs," she declared. "I shall tell mamma in the morning; and I shall tell her how you helped the nasty wretch to keep me shut up here!"

Eda made no reply to this speech; but her silent gravity exercised more influence over the child than any remonstrance she could have uttered; and presently Violet sidled nearer, to display her bruised hand.

"Look there! It was all Manon's fault; if it had not been for her I should not have done it. It was her fault, wasn't it?"

"No, I do not think it was," said Eda, quietly.

"If you take Manon's part I'll hate you! She *is* a wretch, a nasty wretch!" and Violet stamped on the floor to give emphasis to the epithets she was employing.

"If you are going to say such rude things I shall leave you to undress yourself," she was told.

"Then I'll get into bed with my clothes on, and that will make me ill."

"Very well," said Eda, coolly; "if you do not mind being ill, Violet, I have not the slightest objection. The doctor shall be sent for, and a few doses of his nasty medicine may cure you of your silly fits of temper."

"I don't like to be called silly," pouted Violet.

"Nor do I like to see you scream and fight like an overgrown baby. You are an unhappy little girl, and I feel very sorry for you."

Violet hung her head, and permitted her clothes to be unfastened; nor did she offer any resistance when Eda, kneeling down, gently forced the child on to her knees beside her, and, in the simplest words she could use, put up an earnest petition for Divine pity and forgiveness.

"We never say our prayers to Manon," Violet observed, as she nestled down beside her sleeping sister.

"Do you not say them to your mamma?"

"No; she is too busy to hear us. You haven't seen mamma, have you? Oh, she does wear such pretty dresses! I mean to have some just like hers as soon as I am old enough."

As this was not a profitable topic, Eda dropped the curtain between herself and the little chatterer, and, promising to stay till she was asleep, took up a book and tried to read.

But her thoughts were too busy for the volume of childish stories to interest her. She saw before her a difficult task, involving great responsibilities, and was more than half inclined to renounce it at once. What good could she hope to effect with these wayward children if Manon counteracted it, and their mother neither seconded her efforts nor upheld her authority? Eda was diffident of her own powers. With docile children she believed that she could get on fairly enough, but with these little girls

more tact and firmness would be required than she ventured to think that she possessed.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Discouraged by the events of the evening, unwilling to turn back from the work set before her, yet fearful of disgracing Lady Chessington's recommendation by proving herself incompetent, she was still sitting dejectedly at the nursery fire, when the door softly opened, and a lady, elegantly attired in a demi-toilette, stepped into the room, and announced herself as Mrs. de Courcy.

"So sorry that I have not been able to come and see you sooner!" she graciously said, as she held out her jewelled fingers, and just touched Eda's. "I came at the very first moment I could leave my visitors.

"And so my precious darlings are both asleep," she murmured, stealing on tiptoe to the bed. "Dear little things! how I love to see them so peaceful and happy! You mustn't be too severe with them at first, Miss Granton, for they are spirited little creatures, and not accustomed to be checked. Indeed, I am afraid that they have been rather neglected, for my health is so delicate that I cannot have them with me as much as I could wish."

Eda soon made the discovery that Mrs. de Courcy's health never interfered with her acceptance of the invitations showered upon her. If a complaint were brought to her of some mischievous trick perpetrated in the house or garden by the little girls, she was too ill or nervous to listen to it; but she could make elaborate toilettes, receive visitors all the morning, and at night fulfil engagements to concerts, balls, &c., seldom returning home till daybreak, without evincing any great degree of fatigue.

However, she stayed by the bed for two or three minutes, softly dropping kisses on the rosy faces of the sleepers, and asking if Miss Granton did not think that Violet would grow up extremely good-looking. She shrugged her shoulders, and smiled deprecatingly, when Eda ventured to hint that the child's violence of temper needed subduing, but neither seemed anxious nor offended.

"Ah, yes, she is a naughty little high-spirited darling; but then she has so much originality of character! In fact, she only wants managing, my dear Miss Granton. One cannot expect one's children to be perfect, can we?"

Eda was silent, but Mrs. de Courcy, satisfied with her own arguments, stroked the hair that lay on Violet's forehead, and then came back to the fire, saying, very civilly, "I hope Mrs. Wells has done her best to make you comfortable; and you must let Manon unpack your trunks. You will find Manon a most useful creature."

"I cannot say that I like her manner with my pupils," Eda frankly replied; but Mrs. de Courcy only smiled, and gave her white shoulders another shrug.

"She is rather brusque sometimes; but then it is so difficult to get a servant who suits in every particular; and Manon's French is unusually pure. Besides, her taste is excellent. She makes the children's dresses so well that I would not part with her on any account!"

Eda longed to ask if Manon's attainments could possibly atone for her alternate neglect and severity; but Mrs. de Courcy was now in haste to be gone, and begging Eda to ask for anything she required, she glided back to her guests, who were quite touched when they learned, from their beautiful hostess's apologies for her absence, that she had been unable to resist stealing away to have a peep at her sleeping darlings.

After Mrs. de Courcy left the nursery Eda resumed her seat, feeling, if possible, more depressed than before. It was the first time she had come in contact with a fashionable mother, and her heart ached for the little ones, whose faults she could now trace to their true source.

But now another visitor broke in upon her meditations. It was the housekeeper, who, when her cares for the day were over, had recollected the stranger, and come in search of her.

"Now, really, this is too bad!" she exclaimed, when she caught sight of Eda's unsnuffed candle and despondent attitude. "That heedless Manon should not have left you here alone. Do come to my room, Miss Granton, and let me get you some supper. You've had but a poor reception," she added, fancying that she could see traces of tears on Eda's cheek; "but I hope you'll excuse it. I should be very sorry if anything happened to drive a young lady away that's shown us already how clever she can be."

"Am I to believe this flattering speech, Mrs. Wells?" she was smilingly asked.

"Indeed, miss, you may; and Maria, the upper-housemaid, will tell you how I said, as soon as you sat down in my room with those children, "Miss Granton knows her business; and, please God, she'll make the poor little spoiled things as good as they're pretty, which it will be a blessed thing for every one in the house if she does!"

In spite of the leaven of selfishness lurking in the housekeeper's words, Eda felt cheered, and after a night's rest, she arose, ashamed of her faint-heartedness, and ready to meet with forbearance and patience all the annoyances—and they were many—of the coming day. She knew that even if success ultimately crowned her efforts, and the children became docile and obedient, it would not be till after many battles had been fought both with Manon and her charges; but she called up all her courage, and found her first reward in the pleasure the little girls testified at seeing her again.

(To be continued.)

A TOKEN FOR "LUCK."

I AM not of a sanguine temperament, but inclined rather to chronic apprehensiveness. My very nature is to anticipate failure; and at one period of my life this nasty morbid feeling had got such hold of me, that I really began to regard myself as the settled victim of ill-luck. I was a young man at the time, and if I had not been led to master this constitutional defect *then*, there is no telling how dismal and unsuccessful my career had been. And as I believe there are many like myself, of a naturally desponding cast of mind, I am going to relate the rather singular circumstance that gave me such a view of life as enabled me to overcome my infirmity. We cannot alter our physical composition, but we can control its injurious tendencies by good wholesome principle.

Several things had happened that disappointed and disheartened me, when I went off one summer, in most unenviable and snappish mood, to spend a fortnight's holiday, all alone, at the dreary sea-side place called Moulder-on-Lees. Its dreariness was its attraction; for there I should have no chance of meeting any one I knew, and so could brood over my ill-fortune without interruption.

Were I poetical I might say a great many pretty things about the harmony I there realised between my feelings and the various objects I saw around me. The restless ripple of the sea; the stern rocks, dashing aside, like inevitable destiny, the aspiring waves; the fisher-boats that brought so often back the tale of toiling in vain; the distant sail on its voyage of hope, too often to end in wreck; the sand that seemed so firm, yet for ever shifting. But I am not poetical, so forbear.

One day I took a long walk inland. As I was crossing a field that was being ploughed, I thought I saw in one of the newly-made furrows a small coin. It proved to be so—a thin bronze-looking shabby sort of halfpenny. Being fond of collecting such things, I put it in my pocket, and continued my gloomy walk homeward. That evening I was more than usually melancholy. I sat after dinner in a tolerably comfortable easy-chair in the little private room of the inn, and pondered over my bad luck till I was perfectly miserable. I put my hand in my pocket to pull forth my toothpick—for that truly aristocratic implement is friendly to bitter reflections; you can dig away furiously with it, as if finding out your enemies—when out fell the coin!

It diverted my attention, and I began to examine it. On one side was the rough impression of a head; on the reverse, a device like a ball with a cross on it. There were two inscriptions, which were not so defaced but that I could decipher them after a little puzzling. One was, "Hans Schultes zu Nureb." "Oh, I see," was my soliloquy, "one of the old *tokens*, and a foreign one, too. Nureb.! why that must be an abbreviation for Nuremberg, and Hans Schultes must have been one of the old merchant princes of that most ancient and enterprising city. Hans Schultes of Nuremberg; and there's his likeness, with that wonderful head-piece like the turban of a Turk. But how came it here? Very likely brought with the mud which they dredge out of the river and lay upon the land." Then, after thinking what a tale that coin could tell if it might but speak, I turned it over to make out the other inscription. "Glick kumpt von Got ist war." "Why, that must be very *old* German," I said to myself. "It must be the old way of spelling, 'Glück kommt von Gott ist wahr'—'Luck comes from God is true.'"

As I repeated the words to myself, I was struck with their singular appropriateness to my feelings at that time. It was as if some one spoke to me. I fell into a profound reverie.

"So that was the old fellow's motto, was it? He believed in luck, as I do, only he believed in something else too. I dare say he was a fat, sturdy, bandy-legged German burgher, who, do what he might, always came down safely on those same bow-legs of his. So it was easy for him to put down all his success in the world to heaven's special favour."

I was almost angry with the man, yet I kept on thinking about him, and couldn't get him out of my mind. I pictured to myself his home at Nuremberg, his comely family, his quaint costume. I seemed to know Hans Schultes and all his belongings. The great staring spots on the carpet of the room turned, each in succession, into a portrait of Hans Schultes. And when, at last, I looked up and saw Hans Schultes, just as I had imagined him, sitting as large as life in the chair opposite, I was not in the least surprised.

"I have been thinking of you, Herr Schultes," I said, in quite a familiar sort of way, as to an old friend unexpectedly turned up.

He smiled benevolently.

"I want a commentary on your text here!" and I held up the old token.

The old gentleman grinned, and slowly nodded.

"You have been a lucky man in your time, eh?"

"Ya!" And the grin was repeated on a more extensive scale.

"Born with a silver spoon in your mouth?"

"Nein!" he said, gravely. "When I was young, I did never have but wooden spoons in my mouth My father was very poor."

"Ah, but what I mean is, that luck was always on your side from your earliest days."

"What *is* luck?" said Hans, fixing on me his tranquil blue eyes with a steadiness of gaze that made me think a moment before replying.

"Well, I suppose it is having things turn out just as you want; never hardly meeting with disappointment; getting on in the world first-rate, with the least amount of trouble"——

Here I was interrupted by such a burst of guttural sounds—which I suppose were laughter,—that I stopped, rather angry. "Nein, nein, nein!" he cried at length. "That is not luck, that is not what I call luck." And my definition seemed to amuse him so much, that he went off into another fit of gutturals.

"Then, pray, what is it?" said I, sulkily.

"Glück kommt von Gott," was his answer.

"Well, I suppose so; but that doesn't explain what luck is."

His only reply was a most extraordinary ventriloqual sound—possibly a sixteenth-century expletive—but the tone of it was incredulous and pitying.

It was certainly not pleasant, so I looked at him somewhat sternly.

And as I did so, a dream seemed to come over me, and all around began to change like a dissolving view, though without occasioning me the least surprise. Hans Schultes was still there, only he looked much younger, and wore a peasant's dress. He was kneeling reverently before an ancient dame, whose hands were laid upon his head. The room was bare and gloomy, and I fancied I could hear the rustle of the forest trees whose foliage darkened it. As the young man rose, and took his leave with many an embrace, the dame kept pointing upwards with her finger, and said, with an emphasis of loving admonition I shall never forget, the simple words—"von Gott."

Then, with that remarkable ease with which circumstances shift in a dream, all blended instantaneously into another and widely different scene. The room expanded into a magnificent hall, brilliantly lighted by innumerable candles, and filled with gallant company. A banquet was going on in what I at once, by some mysterious intuition, recognised as the town-hall of Nuremberg. The crash of instruments of music was heard—for Germans always were given to noise in that matter—and when it ceased I saw Hans Schultes on his legs, going to make a speech. He was evidently the burgh-master elect, and looked a portly middle-aged man. "Why, there's my lucky friend Herr Schultes again!" I caught myself exclaiming.

Upon this, some one said in my ear—I don't in the least remember seeing who the speaker was, but the words dropped gently, like the dew—"Lucky! yes, if luck is hard work, patient application, determination to master difficulties, making good use of your brains, being devoted to duty, never whining under disappointment, conquering self, and while persevering in doing your best, to put your trust in God."

"That's a new sort of luck!" said I, sarcastically.

"It's the only luck Hans Schultes has known," was the reply.

"Anybody can have *that* luck," I urged.

"Anybody who tries," said the voice.

"But people don't get all they want, with all their trying," persisted I, with great bitterness.

"So much the better for them, if only they try their best; for—'Glück kommt von Gott,' and He knows what's good for us."

And as these now familiar words fell again on my ear, the light faded, the room contracted, the company passed away, and I seemed to be in the cabin of a ship. It appeared perfectly natural, and I took to the situation with all the unquestioning confidence of one who dreams. It was one of Hans Schultes' trading vessels, I knew. But how the cabin did go up and down! The ship must be in a gale. The swaying and plunging were fearful. Hark! there goes the mast with a mighty crack, and the whole ship trembled. The water comes pouring into the cabin. I shout for Hans Schultes, "Hans, Hans! where are you? the ship cannot sink with lucky Hans Schultes on board!"

A mariner, pale and fearful, looked in at the door, and said, "Peace, master, Hans Schultes is too lucky to be aboard. He was disappointed in coming with us at the last moment, and now *your* last moment has come."

As he spoke, I felt myself engulfed. The sea hissed around me. I struggled. I was laid hold of. I clung to somebody!

I awoke, and found myself struggling with the landlord of the inn at Moulder-on-Lees, who was trying to keep me in the arm-chair, and who was confirmed in the opinion that he had got a raving madman to deal with, by my staring wildly at him with open mouth, and saying, with tremendous prolongation of emphasis on the last word—"Glück kommt von Gott ist wahr—r—r."

It was a long time before I could make them feel at all comfortable about me. The landlord kept near, ready for a spring at the first symptom of another outbreak. There was the waiter casting furtive glances at every movement I made. And there, outside the open door, glimmered the hostler, with (I verily believe) a halter in his hand.

"I've been asleep, and had some extraordinary dreams," I meekly said, at length.

"Very extraordinary, sir," replied the landlord.

"What makes you all stare at me? Can't a man have an extraordinary dream without being watched like a wild beast?"

"The gentleman doesn't know how queer he looked," remarked the waiter; "I really thought you were a lunatic, sir."

I burst into a laugh, which seemed some evidence of sanity in their eyes, for they laughed too.

"Oh, but you did indeed look dreadful, sir!" continued the waiter. "I came into the room to bring you your coffee, and you were twitching in your chair, and making such faces, and then you cried out all at once, with such a screech, 'Hands, Hands!' Says I to myself, 'Hands indeed, that's just what you want.' So off I ran for master, and quick enough he came; but no sooner did he lay hold of your arms than you gripped him like a drowning man."

"Like a vice," said the landlord; "I shall be black and blue with it to-morrow."

"I'm very sorry," said I; "pray put it down in the bill." And I have reason to believe he did—not as one item, but as a small perturbation of all the items.

The next day I was off. I was not going to mope any more at Moulder-on-Lees or anywhere else. You may laugh, and say it was only a dream, and that my dinner had disagreed with me, as perhaps it had; but I don't care what anybody says. That dream put some new ideas into my head; and since they were good and sensible ideas, I made up my mind to keep them there, and what is more, act them out. So away I started for a more lively place, and finished my holidays merrily.

Then I returned to business, having first recorded the vow, that henceforth Hans Schultes' "token" should be a *token indeed* to me, that true luck is only to be found in steady work, and that no one need distress himself about success who is doing his very best to secure it, since *luck comes from God.*

FANNY FORREST; OR, EVIL COMMUNICATIONS.

CHAPTER IV.

FAITHFUL to her promise, it was still quite early on the next day when Fanny's figure might be seen peeping cautiously within the garden gate, too much in awe of Hannah's possible presence to venture further within the precincts of the place. Ruth was standing idly in the doorway when she first appeared, but no smile of welcome came as usual to her lips; on the contrary, she could not have accounted to herself for the panic of coming trouble which fell upon her, as, in obedience to Fanny's beckoning summons, she drew her broad-brimmed hat down, far down, over her face, and strolled with lingering footsteps to the gate.

But there was no panic to be detected in Fanny's voice, or fear of any trouble, save detection by Hannah's unfavouring eyes, as she took Ruth's hand within hers, and led her on a few steps to where, under the shelter of a high privet hedge, they could sit in safety from curious eyes, and talk together out of reach of curious ears.

Fanny found it harder work than she had at all expected to overcome the scruples of her friend, for Ruth at first would only reply with the one determined negative—that a trip to Upton such as Fanny would fain have arranged about could never, never be—no, never! Again and again she uttered the same words, each time with as firm an outward appearance as before, yet each time with a shaken confidence in herself, till, as the morning wore on, and still she lingered in dangerous dalliance, listening to the voice of the tempter, Fanny seemed to prove in some mysterious manner that all her scruples were nothing more than phantoms raised by her timidity. The money, as far as that went, she argued, had certainly been left to her disposal, to be used as she found occasion. If her father had been at home, there was every chance he would have taken her himself to see the *fête* which had thrown the little town of Upton into such a hubbub; and as to the scruples about going without him, or being recognised when there by any of the neighbours, why, Fanny only hooted at these fears. They would not be away, after all, really any time, and they could go round by the lanes to Bentham, and thus avoid the high road; and once at Upton, every one there would be far too much taken up with their own affairs to pay them any attention.

And thus the morning passed away; and when Fanny separated from her friend, she could scarcely guess how far her insinuations had been successful, for Ruth said never a word, but only turned in at the garden gate with an expression on her face which Fanny found it impossible to decipher.

But when the cool twilight came again, and Fanny crept to her old corner by the window-sill, and found Ruth there as usual, the darkness which to one gave concealment to the trembling lips and painfully flushed cheeks, gave to the other the boldness and audacity which had been wanting in the morning; and so it came to pass that, before the moon had risen above the trees to shed its calm influence over Ruth's troubled heart, the words of consent, however reluctantly uttered, had been spoken; and in her triumph Fanny had thrown her arms round Ruth and kissed her.

It was intended as a seal to the compact, and yet

it had nearly destroyed the work of the whole day; for at Fanny's kiss Ruth started back within the room, and covered up her face with her hands with an action of despair. Her father's face—grave, almost stern—rose up before her; Owen's, too—more gentle, but full of sad reproach—seemed to float before her very eyes; and it was only in a dream that she listened to all Fanny's concluding arrangements and last injunctions; nor did she stir or change her attitude one inch till long after the last good-night had been said, and Fanny, full of her triumphant hopes, had left the cottage far behind.

Poor Ruth! what amount of pleasure in the day to come could in any degree compensate for what she was suffering now? It seemed unendurable—the thought of all the love and confidence she was forfeiting for this one gratification. No; as she sat there till the room was fairly flooded with the bright light of the summer moon, she came back to the old determination that it could never, never be, and went up to bed with the resolution firmly taken, that when Fanny appeared the next morning she would tell her plainly, and once for all, that it was changed, and the carefully-planned expedition was at an end.

But Fanny was much too wary to run the chance of such a falling back. It was in vain that Ruth spent the whole morning straining her eyes—how fruitlessly!—for the face and figure of her friend to glide along, according to her habit, in front of the little wooden gate. No use for her to stand out in the glaring sun till she was faint and giddy, looking down the long perspective of the road leading to Squire Taunton's lodge; not even a flutter of the tawdry gown came to reward her; and with a moan of remorseful pain Ruth turned dejectedly to the house again. It would be too late to speak of change at the last moment, when Fanny appeared in full array, and in all the excitement of the expedition which to her seemed only full of the purest enjoyment. Why, oh, why! did nothing happen to take the matter out of Ruth's hands before it was too late?

With the vain hope that Hannah, in some strange freak of fancy, might have changed her mind concerning her meeting and subsequent tea-drinking, Ruth next turned towards the kitchen, and lingered hesitatingly on the threshold; but already the Sunday gown, and the bonnet with the prim white cap within it, were laid out upon the table, and the boots, and the prayer-book, and even the huge cotton umbrella, were set in order close at hand. That chance was gone, then, too. And with one final and forlorn hope that some unlooked-for chance might bring her father home one day earlier than she expected, Ruth seized on her hat again, and turning her eyes in the opposite direction to that in which she had looked for Fanny, she scanned with even a more fervent longing the road where, if her father were coming, she would soonest catch a glimpse of his approach. But in vain: the old-fashioned coach, by which she had almost made herself believe he would appear, rolled on relentlessly past the turning to their home, and Ruth felt that her last resource was gone. Owen had told her plainly he could not come: there was no chance now of a rescuing hand. She must give in to adverse circumstances, and try, with whatever effort it might cost her, to make the best of matters as they were.

And yet, when the glare of the mid-day sun was past, and the tall trees had begun to cast their welcome shadows, with lengthening stretches, over the fields, when Hannah had nodded a good-bye to her young mistress, and set out on her pilgrimage, while the dead calm of the summer afternoon was only broken by the lazy humming of the bees among the fragrant beds of mignonette, or by the trickling of the little stream among its pebbles, Ruth still sat on, with her face buried in her hands, and no further adornment than the cotton frock she had worn all day.

It was not till a figure standing in the window threw a shadow across the spot where she was seated that she sprang up, with a little scream, to meet Fanny Forrest, arrayed in an assortment of finery which fairly took away her breath, but yet with an ominous and angry glitter in her eyes.

"Not ready yet? nor no signs of it either! What do you mean, Ruth?" she asked, with a harsh sound in her voice which set Ruth's heart beating. "You don't mean you're a-going to break faith—do you?—after all?" and Fanny fixed her eyes on Ruth's trembling countenance with a most contemptuous stare.

"No, no, Fanny—of course not. But I was only waiting to see you, because—I thought—perhaps—I didn't know whether, after all—suppose we waited——" stumbled out poor Ruth, with fiery cheeks and choking voice. "Don't look like that, Fanny! don't! You are too unkind; I only wanted to know what you thought——"

Not one assisting word had come from Fanny's lips to help her friend out of her difficulty. She waited, without even shifting her searching eyes for a second, till Ruth had stopped, when, with a volume of suppressed anger, she began:—"You want to know what I think? Then I'll just tell you that I think you are the stupidest girl I ever met with in my whole life. You are more than that too, if you will have my opinion, for you're a cheat, to fix upon a thing, and lead me on, and then back out of the affair like this!"

Ruth raised her hands in a sort of despair. "Oh, don't say that!" she cried; "it is not true; I never said I would not go—I only said——"

"I don't want to hear what you said," broke in Fanny, angrily; "I only want to know one thing: are you coming, or are you not? If you are, by the time you are ready we shall have to run for it to

catch the train at Bentham. If you are not——" and Fanny stopped, with a menacing hesitation.

"I am, I am!" moaned Ruth. "I will do anything you like, if only you won't look like that, or speak to me as if you hated me. I will not be a moment getting ready, if you will wait for me."

"Look sharp then!" answered Fanny, not even yet vouchsafing to look pleased. "If you are more than ten minutes or a quarter tittivating of yourself, we shall find ourselves in the wrong box when we get to Bentham, and see the train whizzing out of sight. And, I say," she called out, as Ruth was flying out of the room, "have you got the money ready? for that is more than half the bargain, and 'twouldn't do to start without it, would it?"

"Yes, yes—it is all right; it's in the same place where you saw it before," replied Ruth, pausing with her hand upon the handle of the door. "I can get it on my way down."

"You'll never have the time to do it all!" urged Fanny, petulantly. "Here, chuck your keys over to me; I can climb in quite easily, and have it ready when you come down."

Ruth hesitated still, but Fanny was already half in across the window, and was holding out her hand imperiously. The heavy brow had knit the instant she perceived Ruth's indecision, and the bitter words were rising again to her tongue, when the keys were flung across the room, and fell rattling together at her feet.

"That's the way to do it!" she called out, exultingly, as she dropped her feet upon the floor within the room. "I'll find where it is right enough. Do you go along and hurry now, or after all we'll lose our sport."

"Yes, yes—I'm going. But oh, Fanny! do take care, and don't let anything get knocked about within the cabinet. Remember, all father's most precious things are there, and he would never forgive me, never——"

"Did I ever hear such a girl as you are?" answered Fanny. "Why, if every finger on my hands were thumbs you could not look more frightened! But see: when you come down, if I am not here, you'll know I'm waiting just outside there, in the lane. It's safer for me there than here; and you follow me, and look sharp about it, too, will you?"

"Yes, yes—I will; but wait for me, please—please do! You are quite safe here, Fanny; and I don't think I could ever start alone."

"You are an idiot ten times over, Ruth! Of course I'll wait for you; I shall not be a stone's throw from the gate. But you go and get ready, and don't drive me wild dawdling any longer!" And Fanny opened the door herself, and pushed Ruth out into the passage.

There was no help for it now, and up the narrow staircase, taking two, three steps at a time, Ruth flew. Her wardrobe was not large enough for her to waste much time in deliberating over it. The pretty pale-blue Sunday frock Owen was so fond of, the gloves and tie, and the hat—a present from her father not so long ago—these were all dragged out with trembling hands, and laid upon the bed. Nothing could stop it now, and she must only hurry, or Fanny would be in a rage again, and say more dreadful things, to haunt her for ever after. But the blue dress was only half on when Ruth stopped short, while her heart beat so wildly that she had to cling to the table at her side to steady herself: for softly through the air a sound had reached her, so like the signal-whistle always given by Owen at his approach, that it made her tremble with a new alarm; for now, even if Owen were to come, it would be too late. There could be no concealment—the story must be told; and what, what would he say?

Ruth waited and watched to hear the sound again, but in vain. Then it surely was not Owen, she whispered, with a sigh of strange relief. The secret was still her own. It must have been only some passer-by whistling to himself who had startled her so much; and yet, before she could be happy, she must, in spite of her hurry, stop again to listen for a moment, and stretch her head out of the wide-open window, and strain her ears to catch that sound again. But all she could hear was the sudden clapping of the door below, and hasty footsteps running through the garden; and Ruth knew that Fanny must already have left the house to wait for her without; and now, with fresh energy and despair, the rest of the holiday garments were donned, and Ruth, with only half a glance into the empty room below, rushed out through the garden, and turned quickly into the lane. *(To be continued.)*

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

80. What passage in the Bible shows the reverence due to the house of God?

81. Mention the passage which shows the birthplace of the prophet Elisha.

82. What prophet is stated to have been a gatherer of "sycamore fruit?"

83. State what relationship existed between St. Barnabas and the Evangelist St. Mark.

84. Where in the Bible is the constellation *Orion* mentioned beside the Book of Job?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 192.

69. "They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins" (Heb. xi. 37).

70. "The Cretians are alway liars, evil beasts, slow bellies" (Titus i. 12, 13).

71. They were devoured by fire from the Lord, because they offered strange fire (Lev. x. 1; 2).

72. "Holy and reverend is His name" (Ps. cxi. 9).

73. "Thou . . lookest narrowly unto all my paths; thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet" (Job. xiii. 27).

74. 2 Pet. iii. 8.



(*Drawn by* J. N. Lee.)

"FOR ME TO LIVE IS CHRIST, TO DIE IS GAIN."

THE faltering fingers touch uncertain strings:
Of love, of earthly love, the poet sings—
Of love, when doubt assails, so quickly slain;
O words of love which speak diviner things!
"For me to live is Christ, to die is gain."

The gold of autumn turns to ashen grey;
The dirge of hope remains from day to day
The burden of our songs, the sad refrain;
Till smiling lips at last have learnt to say,
"For me to live is Christ, to die is gain."

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John, leaning on the bosom of the Lord,
And ever listening for the whispered word,
  Found rest and peace in weariness and pain;
Love is its own exceeding great reward;
  "For me to live is Christ, to die is gain."

In Jesus the Divine and human meet,
The harmonies of life are made complete,
  The wailing minors cease to vex the strain,
The varying chords awake in music sweet—
  "For me to live is Christ, to die is gain."

When shadows deepen in the dying light,
When sunset glory fades in gloomy night,
  His shining stars shall make my pathway plain,
His hand in mine shall guide my steps aright,
  "For me to live is Christ, to die is gain."

J. R. E.

EDWARD TURNER, CARPENTER AND BUILDER.

BY AGNES MACDONELL, AUTHOR OF "MARTIN'S VINEYARD."

CHAPTER XII.

BARBARA ON THE HEARTH.

"Like the fair sunshine when clouds clear away
Is love, thrice crowned, that wins through long delay."

MR. BRERETON, who had come up with Charlie when he sailed, stayed a few days afterwards to see Mr. Smith, and to talk over the plan of my joining him at Birchfield. It was finally agreed that I should remain at Smith and Horrocks' till Christmas, when I should leave for good and all, as they say, and go down into Kent. Mr. Smith and I parted very good friends. He had always behaved very just and honourable to me, and I felt very sorry to leave the workshop in Blackfriars, even though it was to begin an independent and much better business than I could have hoped to have for many a year in the ordinary course of things. I was very anxious to leave all my work at Smith and Horrocks' straight and smooth for the man who followed me as foreman, and I wrote home to my mother two or three days before Christmas, saying I should not be down at Birchfield till after the Christmas week, when I was to enter on my work at Brereton's shop. But on Christmas Eve I found that I had nearly wound up everything, and there was nothing more to be done than I could finish in one day.

I could scarcely understand the change that had come over everything; indeed, those busy days before I left London seem, even now, like a dream, in looking back. My life, that had seemed so dark and monotonous, had suddenly been broken up, and the brightest hope seemed to be poured upon it. I made all my arrangements for leaving quietly enough, I dare say, to the eyes of others, but every hour increased the longing to go to Birchfield once more, and to see Barbara. For with the fresh hope that Charlie Brereton's words had given me, had sprung up all the old thoughts and feelings about her that I had so long suppressed, stronger than ever. I determined to go down and spend the Christmas Day at home, and return to town for a day or two in the Christmas week, so as to close up my work and say "Good-bye" to Mr. Smith and the men. I took the train down to Birchfield that afternoon. Barbara was not at the station, another young woman was there, who said she had taken her place for the afternoon, and Barbara was to do her work on New Year's Day. I felt almost glad she was not there, for I knew she must be up at the cottage.

It was a clear still evening, about half-past four, as I walked up the lane, and across the bit of common to the house. There was a light in the window as I turned in at the gate. I stood for a moment, and looked in. Barbara was there, and quite alone; she was standing with her back half-turned towards the window; she held her apron, which was full of holly and green boughs, with one hand, and was reaching up to put a bit of ivy behind the glass above the chimney-piece with the other. I thought her face looked sad and sweet, and, somehow, older, as she stood with the firelight shining on her; and a great love came into my heart towards her, like a sea.

I lifted the latch, and went in. She spoke without turning round. "Don't the berries catch the firelight prettily here, Robert!" she said. "We shall have it all done before your mother and Ann come in."

I took a step into the room, and spoke her name. She gave a little cry, and turned; I think she must have read it in my face, before I found the words to speak, and while I held her two hands in mine, and looked into her dear face, which was as the sight of the blue sky to my heart after a life of November days, though it was so pale.

"I was so startled!" she said, as if she wanted to excuse the blushes that were rising on her cheeks. "You said you would not come to-day; we had no hope—we had no thought——"

She kept on smiling; but suddenly, a great sob choked her as she spoke, and she tried to hide her face.

I took her to my heart then, for something spoke strong within me that the hour had come, and I told her how I loved her, and had loved her many a year.

And so I found the day had come; and Barbara said she loved me, and that it gave her joy to be my wife.

CHAPTER XIII.

CHRISTMAS EVE, AND A LETTER.

The very graves appeared to smile,
So fresh they rose in shadowed swells;
"Dark porch," I said, "and silent aisle,
There comes a sound of marriage bells."

THAT was a happy Christmas, when God gave me the blessing of my life in Barbara; but each year, I think, has blessed me deeper in our life together.

We live in the house at the end of the wood-yard, for Mr. Brereton has grown infirm of late years, and the management of the business falls almost entirely to me, and I have to live near the shop. My mother and Robert and Ann still live in the cottage on the common. Robert keeps his situation as gardener. Ann still takes in needlework, and is almost always busy, working for the ladies in the neighbourhood; but she is ever ready to do a kindness for any of the neighbours; and in times of sickness or trouble they often send for Ann, for she has a quiet way and a firm mind, which make people cling to her when they are distressed, or burdened with cares and sorrow.

Tom Milton now works as one of my men, and lives with us in the house near the workshop. Tom has grown into a fine strapping lad, and promises to be a first-rate carpenter; but he has a mighty fancy for emigrating, and some of these days, I suppose, he will go and join Charlie Brereton in that distant place on the borders of the States and Canada, where he is living. Charlie is thriving in his new home, and seems quite restored in health. We have not heard very often from him; but a few days before this Christmas just past we received a big box from him. It happened to come the day before Christmas Day. My mother and Robert and Ann ate their Christmas dinner with us; and when we were all sitting round the fire, in the afternoon, Robert and I opened the box from America, and took out the things it contained. It was filled with presents for us all. There was a fox-fur muff for my mother, and curious Indian shoes and caps, worked with bright-coloured quills, and a roll of Canada cloth for Barbara, for her to make her baby a cloak of, as it said on a slip of paper fastened to it.

The women drew round the table to see and admire the things; and then Barbara took out a parcel directed to Ann, which lay by itself. They opened it together, and drew out a white shawl, of some fine silky material, within it was laid a white fan made of feathers, in the centre of which was set a stuffed bird no bigger than a butterfly. Barbara gave me the baby to hold while she shook out the shawl and laid it over Ann's shoulders, and put the fan in her hand, and then she, the silly little woman, gave a sob, and folded her arms about her, and kissed her, and when she turned again towards me, I saw, though she was smiling, there were tears upon her cheeks. Robert said Ann looked like a grand lady, with that long white shawl on. But she only stood a moment to be looked at, and then slipped it from her shoulders, and folded it again, and put the fan in its case.

Then we sat down by the fire, and I took out this letter and read it to them, and parts of it I copy here.

"Conshohocks Falls, Cookaville, County Maine,
"November 18, 18—.

"MY DEAR NED—Many a time have I thought of writing these last six months, since I got your letter; but somehow the time has slipped on and on, and it's nearly twelve months since I took up my pen to wish you all well at Birchfield, for many and many a time I think of dear old England, and the old days. As the song says, 'Absence makes the heart grow fonder,' and it is true in my case, at any rate.

"The speculation in the timber cutting, which I told you of in my last letter, turned out very well. We made two hundred dollars on the last lot sent down that autumn; and last spring I joined partnership with Abner Kimble, the Vermont man whom I told you about. We get on very well together. He is a middle-aged man, and very shrewd and clever about business.

"The frost lasted very late this year, and for three weeks our mill stood still for want of timber. In the idle days, I took a journey up country, quite into the wilds, to see after our spring rafts; and a fine journey I had, partly going on sledge up the river, and partly through the woods on snow-shoes. I took my gun with me, and managed to get a couple of black foxes, and a fine loon-bird. Tell your mother I had the fox-skins made into the muff I sent her in the box; Kimble dressed and sewed the skins, and a woman down at the station lined the muff.

"Our mill has a fine situation just above the falls, and in summer the woods all round look beautiful. I think you would say my house was as pretty and comfortable a home as a man need desire. I have done a great deal at it myself, and trimmed up our bit of clearing, and made it look something like a little English garden. But sometimes, of an evening, when Kimble sits reading his newspaper or his Bible by the fire, or of a Sunday, when he has gone, fourteen miles down the river, to the nearest meeting-house, I sit by the fire alone, and my mind always goes back to Birchfield, and I think of my friends there, wondering if they still remember me. It is near three years since I went away, and it seems like more to me, too. And now, Ned, I think I've made up my mind not to let any more years run on, but to go to England for a visit, and see my uncle and you all again. I have saved a little money, and our business is doing very well, and in another year's time it will be harder to leave than it is now. Kimble does not much like the idea of my going, but he will come round to it in the end. He said, last night, after we had been talking about it, 'Well, I guess you'll have to go, as you've got such a hankering after it; hankering is like nature, and you can't argue a man out of it, no more than you can stroke a bear into being civil, or talk a hop-toad out of jumping.'"

When mother and Robert and Ann had gone that night, Barbara and I stood listening to the Christmas bells, which had just began to ring, and my wife looked so musing and still, that for a while I said nothing; but at last I lifted her chin on my hand, and began to twit her a bit, and offered her a penny for her thoughts, saying I knew what they were, and that she was planning to steal Ann's white shawl. She laughed, and called me "Stupid."

"But not so stupid, either, Ned," she said; "for after all, I was thinking of the white shawl." Then, in a low voice, "I was thinking how Ann would wear it when Charlie Brereton came back—on her wedding-day."

And then she kissed me.

THE END.

"NO TEMPLE THEREIN."

BY THE REV. JAMES SPENCE, D.D., AUTHOR OF "HOURS WITH DANIEL," ETC. ETC.

"And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it."—REV. xxi. 22.

IN the chapter where these words occur we have portrayed to us the happy and triumphant state of the redeemed Church when all its conflicts shall have ended, and all its enemies shall have been overcome. That state is depicted under the image of a beautiful city, of which Jerusalem was the emblem, and it was disclosed to St. John by a vision of that city, the new Jerusalem, descending from heaven. Jerusalem was regarded as the peculiar dwelling-place of God on earth, and to the Jews it thus became the natural emblem or symbol of the heavenly state. The carrying out of the image is in perfect keeping with the conception. It is a city of glorious structure and magnitude, with beautiful walls and gates and streets, built of most costly and precious materials—a city filled with fountains and streams, with the love of life on either side of the river of life and its twelve kinds of fruit, but a city which has no temple—a city where there is no night, and into which no sin or impurity can ever enter; where the inhabitants never are sick, and where death has no dominion.

The Temple is contemplated here, of course, after its specific Old Testament character and design. "Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them," was the command of God to Moses (Ex. xxv. 8); and the very name "tabernacle" or "tent of meeting" characterises it as the places where God, in visible symbol, condescended to meet with His people. It was set up first at Sinai in the wilderness, and on the entrance of the Israelites into the promised land it found a resting-place for a time successively at Gilgal, Shiloh, Nob, and finally at Gibeon, five or six miles north of Jerusalem. As a stable and permanent building, the Temple took the place of this movable tabernacle. It was a most magnificent edifice, erected by Solomon; was seven years in building; and, when solemnly dedicated to God, was filled with a cloud of Divine glory. It was the grandest object in the historical Jerusalem, and the brightest ornament of the city, typically considered. To abide in its courts, to dwell under its shadow, was deemed by the devout and pious Jews their highest privilege, the greatest boon, spiritually considered, which they could enjoy in life. "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple" (Psalm xxvii. 4).

The Temple, then, was the appointed dwelling-place of God, the house of sacrifice, and the house of prayer. What is intended by this privature representation of Heaven, this absence of a temple? It cannot, of course, mean that there is no devotion, no worship there. Heaven is the house of perfect worship and of the very highest devotion, where untiring service, ceaseless adoration, and abounding praise, are ever going on. With the presence of a temple certain ideas are associated, both in the Old and in the New Testaments, in the mind of the Christian as well as of the Jew; and if we examine them we may find out more clearly and definitely the rich meaning of the assertion that there is no temple in heaven.

I. The Temple was the appointed dwelling-place of God, where He condescended to manifest His presence and reveal His glory to men. "Concerning this house which thou art in building," God said to Solomon, "I will dwell among the children of Israel, and I will not forsake my people Israel" (1 Kings vi. 12, 13). The pious Jew repaired to the ancient temple, and the devout worshipper now repairs to the earthly sanctuary to meet with God, to obtain some glimpses of His beauty, some new discoveries of His excellence, some fresh manifestations of His glory. In heaven there will be no intervening temple, no walls, so to speak, between us and God, no shrine where only or specially He unveils His Glory. There will be the fullest disclosures of Deity, with nothing between us and the glory of His presence. What this will be to the intellects and hearts of redeemed men we cannot say; for to behold the unveiled glory of God in Christ surpasses all our thought and conception now. Here the tabernacle of God is with men, symbolised by places which we designate the "house of God," but in heaven the tabernacle or dwelling of men will be with God for ever. There will be immediate fellowship with Him. On this earth outward means and ordinances help us to this communion; even the walls and pews, the windows and pillars of a material sanctuary may, by endeared association, become a means of grace to the people of God. But in heaven "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it," and our communion will be perfect, our fellowship immediate and uninterrupted for ever.

To enjoy God's presence expresses the fruition of all hope and the realisation of the highest desire in connection with the courts of the Lord's house on earth. The holy in every age, and under all dispensations, have loved the sanctuary, because it helped them to a consciousness and a joy which nothing earthly could give. In heaven God him-

self will be the temple, and the enjoyment in Him, realised by the saints in glory, will be perfect and without cessation for ever. Here His courts help us to raise our thoughts to Him, that we may draw our highest blessedness from Him; then He himself will be our perfect and perennial joy. The force of His love will fill us with all the elements of purity and felicity, and the beams of His glory will encompass us and make us resplendent for ever. Our worship of God and our communion with the highest will not be a thing of buildings in heaven, for there is no temple therein.

II. The temple of old was appointed as the house of sacrifice. "I have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice" (2 Chron. vii. 12.) It was the grand central spot for the ritualistic and sacrificial service of the deistical economy. But in Christ all this came to an end. Burnt-offering and sin-offering have ceased; for it was "not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins." Now, once, in the end of the world, hath the "Son of God appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." All type and symbol met their fulfilment in Him as the great antitype, and "by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Yet, under the Christian dispensation, the believer is required to offer sacrifice. The saints constitute "an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." These sacrifices, according to the New Testament, were of three kinds—the living sacrifice, the living surrender of self to God as a reasonable service, the holy consecration of all our powers to God (Rom. xii. 1); then the sacrifice of praise; and the sacrifice of self-denying benevolence for the good of others (Philipp. iv. 1, Heb. xiii. 15, 16). The bleeding victim has no more to be offered in atonement for sin; the shedding of blood on the altar has for ever ceased. The word *sacrifice*, therefore, when applied to the spiritual offerings of Christians, is used metaphorically, and suggests the idea of something devoted, lost, or surrendered, for the sake of something higher to be obtained. In the sacrifice of self with all our powers to God there is the conquest of selfishness: in the benevolent action and beneficent communications required of all Christians for the good of others, there is the surrender of that which, in human thought, belongs to themselves. In all sacrifices something has to be overcome in us, something to be denied in ourselves, something to be given up for the attainment of higher good, and the realisation of greater blessing. Now, in heaven there will be no temple, and there will be no sacrifice. Nothing will have to be denied, nothing overcome in us. All action will be spontaneous, all consecration natural, all offering free. The doing good and the being good, in all their perfection, will be the native outcome and expression of the life "within the vail." There will be no element of selfishness as a drawback to be conquered and cast out. All service will be perfect, all devotion pure and free, and all action the expression of praise. No offering will be of the nature of sacrifice. No loss will be experienced or risk incurred in the attainment of that which is higher or more glorious. Here, amid the imperfections of this life, such sacrifices are often made—ease for advancement, worldly interest for righteousness, personal comfort for public good, pleasure for duty; but in heaven such sacrifices will not be required, and life will then be perfect, with nothing to hinder its progress or hamper its natural development, every element of it enriched and elevated by the combined and unbounded joy of all. The rose makes no sacrifice in sending forth its beauty and fragrance; the tree makes no sacrifice in bearing for us its luscious fruit; the valleys make no sacrifice when laden with the golden grain for the food of man; and the sun yields no sacrifice in the warmth and light which he diffuses throughout the universe. In this way these seriously answer the very design of their existence. But here it is not man's way supremely to serve his God, lovingly to care for his neighbour as himself, or devotedly to seek the good of all. It is only by the conquest of self through the grace of Christ that he brings forth fruit thus to glorify his Father in heaven, and this fruit is therefore recognised as a spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God. But in heaven all that is beautiful and perfect in holiness and love will find its climax and consummation in the service and enjoyment of Christ, and in likeness to Him, without sacrifice, for ever.

III. The Temple was specially designated "a house of prayer." When the Lord Jesus went into it on one occasion, and cast out those who sold and bought in it, He said, "My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves" (Matt. xxi. 13). It was appointed as a place for the worship of the Most High. This brings to our minds not only the place, but times and special forms of worship. These ideas are also associated with our words "church," "chapel," or "sanctuary," wherever men meet together to worship God; but in these respects there is no temple in heaven. There will be no special or appointed place for worship in heaven. This much we have already said. It is true that the dispensation of grace and truth by Jesus Christ introduced a new state of things in the worship of God, and was a great advance upon Judaism. Thus, the Temple of Jerusalem was the grand central place of worship: now the spiritual worshipper everywhere is accepted of God. But man here is a weak and imperfect creature, and as a means of spiritual help and a matter of con-

venience, sanctuaries and special places of worship are necessary. Nothing of this kind will be required in heaven; hence there is no temple therein. The worshippers will have no occasion to repair to any particular place for the offering of worship and the acts of devotion. Heaven will be illuminated by the glory of God and the Lamb "that was slain;" and everywhere the Divine presence will be diffused; everywhere will worship be joyously offered, and homage heartily rendered. Every act will be devotion, and every utterance praise. Then throughout the realms of the blessed

> Will every heart exult with joy,
> And every voice be song.

Nor will there be special times for worship in heaven, for there is "no temple therein." The temple of old had its regular sacred season, when the tribes of Israel repaired to it, to appear before God. Three times a year were all males throughout the land required to present themselves in Jerusalem, and besides these great annual festivals, there were special monthly and weekly celebrations. We, too, under the Christian economy, have our Sundays and sacred seasons for public worship, but in heaven there will be no distinction of times and seasons; stated and regular occasions for worship will not be needed, nor outward summons to call the worshippers to assemble. Here the devout look forward to the day of weekly rest, when they may specially meet with God, to enquire in His temple, and so find help in the sanctuary. Were it not for special times and places of worship here on earth, the duty would be neglected and the privilege disregarded, but in heaven such opportunities will not be required. There will be no fixing of "the hour of prayer," as in the temple at Jerusalem and in our Christian churches, for the "praises of eternity" will be uninterrupted and constant, and in the celestial city every life will be an expression of perfect worship, and "every voice a song."

Not that there will be no prayer in heaven, but its practice and power will be so natural, beautiful, and glorious, that special places and seasons for it will not be required, for there is "no temple therein."

Nor does it appear that special acts and forms of worship will be needed. All service will be worship. In our earthly sanctuaries certain distinctive parts of Divine service alone are deemed appropriate parts of worship, but in heaven there may be no such speciality or distinctiveness. It will be worship to praise, worship to serve, worship to "stand and wait." Here we have two worlds to deal with: our places of worship on earth are especially for the concerns of the soul, and not certainly for our bodily exercise; but in heaven only one world will be our concern, and one state will occupy our thought and fire our emotion without conflict or compromise, so that all acts will be triumphant worship, and all service acceptable devotion. In this sense, as unrequired, there will be no temple in heaven. How free and glorious then will be the celestial life! how perfect the worship, how firm the communion, how ecstatic the devotion! Blessed truly, and blessed only, are they who, under the infirmities of the flesh and amid the entanglements of the world, are here preparing, through the grace of God, for this condition of eternal life and glory! The new song—the song of redemption—must be learned by us on earth if we would join hereafter in singing it in heaven and help to swell the mighty chorus there of "Salvation to our God and unto the Lamb!"

This theme suggests to us the great importance of places of worship here. Their necessity and appropriateness to our condition and circumstances on earth are implied in the very fact that they are not in heaven. The contrast is suggested: Here, as has been said, we have two worlds to deal with and live for. Sanctuaries are appointed by God to help us in our spiritual life here, and so prepare us for the future glory. Hence, they ought to be prized, and "the means of grace" which they supply, diligently improved. Some theoretically disparage or despise the house of God; in so doing they make themselves wiser than God, who, knowing our frailty and our proneness to "neglect the great salvation," has graciously met our need by the institution of public worship, and the ordinances of His Church. There is in truth an important connection between "the means of grace" and "the hope of glory;" and, without having any theory of disrespect, multitudes practically neglect the house of God, and are satisfied with a very occasional attendance on its services. Many, indeed, born in our favoured land, are never seen within the walls of any place of worship, because they have no consideration for the concerns of their souls. The right use of the house of prayer is to lift our thoughts heavenward, and to prepare us for that land of glory where there is no temple to meeten the soul for the pure and perfect worship of the celestial city, where the formal and thoughtless worshipper will be unknown. All who can, ought to by devout and regular attendance in God's earthly temples, to grow in meetness for the services and the joys of the heavenly Jerusalem. Love to the house of the Lord has characterised devout and holy men everywhere, and in every age of the world.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 14. Mission Work, No. 2.

Chapters to be read—Acts xiii., xiv. (parts of.)

INTRODUCTION. Remind of last lesson. Two Sabbaths spent at Antioch in Pisidia. Who believed, and who did not? Yet the effect of the preaching was great, all in the district heard the Word, and the seed was widely sown. Will the apostles stay and gather in the fruit? The question is decided for them. What did the Jews do? Moved by envy, as before, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, they raise persecution. Whom do they stir up? (xiii. 50.) These women, though devout, *i.e.*, God-fearing Jewesses, unlike Martha and Mary, not yet learned the love of Christ. They and the chief of the city, *i.e.*, magistrates, being stirred up against the apostles, what can they do? How had Christ provided for such a case? (Luke x. 11.) Picture the apostles slowly and sadly leaving the city—sad, not for themselves, but for the honour of Christ, that He should be despised, stopping at the gate to shake off the dust from their sandals, and utter a last warning against them. Then, persecuted in one city, moving to another (Matt. x. 23).

I. Visit to Iconium. (Read xiv. 1—7). Ask the children who had persecuted the apostles in Antioch, therefore might think they would avoid Jewish towns for the present, or at any rate the synagogues. Did they? No, went straight into synagogue at Iconium. What did this show? Not mere rashness, but bold confidence in protecting power of God. What was the result? boldness in speaking, and a multitude of converts. How did God help them? Remind of the signs given to Moses when sent to unbelieving Pharaoh. Of the signs promised to those that believe (Mark xvi. 17). So now great signs and wonders, *i.e.*, miracles done as testimony to the truth of God's Word. But persecution again comes, not only from the Jews, but also from Gentiles this time. The city divided; half, persuaded by unbelieving Jews, take part against, and half, having learnt the truth in Jesus, take side of the apostles. Being men of peace, they will leave the truth to work, and move on elsewhere.

II. Visit to Lystra. (Read 6—18.) (1) *The cripple.* So far have been more or less amongst Jews, who had knowledge of God. Now go to a district wholly heathen. What will they do here? Can no longer preach in synagogues. No longer appeal to knowledge of God and Old Testament prophecies, must now preach in streets, on village green, in market, wherever groups are assembled. Message, one of glad tidings, love of Christ to bodies in healing, to souls in forgiving. What kind of people would listen most eagerly? Surely those who most felt need. Not far to look. Where was the cripple lying? Probably at gate, to excite compassion of all entering. He heard the news, drank it in, believed. St. Paul seeing earnestness, suddenly tries his faith. It is not found wanting. What does the man do? Fancy his joy at being able to walk. A cripple from birth. Alas! no temple here in which, like the lame man healed by St. Peter, may praise God. (2) *The sacrifice.* Describe the news of the miracle spreading. Commotion in the village, people running from house to house, tidings reaches the ears of the priest. What do the people think was the matter? Can be but one thing. The gods come to visit us. What must they do? The priest at once catches up the idea, and wishing to do honour brings oxen for sacrifice, garlands hurriedly tied on horns in honour of this festal day. Now the apostles hear of it, what will they do? Shall they, like Herod, receive divine honour? No; rend their clothes as token of mourning at such an idea, and running in hurriedly, can scarce restrain the people from sacrificing to them. (3) *The sermon.* The apostles seize the opportunity of declaring God; they themselves are men, but are servants of God, and sent by Him. He did leave men for a time to their own ways, yet even then His gift of rain and fruits spoke of Him, now has sent His messengers. (4) *The persecution.* Surely the Jews will leave the apostles alone here. No; they follow them from Iconium, and now set them against the apostles. They stone St. Paul, the chief speaker, so violently, as nearly to kill him. What a contrast to the day before! What does it remind of? Who cried "Hosannah to the King of Israel!" one day, and four days after "Crucify?" But some must have listened and believed, for the disciples stand round Paul, evidently in prayer, *i.e.*, those who have been taught by him and received the Word. See, he is not dead! Their prayers have saved him, and he revives.

III. Return Home. (Read 21—28.) Their journey from Lystra back to Antioch may be traced. Passed through Iconium again, where persecuted before, at each place confirming the souls of the disciples, and showing they must count the cost, as tribulation is lot of all in Christ's Church. Notice also how provide for carrying on the good work; ordain elders in all churches. At last return home. What a tale of adventure have to tell! Been away two years, one of the party left them, another nearly killed, both stoned twice, converts in every city; elders ordained, work prospering, God evidently given His blessing. So (ver. 27) they call a missionary meeting, tell all this, then stay quietly at home till fresh call comes.

Practical Lessons. (1) *Perseverance.* Apostles had a work to do which must be done. No persecu-

tion, difficulty, desertion, stopped them, went straight on, obeying God's command. What an example to the young, starting in life. If God be for us none can really be against. (2) *Patience.* Mark afraid, turned back. Paul and Barnabas patiently trusting, endured to end. Which got greatest blessing? When work seemed in vain in one place, went to another. Knew the result was sure. So, if way seems dark to us, difficulties arise, &c., in patience possess souls. All must be well.

Questions to be answered.

1. What commands had Christ given in cases where His message was rejected?
2. Describe the visit to Iconium.
3. What outward signs did the apostles use?
4. Describe the healing of the cripple. What other miracle does it resemble?
5. Contrast the conduct of the apostles at Lystra with that of Herod.
6. What two practical lessons may we learn?

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SOME months glided by, and Eda, absorbed in her new difficulties and duties, endured with tolerable patience the comparative neglect with which she found herself treated both by Richie and her brother. The former wrote as affectionately as of old; but he had fallen back into the old friendly style she preferred, and seemed to have quite forgotten his eagerness to make her his wife; while Mark was so engrossed in business that he could rarely spare an hour for his sister; and the little house at Hampstead was still in perspective.

Eda would have felt sadly isolated but for the kindness of the Allonbys. At their house she was always welcome; and some of the pleasantest hours she had ever known were spent beside the arm-chair of Gran. Richie she never encountered there again; a chance word or two told her what she had already guessed from Mr. Allonby's manner—that he was but a casual acquaintance, with whom neither the artist nor his sister was so favourably impressed as to wish to know him better.

Flossy Devon she often met, for that young lady was in the habit of flying in and out of the dwellings of her friends at all hours. At first Eda had felt inclined to dislike her, but she soon yielded to the fascination the pretty little creature exercised over every one who came in contact with her. Coquette she was by nature; and if she had a heart, it was so filled with herself that she had no real affection to bestow upon others. She would commit the most unkind acts imaginable, yet with such dulcet words, and such an innocent air of unconsciousness, that her victims generally endured the sting, and forgave her. If she had been ugly or rude she would have been judged less leniently; but who could be harsh to the sweet-faced, caressing Flossy Devon?

It was both rest and refreshment when Eda could exchange the handsome house of the De Courcys for Doris's neat sitting-room. It saddened her to see that the wealth so profusely spent brought neither comfort nor real enjoyment to the parents of her pupils. Mr. de Courcy was a weary dissatisfied man, always seeking for new excitements; and his lady hid under her suave manner a selfishness which she had no inducements to overcome. The servants were over-worked, and only prevailed upon to remain by increased salaries and a degree of license in their scanty leisure that unfitted them for other situations. Scarcely a day went by without some wrangle that disturbed the whole household; and Manon, who knew that she was valued by her mistress, contrived to inflict so many petty annoyances on Eda, that it was only a conviction that the children were really improving under her care that enabled her to endure them.

Sunday at Mr. de Courcy's was the most miserable day of all—every one was dull and peevish; and when her pupils went into the drawing-room to help their father to while away an hour or two with their frolics, Eda gladly fled to a holier atmosphere. But for these opportunities, and her visits to the Allonbys, she would not have been able to contend with the discomforts around her; but Gran unconsciously read her many a lesson of patience. The aged woman, who sat all day in her arm-chair, too feeble to leave it unassisted, was always cheerful, always grateful for any little attention, and could still take real pleasure in the society of those she liked.

Yet what a troubled harassed life hers had been! Partly from her own reminiscences, and partly from the lips of Mr. Allonby, Eda learned that Gran was in no degree related to the young people who called her by that affectionate appellation. A workhouse foundling, she had been buffeted about the world till she became a nursemaid in the house of Mr. Allonby's parents. By them she had been treated with such kindness and consideration that, when misfortunes overtook her generous friends, the faithful creature clung to them with the most touching devotion. After much sickness and sorrow, they both died, and Gran transferred her love to their orphan children, for whom she toiled unceasingly, till the bowed frame and the nerveless hands failed her.



(*Drawn by* F. BARNARD.)

"Then she seated herself beside Eda, whose reserve she seemed determined to overcome."—*p.* 235.

"Fritz was but a boy when his parents died," Gran said on one occasion; "but he had a brave heart—braver than mine; for many a time when I thought no one could see me, I have wrapped my apron round my head and cried my eyes sore. But I prayed as well as cried," she added, quaintly, "and so I used to get off my knees feeling quite fresh again."

"But Mr. Allonby found friends, did he not?"

"No, my dear; he *made* them. When people saw that he was too proud to be idle, they put work in his way; and though it was ill-paid at first, it helped to keep the home together. A wandering home it was in those days; for when we couldn't afford a house, we managed with lodgings; and when the rent of a second-floor was too much for our pockets, we went up to the attics, and what we lost in gentility we gained in fresh air."

"Perhaps Mr. Allonby will not like you to tell me all this?" Eda gently hinted.

"Nay, dear; one of the first lessons I taught my boys and girls—and though it was a hard one, they learned it—was not to be ashamed of anything but sin. When they sit round the fire sometimes, laughing over Gran's old expedients, and I remember how they kept their integrity through poverty and temptation, I feel as if I should like to get away into a corner and thank God for His goodness, and most of all for keeping them all humble."

The Allonbys insisted that Eda should eat her Christmas dinner with them; and as Violet and Rose would spend the evening in the drawing-room, whither she was never invited to accompany them, she was glad to exchange the lonely school-room for a merry family circle. Besides, she felt no little curiosity to see Gran's boys and girls all together—a curiosity that suffered some disappointment, for, after all, they were precisely like any other family. That they were all warm-hearted and hospitable was evidenced by her own reception—that she was an orphan and a stranger being sufficient recommendation to make them vie with each other in kindly attentions.

Eda saw Gran lean back in her chair, with her eyes closed and a look of ineffable content stealing over her features; and she guessed what thankful words the moving lips of the aged woman were breathing. If a more sober mood fell upon them all after this little scene, it was still a happy one; and when they gathered round the fire and talked of old times and struggles, not a word of repining mingled with those recollections to embitter them; and perhaps every one was sorry when Flossy Devon danced in, crowned with holly-berries, and put all serious thoughts to flight with her light laughter. Nor did her chance avowal that Richie Atwood was amongst the guests she had left playing Pope Joan at her father's house render her presence more acceptable to Eda. If Richie felt that he was doing wrong in dancing attendance upon this gay girl, why did he continue to visit at the residence of her parents?

For some time after this family reunion at Mr. Allonby's it dwelt so much on Eda's mind that, chancing to obtain an interview with Mark at his lodgings, she could not resist speaking of it to him, and endeavouring to make him comprehend how much these brothers and sisters clung to each other.

"I wish you could have been with me," she added. "The Allonbys have had a harder struggle than you and I, and yet, Mark, they have kept together."

"Yes, and the consequence is that Allonby himself is still vegetating in the upper part of a dingy house in the Strand. I hope before long to provide you with a better home than that."

"I could be quite content with just such another. My sitting-room at Mr. de Courcy's is not half so cheerful as Mr. Allonby's. Go with me to see my friends, and you will be forced to acknowledge that they are very happy, although they have but few luxuries."

"But your friend, as you call him, is not an artist of any note, Eda. Now, don't take up the cudgels in his defence: I know he is a clever painter, and a rising one; but he has never made any great hit, and it may be years before he does. I am beginning to get acquainted with men much better worth knowing than Allonby. I had the honour of dining yesterday with Bullion the banker."

"In what way can he be better worth knowing than Mr. Allonby? Simply because he happens to be immensely rich?"

"Of course not. But Bullion was once as poor as I am; and when one thinks of the energy, the talents, the aptitude to see and seize every advantage as it offered, that he must have exerted, one cannot but admire as well as envy him."

"Is he a benevolent Christian? Does he make a thoroughly good use of his wealth?"

"No doubt he does," Mark answered, promptly. "His name often heads subscription-lists."

"Is it, then, the power of *giving* that you envy him? It isn't always the richest men who contrive to do most for their fellow-creatures."

Mark "hemmed." He was always displeased when Eda approached such subjects, and he looked positively cross when she added, earnestly—"Oh, Mark! it troubles me to see all your thoughts and hopes centred on getting money. I do not blame you for being eager to improve your position. I suppose every one likes to be in easy circumstances, and able to indulge their tastes; but to spend every hour in scheming and planning to be rich cannot be right."

He seemed inclined to return a tart answer; but her arms were around him, her tearful face full of affectionate anxiety; and he smoothed his brow.

"You are a dear good little thing, Eda; but you don't understand me: you never did. Men and women cannot be expected to think alike on such

subjects. You have not told me how you like my new lodgings."

He had removed lately to a pleasantly situated house in Brompton—for the sake, he told Eda, of being nearer to her; although she certainly saw no more of him than when his abode was at a much greater distance.

"You find them expensive, I fear," she said, as she glanced at the handsome furniture.

"Well, yes," he answered, carelessly, as he looked at his watch; "but we must sacrifice to appearances. And—I must send you away, little sis, for I have an appointment."

As Mark led her down-stairs, a door on the floor below suddenly opened, giving Eda a glimpse of an interior so bright with flowers, gay hangings, and looking-glasses, that she made an involuntary pause; and ere her brother could lead her on, a lady appeared, whose glance of inquiry was so sharp, so full of suspicion, that she shrank closer to her brother, and looked at him for an explanation.

CHAPTER XX...

Mark Granton saw the glance levelled at Eda, and hastened to introduce her. "Mrs. Lavalle, this is the dear little sister of whom you may have heard me speak as the only relation I have in the world. Eda love, I have had the pleasure of being of some little use to this lady, who is a stranger in England, and when I came to lodge here was being sadly imposed upon by the people about her."

With this introduction, or explanation, he was leading Eda on; but Mrs. Lavalle, the doubtful expression her face had worn vanishing, held out her hands to the brother and sister, and insisted on being allowed to have a little conversation with Miss Granton. Mark appeared to have forgotten his appointment, for he yielded, after a faint show of reluctance, and Eda was compelled, somewhat against her will, to enter the handsomely furnished apartment, and accept the refreshments her hostess pressed upon her.

After a walk across the dusty park, Mrs. Lavalle was sure that she must be both hungry and thirsty; and certainly nothing could be more delicious than the lemonade and delicate biscuits she brought her guests. Then she seated herself beside Eda, whose reserve she seemed determined to overcome, and talked to her in low caressing tones that had an inexplicable charm in them. Without appearing too communicative, she contrived to make it known that she was the widow of a West Indian planter, and had voyaged to England to settle the affairs of a relative, by whose decease she came into possession of a considerable sum of money. She was neither young nor handsome; perhaps she really had not passed her thirtieth year, but an enervating climate had told upon her, and a naturally sallow skin and long thin face, made her look like a middle-aged woman ere she had reached her prime. Her large black eyes did not prepossess Eda in her favour; for there were ominous gleams in them ever and anon, that presaged an uncurbed and violent temper. Her redeeming feature was her mouth—when closed, it was firm to obstinacy; but when anything was said that pleased her, the full red lips parted into the softest, sweetest of smiles.

She disliked London, she said, and longed for the moment when the lawyers released her, and she could either return to Jamaica or seek some pleasanter spot than the suburbs of the metropolis.

"Yet this room is very charming," said Eda, glancing at the tropical birds and flowers and ferns that gave it such an uncommon and cheerful aspect.

Mrs. Lavalle looked at Mark with one of the rare and lovely smiles that made her plain face almost beautiful. "Do you think so? I owe everything to Mr. Granton. It was he who suggested it all. He found me pining in my close dull room, utterly tired of the faded moreen hangings, horsehair chairs, and shabby carpet, and longing for something better, but too languid to attempt a removal. He saw what ailed me, and in two or three hours transformed my prison into what you behold it; and yet he persists in saying that I owe him no gratitude!"

"And I say it again," laughed Mark. "It was the pleasantest task I ever was deputed to perform. Only fancy, Eda! Mrs. Lavalle gave me her chequebook, and *carte blanche*, and for the first time in my life I was able to furnish a room according to my own ideas of comfort and prettiness. I shall always feel that I was the obliged party in the transaction."

"You should tell your sister that it is not for this only that I have to thank you," Mrs. Lavalle interposed. "You have had compassion on the lonely stranger in a thousand ways. Remember how many of your evenings you devoted to searching with me through huge packets of dusty faded receipts, ere we found the one that freed me from an unjust and extravagant claim. I might—nay, I should—have been cruelly wronged, but for you, Mr. Granton; and you will not let me testify my sense of your goodness even in words!"

"Eda would tell you that it is one of the chief articles of her creed to make oneself useful," was Mark's reply; "and she likes me to take lessons from her book; don't you, my grave little sis?"

"If all Miss Granton's teachings bear such good fruit, I should like to enrol myself amongst her pupils," said Mrs. Lavalle. "Will you take pity upon me, my dear, and come to see me sometimes? I have made no friends in London but your brother; for my legal advisers are elderly bachelors, and I am too indolent to hunt up the few persons who knew me before my marriage."

"Eda would be delighted to accept your invitation," Mark answered, for her; "but she is seldom able to

leave her pupils; we must not hope to see her again for another month."

This was not quite true, for Mrs. de Courcy frequently took her little daughters to spend a long day with their grandparents, and Eda's time in their absence was at her own disposal; but she felt in her heart that her brother did not wish her to contradict him, and therefore kept silence.

"Not for a month!" Mrs. Lavalle answered, with a disappointed air; "that is such a long time to look forward to!"

"You flatter my little sister when you express so much anxiety to see her again," said Mark.

"I did not intend to do so. Indeed, I know I am selfish in wishing for her society; but you will try and come sooner, my dear, will you not?"

"Eda shall ask for a day purposely to spend it with you," Mark assured Mrs. Lavalle; and with this promise she was forced to be satisfied.

"Don't come here again till you hear from me," the young man said, when once more alone with his sister. "I should not like Mrs. Lavalle to imagine that we wish to force ourselves upon her."

"How could she think such a thing, when she acknowledges that her motives for inviting me are partly selfish ones?"

"But she is inclined to be inquisitive, and might ask you questions about my early life which you would be simple enough to answer; and I do not wish every mere acquaintance to hear the history of Lady Eudora, and so on."

"You might feel sure that I should not care to reveal an episode that reflects so little credit upon you," Eda retorted, sharply; for he had vexed her. "However, I have no desire to see this lady again, so you can excuse me, if she repeats her invitation."

"Very well; I believe it will be better to do so; for Mrs. Lavalle, although very nice in her way, is scarcely the kind of person I should choose as a companion for my sister. These colonial women have too little energy and too much temper to be always agreeable society. I should not be surprised if her fancy for you dies out as suddenly as it arose."

In this, however, he was mistaken; for the month had scarcely expired when Mrs. Lavalle wrote to remind Eda of her promised visit. She felt half-disposed to act independently, accept the widow's invitation, and form her own opinions as to the wisdom of continuing the acquaintance; but she did not wish to offend Mark, and finally enclosed to him the note she had received, endorsed with the question, "Shall I accept?"

Much to her surprise the answer was, "By all means. I am much engaged, but will contrive to be at home in time to escort you across the park in the evening."

Never had Eda felt more glad to escape from her duties than she did on the day in question. Manon, who was becoming more and more aggressive, had so rudely interfered between the governess and her pupils that it was impossible to overlook her conduct; and feeling that the time was come to assert or resign her authority, Eda requested the presence of Mrs. de Courcy in the school-room, and laid the case before her. Manon's insolence had been so flagrant, that her mistress felt compelled to rebuke her, but she was so vexed at this necessity being forced upon her that, like many another weak-minded and selfish person, she talked at Eda until she contrived to make her thoroughly uncomfortable.

"Oh yes, Miss Granton; of course you are in the right—I don't deny that; but it is so very odd that you cannot get on with Manon!—I mean very provoking that there should be all this unpleasantness. It quite destroys my comfort. She will be sulky and contrary for days; and though I particularly wished those polonaises nicely made, I know she will spoil them, just to be revenged upon me. You must acknowledge that it is dreadfully annoying!"

"That Manon should so forget herself? Yes, madam!"

"Oh, but Manon is well enough when she is not interfered with; and when one pays such excellent salaries it is very strange that there should be such disturbances in the house."

"No salary will induce me to submit to a repetition of her rudeness," said Eda, firmly. "I cannot expect my pupils to respect or obey me if their attendant is permitted to encourage them to set my commands at defiance."

"Oh, pray, my dear Miss Granton, let us hear no more about this foolish affair!" Mrs. de Courcy exclaimed, with impatience. "Perhaps Manon meant no harm; as she has been accustomed to have the management of the children herself, I dare say she feels hurt when you interfere with her. I shall have to soothe her wounded dignity with a new dress, before she will condescend to forget her grievances."

And so Eda saw that her own just indignation at the insolence she had complained of was considered uncalled for, and seriously annoying, as it threatened to throw the French *soubrette* into a fit of sulks, and deprive her mistress of her valuable services. No word of regret that the young lady, who was labouring so earnestly to overcome the bad habits Rose and Violet had acquired, should be treated rudely, escaped Mrs. de Courcy's lips; and the sense of injury rankling in Eda's heart made Mrs. Lavalle's caressing greeting doubly agreeable.

(To be continued.)

COMFORTABLE WORDS.

SHORT READINGS FOR THE SICK ROOM. BY THE REV. GORDON CALTHROP, M.A., VICAR OF ST. AUGUSTINE'S, HIGHBURY; AND SELECT PREACHER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

"That I may know Him."—PHIL. iii. 10.

To many persons the apostle Paul must have seemed a very egotistical man. He was always speaking about himself. But the fact was that he was obliged to do so; he had no choice in the matter. His pretensions to the apostolate were continually called in question, and it was necessary for him continually to defend himself, for the truth's sake—for the Church's sake. And, then, his conversion was one of the standing evidences of the truth of Christianity. In many cases he could not hope to produce so much good effect upon his hearers as by just simply narrating the events which befell him on that famous journey to Damascus.

It occurs here to inquire whether Christians might not—within proper limitations, of course, and with becoming modesty—imitate in this respect the example of the apostle; whether they might not speak occasionally about themselves. We incline to think that they might. It would be a great comfort to some persons to know that they did not stand alone in their experience when in sorrow. We are apt to think that our case is an exceptional one, and that never were troubles so great, or so complicated as our own; but if a man could take us by the hand, and say, "I, too, have felt as you feel. Once the visitation of God was heavy upon me, and I hardly knew how to bear up against it. Dark, rebellious, impatient thoughts crowded in upon my mind, and the stream of them well-nigh overwhelmed me. But out of the depth I cried unto God, and He heard me. He enabled me to carry the load. He brought me through the trial. Be comforted; so it will be with you." Or if one should say to us, "I was greatly dismayed once by finding myself fall back into the sins which I thought I had clean escaped. I began to believe that I might as well give up altogether the attempt to serve God. I was beginning to despair. But light broke in upon my darkness. I was enabled to hold fast my hope, and to persevere. I did not do it myself; that I know; had I been left to myself at that moment I should have drifted back into worldliness, perhaps into open apostacy; but my God did not desert me. Neither will He desert you. Believe this." If a friend were to address such words to us out of his own experience, in a time of deep trouble, what a source of strength and of comfort it would be to us! "They looked unto Him and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed," *because* "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles." Yes! we venture to think that it would be well if Christian people spoke sometimes to one another about their Christian experience a little more freely than they are accustomed to do.

This, however, by the way. Let us turn now to the text.

St. Paul has been describing his past life. Modestly, yet without hesitation, he tells us that if it had been possible to win heaven as the reward of human merit, he at least, whatever might have been the case with others, should have accomplished the feat. Every qualification centred in him. His spiritual descent was perfect. He was a Hebrew of the Hebrews. A man of outwardly irreproachable life, he had devoted himself from his earliest days to the service of God. He had been punctilious, rigid, undeviating, in the fulfilment of every known duty. Touching the righteousness which was in the law, he was blameless. "What more could a man want"—some people would ask—"to equip him for heaven?" But Paul turned his back upon it. The slow accumulation of years; the structure of human excellences, and outward observance, and acts of self-denial, which he had been laboriously piling up for so long—he left it all behind him without a single murmur, without a single sigh of regret. And why? Because he got something better by leaving it. All seemed worthless, utterly worthless, in comparison with the prize which the forsaking of his own righteousness enabled him to grasp.

That prize was the knowledge of Jesus Christ—"That I may know Him."

Let us consider, then, what this knowledge is.

Clearly it is *not* mere head-knowledge. St. Paul was essentially an intellectual man, and knowledge of all kinds would be welcome to him, more especially knowledge about the matters of salvation, and about the person and work of Jesus Christ. We can imagine him gathering together with the utmost avidity, and treasuring up with the most jealous care, any fragments of information about our blessed Lord that might come in his way. And St. Paul was well aware, too, that there is an intimate connection between light and life; that progress in practical Christianity goes step for step with advance in Divine knowledge. But when he speaks here about knowing Christ, he means something more than *knowing*

about Christ. How many there are who have the latter kind of knowledge, but do not possess the former! They could give a fair account of the Saviour's history, repeat some of His discourses, recount His miracles, explain His doctrines, but as to a personal acquaintance and friendship with Himself, to this they are quite strangers. Now, it was this personal acquaintance, this friendly intercourse with the Saviour, this realisation of His existence and His presence, this intimate communication with Him, which the Apostle desired, and for which he was willing to submit to the sacrifice and loss of the dearest possession he could call his own. Let us mark this. The Christian desires to "know about Christ." Yes! but much more, to "know Christ." He cannot rest satisfied without a personal acquaintance with his Divine Master, and communion with Him. When he has this, all is transfigured. Prayer is no longer a matter of form, but a speaking to a real person, and his answering you. The Holy Communion is not a mere solemn transaction gone through; Christ makes Himself known to His people in the breaking of bread. The Scripture is a letter addressed to us, throbbing throughout with the pulsations of a living and a loving heart. Jesus becomes a real presence—a personal, well known friend; no abstraction, but one ever near and ever accessible. No wonder Paul desired to "know Him."

The last thought suggested by our subject is that of the condition on which this "knowledge" may be acquired. With us, as with the Apostle, there must be an entire separation from all self-dependence. What St. Paul did, he did right out. There were in him no half measures—no turning back to and hankering after that which was forsaken. Said a good man on his deathbed, when asked by a friend how he had been engaged since they met last—"I have been gathering all my good deeds, so-called, into one heap, and all my sins into another, and I have fled from them both to Jesus Christ."

So with us—when we turn our backs resolutely upon all, taking the apostle's estimate, and counting everything but dross and refuse in comparison with the personal acquaintance with our Divine Lord, then, like St. Paul, we come, through the Spirit, "to *know* Christ"—"to know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death."

FANNY FORREST; OR, EVIL COMMUNICATIONS.

CHAPTER V.

"NOW, Fanny! here I am!" cried Ruth, before she had well-nigh reached the leafy shelter of the lane. But there she stopped in blank bewilderment; no Fanny was to be seen. The lane stretched out, white and dusty, before her; the sun struggling in here and there through the hedge beside her formed strange patterns on the pathway; but there was no Fanny—no sound even of life, except the ceaseless song of the larks in the sky above her. What did it mean? What was she to do? For a moment the horrible suspicion flashed across her mind that this had been a deep-laid scheme of Fanny's all along, to obtain the money for herself, and leave her to her fate, to which plan she had fallen an easy dupe; but, again, banishing this thought, with a blush of shame at having harboured such a suspicion even for a moment, Ruth, remembering Fanny's oft-repeated injunctions to her to make no delay, supposed that, in impatience at her non-appearance, her friend had started in advance; and poor Ruth, with a groan at this first misadventure, prepared to follow in her steps.

Just once she paused to think was it, could it be, that, with a recklessness of detection, Fanny had taken the shorter high road to the town? If this were so, she might be already safe within the station, the tickets taken, only waiting for her own approach to take their places in the train; and spurred on by this thought to fresh exertions, poor Ruth, with flying steps, and heedless now of either sun or shade, gained at last the stile which led to the short piece of road lying between her and the town.

For one second she stopped to pull her hat down over her eyes, and wipe the grimy lines of dust from off her burning cheeks; but in the distance—yes!—just turning to the station, she could see a phantom hat, with a speck of bright flowers in it, and a gaudy parasol; and with a bound of hope she jumped into the road. More than one passer-by stopped and turned to look after the girl, attracted by her eager and unhappy countenance and hurried gait; but who would not hurry, when the railway is the goal to be attained? and, with only a smile of pity, the passers-by turned their curious eyes away again.

At last—at long last—the goal was reached, and with knees trembling and knocking together, Ruth ran down the steep flight of steps leading to the platform, in sure confidence that here at last her troubles would be at an end. Here she would meet Fanny, and as they bowled along together in the train she would pour into her sympathising ear the unfortunate beginning to her evening's pleasure.

And now, with another snort and another groan, a final clapping of doors, and the short shrill whistle

from the guard, the long train was set a-going, and panted slowly out of sight. Ruth had taken one final skirmish down the platform, and peered into every window as she went, but no Fanny was there to be seen; and, sick at heart, wearied and bewildered, she turned away, and, forgetful of everything beyond her own forlorn condition, she sat down upon the lowest of the broad flight of steps, and cried as she had not done for many a long day before.

Bitter, bitter tears they were, surely, and bitter thoughts came with them too—fed from the stores of self-reproach and remorse, which had been gathering in her heart for long. The old porter came and stood before her musingly for some time, as she sobbed out loud in her trouble, till at length, quite satisfied that he had divined her grief, he laid his hand upon her shoulder, and bade her to cheer up, if she were a-fretting for the sports at Upton. There'd be another train a-startin' in an hour. Maybe her friend would come ere then, and she would still ha' time to see a sight o' fun and fireworks; yes, sure! But Ruth only wriggled from his hand, and, with her face still covered up, she fled like lightning up the steps, and away out into the road again. It was well for her now that the train had carried off to Upton the swarms of people who had thronged it but an hour before, or she could not have escaped without remark; but Ruth sped past the few loiterers who were hanging about still too quickly for them to remark her tear-stained face. It was only when she reached the lane again that she threw herself upon the ground, and, heedless of the grimy dust upon her Sunday frock and cape, she buried her face down among the cool green ferns and glossy briony leaves, to give full vent to all her disappointment.

It might have been an hour that she lay there—or two, perhaps, for all she knew—her heart full to the brim with angry passion at her faithless friend—full, too, of anxiety to know the real meaning of it all—full, most of all, with apprehension of the confession which might have to come if Fanny in the end had played her false. It was all a horrible confusion in her mind, and if it had not been for the terror of rousing Hannah's suspicions at her late absence, Ruth would have liked to lie there yet another hour, to try and cool her crimson cheeks, and ravel out her thoughts a little more; but if she dallied longer now, she could not hope to escape from those searching eyes she stood so much in fear of. And thus, with weary and dejected steps, Ruth once again pursued her way.

The lane seemed to have doubled and trebled in its turnings since she had been there before. The dust rose in puffs at every step, and seemed to choke her; and now, to add to her discomfiture, while still a long way from her home, she could hear loud voices, and rough noisy jokes from parties of navvies, who, in twos and threes, began to throng the path, on their way from the neighbouring quarry to the town. As each fresh group passed, and Ruth could feel them staring at her strange appearance, and could hear their muttered jokes as they passed on, she could not keep the colour from rising up even more painfully than before, as she tried to shrink herself away almost within the hedge, brushing, as she did so, the dusty branches with her face.

But the longest lane comes to an end some time or other; and as Ruth, with her last grain of strength, pushed open the little garden gate, and walked up the narrow pathway to the house, the first ray of pleasure she had felt that day stole into her wearied mind. She was at home again, that was the great relief; and who could tell but, after all, the whole thing might turn out to have been only a practical joke of Fanny's? who could tell but that when she went into the sitting-room now she might find the keys still lying where she had thrown them, and the cabinet still unrifled of its contents? With almost a buoyant step at such a hope, she entered the house, and turned the loose ill-fitting handle of the door. But there she stopped: it was not, however, from Hannah's peering eyes she shrank so guiltily back; no—worse, far worse, than anything she had pictured to herself—there, by the table in the window, where papers and odds and ends of every kind lay littered about in confusion, stood Owen, well nigh as flushed and heated as herself, with the yellow pocket-book within his hands.

It was the last straw—the last item in the day's misfortunes—the one jot to make the trouble insupportable; and with a cry of indescribable pain, Ruth slammed the door again, and rushing up the stairs, she threw herself upon the little sofa in her room, covering her face completely with her folded arms, while her whole body shook with the sobs which seemed to choke her.

It was not long—scarcely a moment—before Owen had followed her up the stairs, and was kneeling beside her, trying to soothe her grief; but it was long, very long, before, with even his most gentle words, his tenderest care, he could raise the swollen face, or catch the broken words of sorrow and self-reproach with which Ruth first tried to tell her story. It was not till he chid her, at last, for making him miserable with her sobs, and that he assured her again and again he knew it all already—he guessed it all, at least—that he could get her to listen to him as he related his portion of the tale: how some most unexpected chance had given him another evening to himself; how, as he came whistling under the window, expecting to see Ruth's face joyfully appear within, he had caught sight, instead, of Fanny's gaudily-attired figure bending with eager curiosity over the table; how, while he had vaulted in at the open window to surprise her at whatever she might be about, she had taken quick alarm, and had darted out through the door away

from him, across the garden and down the road with lightning speed, stopping him in his pursuit by flinging across the hedge the pocket-book, which, until now, she had held within her hand. Owen had stayed to pick it up and find the note which he had seen fluttering out, and then he had given chase again, and at last had come up with Fanny at the lodge—and then?

Then she had given herself up, and with an impudent voice had told him all the story, in answer to his questioning, and asked him what he wanted with her now. Owen was too angry to trust himself with either words or deeds; he merely satisfied himself that she had not carried off anything with her except the pocket-book, which he had regained; he checked with one glance the words with which she tried to implicate Ruth in all her own misdoings, and then, holding her firmly by the arm, he had half led, half dragged her into the lodge, where, explaining the facts with a few brief words, he had yielded her up to the tender mercies of her uncle, and, judging by the storm which had fallen upon her before he could even escape into the road again, he could not but feel satisfied she had received her punishment in full.

So Owen's story ended, and Ruth filled in the rest with still choking voice, and with no attempt to shield herself in any particular. And Owen, when he had heard it all, while he did not hide his sorrow at her conduct, still tried to raise her heart to the full and truthful confession with which he thought she ought to meet her father on his return.

But who can describe the ten times added bitterness with which she reproached herself, and shrank withal from such a confession, when, later in the evening, with Owen still beside her, she drew the old-fashioned little chest before her, to restore its contents to their usual order! Oh! who could tell the grief, the dismay, the misery, she felt when, in the yellow pocket-book, she found the note, indeed, safe and crisp as ever, but nothing else—no faded flowers, no fold of hair, no relic of the love so strong, so tenderly cherished still!

Owen could not help her now: no one could comfort her now in her distress, as for hours, regardless of her previous fatigue, she paced the road where Fanny had thrown the case aside in her flight. The moon was glittering brightly over everything around, as they searched and rooted in the long damp grass and deep-leaved ferns for that which, if lost now, could never be restored; but without avail, no trace of what they sought for could be found.

And then, at length, Owen had to say good-night and leave her too, and had to deny, with a heart as sad well-nigh as her own, her piteous request to return again the morrow evening, and help her to pour out her trouble into her father's ear, for to-morrow he had business that would take him to a town miles away at the further side of Bentham.

And so poor Ruth was alone—alone through all that long night, when she knelt in the moonlight, craving for the strength and courage to do that which she knew she ought to do—praying humbly for grace to support her in the struggle—that she might not fail.

How it was done at last Ruth scarcely knew herself; for, ever after, that scene, that one hour, which seemed to her at the time to stretch to a hundred hours' length, remained as a nightmare on her mind—a dark corner never to be visited in memory, or drawn to the light again—the hour when she had had to listen to words of righteous anger, such as she had never heard before—to witness, as she had never thought to witness, the strong man's grief over the lost tokens of the love he yearned for still.

It was a sad, a heartbreaking sight, and we will not linger over it now, but rather turn our gaze onwards, towards the days, which came at last, when all these things were past and gone, when Fanny Forrest's hated name had sunk into oblivion, when Owen's brightest days were those he spent in the sweet atmosphere of peace within his home, and when Ruth was once again restored to the place she had held before within her father's heart, and to the enjoyment of his perfect confidence and love.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

85. What prophet used the girdle of another when foretelling his death?

86. Of whom is it stated that he was "a Syrian ready to perish?"

87. Quote the only passage in the Bible where the *sycamine* tree is mentioned.

88. Where did the apostle dwell of whom our Lord stated that he was "an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile"?

89. Quote a passage from which it would appear that in olden time "beacons" were used on the tops of hills as signals or land-marks.

90. Where is it stated, in reference to a sacrifice being offered to God, that a "burning lamp" passed between the pieces of the sacrifice?

91. Give the passage where an Evangelist speaks of writing with "paper and ink."

92. Where is the word "shoelatchet" first used in the Bible?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 208.

75. Benaiah the son of Jehoiada (1 Chron. xi. 22).

76. "Come upon them over against the mulberry-trees." "When thou shalt hear a sound of going in the tops of the mulberry-trees" (2 Sam. v. 23, 24; 1 Chron. xiv. 14, 15).

77. "The fourth part of a shekel of silver" (1 Sam. ix. 8).

78. Jonas (John i. 42; xxi. 15, 16, 17).

79. Mount Olivet (Acts i. 12).



(*Drawn by* HERBERT JOHNSTON.)

THE SINGER.

A LARK rose, rustling through the corn,
With small dusk pinions wet with dew;
The pale pearl light of early morn
In skies above was peering thro'
The lattice bars of gold and blue.

It seemed as tho' the conscious air
Was charmed to silence with the song;
I saw the brown breast-feathers stir
With that full music, soft and strong:
I stood and looked and listened long.

And all the waking earth was sweet:
The brook was whispering with the breeze,
That danced away across the wheat,
To chase the leaves, and join with these
At hide-and-seek among the trees.

O clear sweet singer of the skies,
Teach us the worth of common things,
Seen when the world of beauty lies
Broadcast around the soul that sings,
Borne up aloft on eager wings!

We choose the darkness and the ground;
We build low down beneath the corn;
And eat and live, while, all around,
In skies above, the light is born;
We fold our wings and live forlorn.

J. R. E.

THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF THE LORD JESUS.

BY THE REV. T. M. MORRIS, IPSWICH.

III.—THE WORD OF FILIAL AFFECTION.

"When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by, whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home."—JOHN xix. 26, 27.

THE three Marys—the three Marys at the cross—is the picture with which we are here presented—a picture which has been preserved for us only in this Evangel of John.

Seven times does our suffering Lord break silence while hanging upon the cross; and the dying Saviour speaks in tones so thrilling, in language so significant, that we feel it is for us to treasure up every word He uttered on this memorable occasion. These seven final words of the Lord Jesus are evidently divisible into two classes, the first three, spoken before the darkness, having reference to others, the last four having reference to Himself alone.

The first word is spoken with a sublime and absolute forgetfulness of self. In contemplation of the great sin and need of man, His all-embracing love can only find expression in the words, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." He does not even add, "What they do *to Me*."

To the utterance of the second word of grace, which actually effects the forgiveness of sins in one who is the pattern and first-fruits of sinners, He is invoked by the malefactor himself, and the gates of Paradise are at once thrown wide open by Him who has never been appealed to by penitent sinner in vain.

And now, reminded by that word *Paradise*, of the state into which He is about to enter, and of those whom He shall leave behind, He utters this third word, of *filial affection*, which so distinctly reveals the deep, true, human sympathy of our Saviour. As High Priest He supplicates for all—makes intercession even for the transgressors; as King He dispenses, with royal hand, grace and salvation to the suppliant. In this third word we see Him display that tender sympathetic care which forgets not, even in the moment of greatest distraction and suffering, the interests and need of those who are dependent upon it.

In the first two words Christ speaks as *the Divine Saviour;* in this third utterance we hear Him speaking as *the Son of Man*—as one who, though He was Lord of All, condescended to assume our nature, and who is not ashamed to call us brethren. Precious are all these dying words of Christ, but with strong tenacity do we cling to these so distinctly expressive of the kinship subsisting between Christ and us. These are words which seem to bring Christ very close to the heart of our common humanity: they are tremulous with human affection; they are expressive of the profoundest and most tender sympathy; we are sure, as we listen to them, that we hear the voice of the Son of Man—One whom we can not only trust as a Saviour and worship as a King, but One unto whom, in all our weakness and weariness, we can go as to that true and loving Friend who sticketh closer than a brother.

We rejoice in the thought of the Divinity of our Lord. We love to think of those seasons when the glory of the Godhead gleamed forth upon the astonished eyes of those who could not penetrate the walls of the fleshly tabernacle in which it, for a while, was shrined. But we must be also mindful that Christ was as truly human as we are; that He assumed our nature, and was the subject of all human feelings, while He continued free from all human frailty. The power of our religion consists largely in this: that in Christ we have a personal revelation of God, affording us a definite and intelligible centre around which our human affections may cluster, and in which our human confidence may repose. Let us, then, be careful to apprehend distinctly both sides of our Saviour's character, and rejoice to know that He whom angels worship, and by whom the worlds were made, is not far removed from us, but One who

can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, being our Brother and our Friend as well as our God and our Saviour.

But we must now look a little more intently and carefully at the picture with which we are here presented. It is a little group standing now very near the cross, and standing there in still, speechless agony—hoping, perchance, that some dying look, expressive of recognition, may even yet be directed to them, though hardly expecting to be addressed at such a time by any special word. And who are these that venture thus near to the dying Saviour? During the previous tumult, that seems now in some degree to have subsided, the acquaintance of Jesus, and the women, stood afar off; but after a while those who are here referred to venture to take their station near the cross. And have we not here, it may be asked, just those whom we might expect to draw near?

Of all the apostles and disciples there is John only; he who records these words was the only one who heard them; John, the youngest of the twelve, whom we always picture as a mild, gentle, meditative man, was the one who, with the women, ventured nearest to the cross. And this is not so strange as it seems: he who has the gentlest spirit in times of peace and security will often be found to display the truest courage in seasons of real danger; and besides this, John's was a love which swallowed up fear, and was stronger than death.

And so of the women; we see here only what has been often seen elsewhere. At times when the hearts of strong men have failed, and have been dismayed, weak women, with brave and resolute hearts, have stepped forth to do and dare in such a way as to shame the shrinking cowardice of men.

The one of all that little group of women who mostly claims our attention is not Mary Magdalene, nor that other Mary, but *Mary the mother of Jesus*. What her feelings were, as she stood beholding the dying agony of her Son, no tongue can tell. Her heart was being pierced and riven by that sword of which old Simeon, thirty-three years before, had forewarned her in the Temple. All the keenness of that sword-thrust is she now feeling as she stands near the cross. There is no demonstration of grief so terrible to witness as that which she probably manifested—the pained stricken look of mute agony which cannot even find relief in tears.

> "See her standing by the cross,
> In her untold grief so lone;
> Ah, she mourns the double loss
> Of a Saviour and a Son!
> Who her weary woe can see,
> And not weep in sympathy?"

In order to understand her woe we must look back for a little. If we would understand the sorrow of any parting, we must remember the nature of the tie which is severed.

One of the most touching incidents in our Saviour's public ministry is where He meets the funeral procession at the gate of Nain, in which we see a sorrow-stricken woman following to the grave the remains of her only son, and she was a widow; all the remaining light of her lonely life had gone out in darkness. But her grief was not like unto this grief. Mary was related to Jesus as no mother ever was to son, and yet between them there was a strange and ever-broadening interval, the sense of which pierced her mother's heart like a sword.

We would like to know more about those thirty years which Jesus spent almost entirely in Nazareth with His mother—for a while, at least—supporting her by His humble industry as a carpenter. This was the time of Mary's earthly blessedness, when she had her Son all to herself. So soon as His public ministry commenced, the relationship began to alter, and the sword began to pierce. She who has had Him to herself so long has to learn the bitter lesson that He is to be peculiarly hers no longer. He henceforth belongs to the world, and He must seem to slight His earthly mother's love in doing His Heavenly Father's business. We lose sight of Mary almost entirely during the period of Christ's public life; but we meet her here again beneath the cross. Yes, through those weary hours of painfulness and humiliation we see her looking with sorrowful surprise upon Him who, without sin, was made a sin-offering. Perhaps no human heart has ever been riven as hers was then. The silence has been broken twice, but as yet there has been no word specially for her. Will He, who seems so lifted above humanity, forget, ignore His earthly relationship? No. He in this third utterance declares *His filial love*—shows that He who can forgive and save as a God can feel as a son. He bends His eyes, full of filial love, upon her, who has so often looked down with eyes of motherly love and tenderness upon Him; and, in departing from her, He provides for her. He is to cease from being her Son. Henceforth she is to know Him no more after the flesh, as her Son, that she may know Him more fully after the spirit, as her Saviour. But He will not leave her without a son; there shall be one to comfort and support her in her declining life—one, of all men, likest to Himself. He looks down from the cross and says—and He needs say no more—"Woman behold thy son;" and then, glancing from her to the disciple who was standing by, He said, "Behold thy mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her into his own home. The sword of which old Simeon spake has pierced her indeed:

> "And yet what mourning matron here
> Would deem thy sorrows bought too dear,

By all on this side heaven?
A Son that never did amiss—
That never shamed His mother's kiss,
Nor crossed her fondest prayer;
E'en from the tree He deigned to bow
For her His agonised brow—
Her, His sole earthly care."

Having thus glanced at the scene, let us more particularly consider the words uttered by our Saviour on this occasion—words so distinctly expressive of *His filial affection.*

I. *The words which Christ addressed to His mother:* "Woman, behold thy son!" There are several ideas of interest and importance suggested by these words which throw light upon the character of Christ, and the relation in which He stood to His mother.

The words strike us as peculiar. Christ in addressing Mary does not say, "*Mother*, behold thy son!" but "*Woman*, behold thy son!" And we may safely conclude that this mode of address was intentional, and some of the reasons for the adoption of it are not difficult to discern.

This mode of address was, not improbably, chosen with the view of mitigating the great distress of Mary. Hers was a grief which derived much of its poignancy from the fact that the sufferer whose agony she witnessed was her Son. Christ did not wish to render her sense of that relationship more vivid, but rather, as we shall presently see, to have her earthly affection assume a more spiritual and heavenly character.

Another probable reason may be found in this fact—that she was then surrounded by those who were regarding Christ with the intensest hatred; which hatred would have declared itself against her, with the view of augmenting His sufferings, had she been known to be His mother. That she might not be exposed to the brutal indignities of the crowd, He addressed her in such a way and in such terms that attention should not be directed to their relationship.

This mode of address was adopted, we may suppose, with the design of teaching Mary that there was now the dissolution of all ties of merely earthly kinship. This she has been gradually learning for three years past; now she is being painfully perfected in that lesson. She loses her Son; she finds her Saviour. He will be her Son still in the sweet and tender memories of the past; but from this time forward He will be chiefly regarded as her Redeemer, her Lord, the very Christ of God.

As we consider this mode of address, we can scarcely fail to discern another reason for its selection. The silence of Christ is not less significant than His speech. The reserve which characterises this mode of address, the evident avoidance of the use of the word *mother*, the ignoring of the earthly relationship, is not without intention. We seem warned beforehand against yielding to that tendency which has developed into the Mariolatry of the Church of Rome. We know how in that Church the Virgin is made to take the place of the Divine Son, and how the worship and service of the Virgin are substituted for the worship and service of Christ. To such an extent is this carried, that we may say that in the religion of Rome the central figure is rather that of the Virgin than that of the Lord Jesus Christ. How sad is it that millions of our fellow-creatures should be taught to regard the Virgin as elected to be the mother of God, and the co-redeemer of the world; and that sinners' prayers are more sure to be heard by her than by the Son, for the Virgin is all mercy, while the Son is both mercy and justice. How sad is it that any should think of offering such a prayer as this—"O Mary, the most sweet patron of the distressed, the most learned advocate of the guilty, and the only hope of those who despair, the illustrious saviour of sinners! hear and assist me, most benignant mother of God and mercy!" This Mariolatry—this Virgin-worship—was never more rampant in the Church of Rome than now.

Is it not worthy of notice that the New Testament is distinguished by the conspicuous absence of everything which can even seem to countenance the worship of the Virgin? She is, indeed, to be accounted as highly-favoured among women; but she is not to be regarded as miraculously separated from the sisterhood into which she was born. The allusions to her are brief and few, and all of such a kind that we can scarcely do otherwise than regard them as being designed to warn men, by anticipation, against those errors into which so many who call themselves Christians have been betrayed. If we limit our attention to the mode of address adopted by Christ on the cross, do we not see this? Does it not teach us—does it not seem designed to teach us—that no creature, not even the earthly mother of Jesus, must be allowed to stand between the sinner and the Saviour?

We see Christ here providing for His mother, and providing for her in a peculiar way: the word is, "*Woman, behold thy son!*" On the cross she sees her Lord and Saviour; by her side, in the person of the beloved disciple, she sees one who henceforth will be to her as a son. We may not unreasonably conclude, from this consignment of her to the care of John, that Mary was at this time a childless widow. He who has been a Son and more than a Son to her, is now about to take His departure. He can never be as a Son to her again. Henceforth she will know Him no more after the flesh. But he leaves her not desolate and unprovided for. The old relationship is dissolved, and henceforth is only to be remembered as that which has been. A new relationship is formed.

"When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, Woman, behold thy son!"

We cannot but admire the affectionate and provident regard which Christ displayed towards His earthly mother; and we cannot but rejoice that He regards with an equally tender and provident care all those who are bound to Him by the relationship of faith. There is no relationship so close, so dear, so enduring as this. On one occasion, when some one came to Jesus and said, "Thy mother and thy brethren are without, desiring to speak with Thee," we know what was Christ's reply—"He who doeth the will of My Father, the same is My mother, and sister, and brother." All who belong to this great spiritual family Christ loves with an unchanging love, and provides for with a tender and untiring carefulness.

II. But we must not pass over without notice *the word which Christ addresses to the beloved disciple*—"Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home."

St. John was selected by Christ, we may be sure, as the one who was in every way best fitted to make up to Mary for the loss which would appear to her at first as so sad and irreparable a one. All that could be done to secure for her a peaceful and happy old age we may be certain St. John did—loving her alike for her own and for Jesus' sake. Mary would never tire of talking of Him who was both her Son and her Saviour; and St. John would be readier to listen than even Mary was to speak. Honour had been put upon John before, during the public ministry of Christ. He appears as the beloved disciple—the one who was admitted to closest intimacy with the Master; and he is singled out by the dying Saviour as the one to whom this sacred trust is to be confided. We know not how long they lived together, nor where they lived, but we are sure that their communion was sweet; and we can scarcely do otherwise than believe that this close and possibly lengthened intercourse with the mother of Jesus was the means of enabling him to do what we all feel that he does—bring the living, loving, personal Christ nearer to us than any other New Testament writer. The other Evangelists tell us more minutely what Christ did; John treasures up the most precious words of Jesus, and presents to our wondering and admiring eyes in His divine and human personality the very Christ of God.

Here we see Him having regard to one of the precepts of the old moral law—"Honour thy father and thy mother." Let children remember that, do what they will, they can never repay their parents for what they have done for them. They cannot be too thankful for a father's considerate care and wise control; but how much more do they owe to a mother's love! One of the marvels of nature is a mother's love for her children. What can there be more seemly and befitting, then, than the consistent and uniform display of filial affection? Not only should children honour and obey their parents while the state of childhood continues, but in after life, when they have passed beyond their immediate control, and are no longer dependent on their care, they should display to them that considerate and respectful regard which, whatever their age and position, it will be always their duty and honour to render.

And if, when the children are strong and vigorous, the parents have become old and decrepid, it should be accounted not a duty to be grudgingly discharged, but an honour and a privilege to minister to their comfort or their need. Those who are called thus to act should look forward to the time when, in the infirmity and perhaps the dependence of their own old age, the love, care, considerate regard of their own children will be their greatest earthly solace. We should be thankful that the precept of Sinai is sustained by the sanction of Calvary, and that, while dying for our sins, Christ left us this example of *filial affection*, that we in this, as in all other respects, might follow in His steps.

"ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."

BY THOMAS ARCHER.

WITH THEM WHO HAVE NOT WHERE TO LAY THEIR HEADS.

THERE is a degree of poverty which, while it is not absolute pauperism, often has deeper needs than those which are alleviated by parochial relief—a destitution which is none the less bitter because those who suffer it cannot stoop to actual mendicancy, and shrink from the degradation of the casual ward and its contaminating influences.

Those of us who at this season of the year are surrounded with comforts, and can meet together to enjoy them, should feel that there is no sadder phase of the life of this great city than that to which our attention is called by the statistics of

those same casual wards, and the accompanying certainty that every night there are men, women, and children who, amidst surrounding luxury and splendour, have not where to lay their heads, and for whom the repellent door of the nearest union workhouse is closed, even if they could summon such courage as comes of desperation, and dared to enter.

Happily, the numbers of those who seek what is called casual relief have diminished in proportion to the general abatement of pauperism; and it is perhaps encouraging to know that the applicants for nightly shelter at Refuges for the homeless and destitute are fewer than they were three or four years ago. This is a fact which should be made public, because some of these Refuges have been accused of offering inducements to casual paupers to seek food and shelter provided by charitable subscriptions, instead of betaking themselves to the night-wards provided for them at metropolitan workhouses. The complaint was made on altogether insufficient grounds, at a time when, during a hard winter, and with a fearful amount of distress among the poorest class of the community, the workhouse night-wards themselves were frequently inadequate to the demands made upon them; while, apart from the persons who were known as casual paupers, there were hundreds of unfortunates suffering from temporary starvation and the want of a place in which to find a night's lodging, who yet were altogether removed from what is known as pauperism, and dreaded the abject hopelessness which they associated with "the Union."

It should not be forgotten, either, that the task which is, and was then, imposed upon the pauper on the morning following his night's lodging and its previous dole of gruel and bread, renders it almost impossible for the recipient to obtain work. Before his job of stone-breaking or oakum-picking is accomplished, the hour for commencing ordinary labour outside the workhouse walls has passed, and his hope of resuming independent employment, and the wages that will provide food and lodging for the next four-and-twenty hours, has passed also. This alone is always sufficient to make a very marked distinction between the regular casual pauper and the temporarily unfortunate man or woman who, having failed to get work, and seeking only the aid that may give rest and strength for a renewed effort, might look in vain for succour but for the existence of places like that admirable Institution to which I wish to take you to-night.

The shameful spectacle of groups, and, in many instances, of crowds, of houseless, starving, and half-naked creatures huddled about the doors of casual wards, to which they had been refused admission in direct defiance of legislation, led to the establishment of night Refuges. There was then no time to dispute. While boards and committees were squabbling and vilifying each other, the poor were perishing. But even now that a better system prevails, and pauperism has so considerably diminished, there is much necessity for the continuance of these institutions and their adaptation to the relief of that kind of distress which is all the more poignant because it is at present only temporary, but would receive the brand and stamp of permanence if it could find no other mitigation than that secured by an appeal to workhouse officials, the shelter of the casual shed, the union dole, and the daily task required in return.

At the time that night Refuges were first founded, in consequence of the failure of the Houseless Poor Act, there were one or two Institutions which went on the plan of offering no inducement whatever to those who sought shelter within their walls. The provisions were barer, the beds harder, the reception little less cold and unsympathetic than they would receive at any metropolitan union.

Those of my readers who remember the Refuge for the Houseless Poor which once stood in Playhouse Yard, close to that foul tangle of courts that still exists between Barbican and St. Luke's, and is known as "the Chequers," will understand me when I say that there were no alluring inducements for the houseless and the destitute to seek its aid.

I have seldom seen a more painfully suggestive crowd than that which waited outside the blank door of that hideous building on a cold drizzly evening when I paid the place a visit, only a short time before it was finally closed. I cannot deny, however, that the applicants for admission consisted of those persons for whom the institution seemed to be especially designed. The very lowest class of poverty, the representatives of sheer destitution, made up the 350 men and the 150 women who were to occupy the bare wooden bunks in the two departments of the building that night, and to accept, as a stay against starvation, the half-pound of dry bread and the drink of water. What I would call emphatic attention to is the fact that this place was filled nightly at that time, because the inmates could leave early in the morning to seek a day's work, and so rise out of that depth of destitution which was represented by the nightly return to the casual ward. But let us remember that, though this Institution could scarcely be characterised by the warm name of "charity," it received all applicants who were not suffering from infectious diseases, and therefore its policy was deterrent. In order to separate itself from the idle casual, it made its provisions little short of penal, and, indeed, very far short of those common comforts that are to be found in prison.

But the Refuge in Newport Market was one of those which had been founded on a different principle. It was never intended as a supplement to the casual ward, or as having any relation to poor-law relief; though, during the terrible distress that overtook the houseless in that severe winter when our poor-law arrangements broke down utterly, it was impossible for any place founded in the name of Christian love and charity to be very particular in excluding famishing and frozen men and women on the suspicion that they had already somehow obtained parochial relief the night before.

This "Refuge" was originally established by the influence and the personal exertions of Mrs. Gladstone, and a few ladies and gentlemen who, knowing of the extreme distress that prevailed in all that poverty-stricken neighbourhood about Seven Dials, around the alien-haunted district of Soho, and in the purlieus of Drury Lane, and the courts of Long Acre, set about providing some remedy for the misery that homeless destitute men, women, and children had to suffer during the bitter nights of winter. First, a regular mission was established in an ordinary room, and, after a time, space was secured to make a Refuge—first for six, then for ten, and afterwards for twenty of the most destitute cases which came under the notice of the mission-woman. This went on till the funds were sufficient to warrant a very earnest desire to obtain larger premises, and at last to make a bid for that queer ramshackle old slaughter-house which was the rather too indicative feature of the locality. The landlords of this place were fully alive to the value of any property rising in proportion to the anxiety of somebody to become its tenant, and they demanded a high rent accordingly. Still, the work had to be done, and the slaughter-house—cleansed, repaired, whitewashed, and divided into several queer, irregular-shaped wards and rooms, which were reached by strange flights of steps and zig-zag entries—was opened with cheerful confidence and hope, under the earnest superintendence of the Rev. J. Williams, who was at that time incumbent of the parish of St. Mary, Soho. It was at that period that I first made acquaintance with the Institution, and with the quiet, undemonstrative work of charity which was carried on there, and is continued to this day, though it is less arduous now that the neighbourhood itself has felt the influence of such an organisation—not so much in the diminution of actual poverty, as in the humanising and constantly suggestive presence of men and women who have brought a Gospel to those who were hopeless, and seemed to have none to care for them.

The need to receive numbers every night to the utmost limits of the Institution has passed now, except occasionally during very severe weather; and though the cases admitted are still those where deep, and sometimes apparently almost fatal misfortune is the claim, there is no longer the urgency which forbade a too discriminating selection, and the regular casual stands no chance under the quick and experienced eye of the superintendent, Major Ramsden, whose military tone and manner are, by the way, modulated so as to carry the sense of detection to the pretender, and to support and give courage to the weak and faint-hearted.

The same complete quiet method of receiving applicants who await admission enables me to repeat the impression which I received during the time that the demands upon the night Refuge were more urgent. The experienced visitor who stands at the gate of this rehabilitated building that was once the old slaughter-house, and who watches the people go in one by one, and listens to their low-voiced pleas for food and shelter, cannot mistake them for casual ward cases. Just as, in some other Institutions, the pain of the spectacle is the degraded poverty of those who seek aid, the most affecting element here is utter destitution, without that *accustomed* debasement which would find a fitting resource at the workhouse door, leading to the night shed.

These are broken-down men and women; old men beaten in the battle of life, and full of present sorrow; young men who have fought and failed, or who have eaten of the husks, and seek occasion to rise to a better mind; middle-aged men not altogether crushed or hopeless, but in sore want, and needing the sound of a kindly voice, the touch of a friendly hand; women who have lost youth and worldly hope together—women who, more weak than wicked, and without resource, need some stay alike for fainting bodies and for wandering souls; women worn and hungry, because of the lack even of ill-paid work, and asking for rest and food till they can seek employment: some who will go forth in the morning and set out afresh; others who, if they can secure two or three nights' lodging, with a mouthful of food and drink morning and evening, have a good hope of doing better in the future.

To those who know how the demand for certain kinds of labour varies, and frequently slackens towards the winter months, when need is sorest, this latter most merciful provision comes with a sense of truest charity. Tickets of admission are issued to friends and visitors of the Institution (and any one may be a visitor who chooses to ring at the bell of the old slaughter-house), entitling the holder to admission after the regular evening hour of half-past five to six, so that in bestowing one of these the judicious subscriber (not necessarily, but surely from sympathy a subscriber, can be a true benefactor. For these tickets will admit the really deserving nightly for a week,

with supper of bread and coffee or cocoa, or occasional savoury soup, and breakfast of bread and coffee. And even this time is occasionally extended, if there be a reasonable prospect of obtaining work. Not only ticket-holders, but every applicant, may have the same privilege, if it can be shown that he or she is really likely to obtain employment. But there is more than this. There are men here—truest of gentlemen beyond that social stamp of rank which rightfully belongs to them—who, with a true manly instinct, know how to take poverty by the hand without offensive patronage or untimely preaching. There are ladies who, in their true womanhood, can see the contrition in faces bowed down—the shame that is caused, not by evil doings, but by the feeling of dismay which comes of having to ask for charity—can sympathise with broken fortunes, with gentle nurture—cast upon a hard relentless world with that poverty which is "above the common."

More still. Among the supporters and the constant visitors are those who can use special influence for cases that need it most, and obtain for them admission to hospitals and other asylums, or introduce to situations those who by sudden calamity have been deprived of the means of living.

Yes, even in their deepest need, poor wandering homeless women may come here and find help, for in that large, lofty, yet warm and well-lighted room, the women's dormitory—one side of which is composed of a series of niches where the comfortable beds are placed—there are to be seen a row of doors, which seem to belong to a series of cabins, as, indeed, they do. Each door opens into a small bed-room—small, but with room for a chair, a tiny table, and the neat bed. They are the lodgings set apart for women who, in the midst of their poverty and destitution, are looking forward fearfully to the time when children will be born to them, and so to a period of weakness, and of the sad mingling of maternal pity and desponding sorrow. Let me say, in one line from the Report, that last year eight young women were received into the Refuge some time before their confinement, were passed on to Queen Charlotte's Hospital, and were helped until such time as they were able to help themselves.

I think the knowledge of this is so cheerful an instance of the value of this most representative Refuge, that even the sight of the bright warm glowing kitchen, with its great boiler of hot coffee, and its noble kettle of soup occupying the jolly range, scarcely imparts an extra beam to the picture; while the long rows of white mugs, the pleasant, clean, fragrant loaves, the big milk-cans, the courteous *chef*, who has a true and pardonable pride in his surroundings—no, not even the cosy rug-covered berths and bunks in the dormitories, nor the quaint little corner room to which I have to climb a crooked staircase to shake hands with the sister who is in charge, nor the equally quaint and cornery, not to say inconvenient, sitting-room of Major and Mrs. Ramsden, who have left their tea unfinished to do the honours of the Institution—can suggest to me a better word to say than that which is suggested by the picture of the poor wandering, weary, fainting women, who, almost in despair, not only for a real, but for an expected life, come here to find rest and peace.

Stay; one word more. Who are the class of people for whom the Refuge doors are ordinarily open? Let us see what were the most numerous cases among the inmates who last year received 6,669 nights' lodgings and 16,889 suppers and breakfasts. Among the men, "labourers," of course, are most numerous; then discharged soldiers—poor fellows who have perhaps foolishly snatched at liberty when offered, and foregone the advantages of re-engagement and a pension; next in numerical order come *clerks*—a very painfully suggestive fact, especially when read by the light of the advertisement-columns of our newspapers, and the sad story of genteel poverty in that great suburban ring which encircles the wealthiest city in the world. Of house-painters there were 24, of servants 21, of tailors 13, of seamen 8; and other callings were represented in remarkable variety, including 1 actor, 6 cooks, 1 schoolmaster, 2 surveyors, and 1 tutor. Among the women 199 servants show sadly enough the truth of the old adage, "service is no inheritance;" while in numerieal succession there were, 55 charwomen, 41 laundresses, 37 needlewomen, 31 tailoresses, 27 dressmakers, 26 machinists (alas! how women still utterly depend on "the needle" for a subsistence!), 24 cooks, 20 ironers, 16 field-labourers. There were 4 governesses, 1 actress, 1 mission-woman, and 1 stay-maker, the rest being variously described.

From among these, 94 men and 193 women obtained employment, 77 women having been sent to Penitentiaries and Homes, while 18 were supported in the Refuge or elsewhere by needlework, 13 were sent to their friends, 69 obtained permanent work, and 14 girls of good character were sent to servants' Homes.

But I have left out one thing now. Among this great representative company of refugees were 60 children, of whom 37 were sent to nurse or to school, while those who were old enough—— Well just listen to that burst of military music in a distant upper room of the old slaughter-house. I must tell you something about the Newport Market boys another time.



(*Drawn by* F. BARNARD.)

"Throwing himself into a chair, covered his face with his hands."—*p.* 251.

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER XXXI.

IT is always pleasant to the feminine mind to be "made much of," and especially so when unkindness or neglect has been one's portion; it was therefore quite exhilarating to Eda when she found herself treated as a guest whose coming confers honour; nor could she help feeling flattered by Mrs. Lavalle's unaffected eagerness to win her liking.

The afternoon passed swiftly away, for the West Indian lady's tables were covered with rare and costly articles that Eda was delighted to examine. From her wardrobe, too, she brought curious pieces of embroidery and bead-work, filmy lace, and shawls such as even the fastidious Mrs. de Courcy might have yearned to possess. One of the handsomest she folded round her visitor, and entreated her to accept.

"Why do you pain me with these refusals?" she said, when the gift was gratefully but positively declined. "It is so pleasant to give to those we love; and I mean to love you dearly, and be your best and truest friend."

It was an enthusiastic speech for a middle-aged lady to make to a young girl, whom she had seen but once before; and Eda half-laughingly replied, "Our friendship must be of longer growth before it will warrant my accepting such expensive tokens of it."

"But I have so many of these things," urged Mrs. Lavalle, with a sigh; "and of what use are they to me? Nothing I wear will make me fresh and fair like you. I never used to care about my looks, for I was scarcely more than a child when I married, and Mr. Lavalle was as indifferent to my appearance as he was to everything else but his gains. But now, when I look in my glass and see how sallow, how hideous I am, I long to be like other women—like you, for instance." And she gazed at Eda with eyes that were dim with tears.

"But you would not care to be loved solely for a fair face?" urged her embarrassed companion, who could not deny that Mrs. Lavalle did not possess the charm of a fine complexion and regular features.

"Solely for that—no; but does not every woman crave to be beautiful in the sight of those she loves?"

"Perhaps so; and yet I do not think that sincere affection pays much regard to outward appearance. Pretty women often marry plain men, and *vice versâ*, while mothers will lavish more tenderness on a sickly or deformed baby than a fine one."

"Mothers—yes; but I was not taking that view of the matter. I forgot, too, your brother says you are very religious; perhaps you think me wicked for repining over my ugliness."

"Do you repine? Oh, Mrs. Lavalle, surely no one has less cause!" And Eda glanced around her. "Why do you call yourself ugly? If you had looked in your glass when you so smilingly pressed your gift upon me, you would have thought differently."

Mrs. Lavalle kissed her, called her a little flatterer—although Eda persisted that she had only spoken the simple truth—and was comforted. But as the hour drew near which Mark had fixed for his return her spirits seemed to sink again, and drawing her visitor to an ottoman at her feet she said, agitatedly, "I have had something to confess ever since you have been here, but could not summon courage to tell you what may lower me in your estimation. But if I do not speak at once the opportunity will be lost. Do you like me, Eda? A little? A great deal? Well enough for a sister-in-law?"

The question was such a startling one that Eda was too confounded to reply; and Mrs. Lavalle went on, "Yes, I know what you think—that I am too old for Mark, although I really am not many years his senior. But there is no other objection, is there? He assures me that I am not homely in his eyes—that he shall never be ashamed of his ugly wife; and it was such exquisite happiness to be loved, that I could not resolve to renounce it."

Still Eda could not speak. The image of Lady Eudora, young, vivacious, and lovely, floated before her. Could Mark have so completely forgotten her already as to have made another choice, and such a choice as this?

"I see you are not only surprised, but sorry," Mrs. Lavalle exclaimed. "You think such a clever handsome young man ought to have done better. Although *he* is willing to overlook my want of youth and beauty, you are not. But I do not blame you for it. If I had such a brother I should think as you do—that no woman could be fair or good enough for him. Still, you will try to reconcile yourself to me, will you not?"

"It is so sudden—I was so unprepared for such news!" Eda faltered, recollecting as she spoke that not many weeks had gone by since Mark told her that Mrs. Lavalle was indolent and ill-tempered, and not the kind of person that he should care for her to associate with. "But if it is really decided, and you have seriously considered the step you are taking, I can only say that I hope Mark will try to make you happy."

"My dear, you should rather say that you hope I shall try to make him contented with me. Assured of such love as his I have nothing left to wish for;

and if I had been talking in a murmuring strain, remember it is only for his sake that I have longed to be pretty. I cannot help wishing that he had more reason to be proud of his wife. But here he comes, to tell you the rest himself."

Brisk, smiling, and apparently on the best of terms with himself, Mark came in, and Mrs. Lavalle rose to meet him.

"Ah, Sophie! then you have your guest; and I suppose you have indulged in a famous feminine gossip. Well, Eda, dear, have you not a word left for me?"

As she stepped forward to receive his salute, Mrs. Lavalle said, "I shall leave you together for a few minutes," and quitted the room. Feeling that something was expected of him, Mark drew his chair nearer to his sister's, and passed his arm around her. "Aren't you going to congratulate me, little sis?" he asked. "Don't you think I shall be a happier man, now I have the prospect of a settled home, than while I was knocking about in lodgings, without a creature to care whether I was alive or dead?"

Eda's heart swelled. Was it her fault he had been so situated? But she would not speak of herself just now, and only replied to his first question. "I will gladly congratulate you, if you can assure me that it is out of pure love for herself that you are wedding this lady."

"Of course I am very fond of her. She is one of the best-hearted women I ever met with." And Mark held out his hand to display a splendid ring, saying, "Her gift, Eda. She would overload me with proofs of her generous affection, if I would permit it."

"But Mrs. Lavalle is some years your senior," his sister reminded him; and he perceptibly winced.

"One cannot have all one craves for, even in a wife; and Sophie's excellent qualities must atone for the rest," was all he said.

"But will they atone? Think, too, how short a time you have known her. By your love for our dear dead mother, oh do not repeat the crime you committed when you wooed the Lady Eudora!"

"*Crime*, Eda! This is strong language!" he exclaimed, angrily. "Crime, indeed!"

"Forgive me," said his sister, deprecating his wrath—"forgive me, if I seem harsh and over-officious; but I feel that I must—indeed, that I *ought*—to say what is in my mind."

"At the risk of seriously offending me?" he asked frowningly. "You are too fond of finding fault with everything I do."

"Only because I love you fondly, Mark, and want to see you just such a good conscientious man as the dear father must have been whom we can barely recollect."

"I suppose my conscience is as clear as that of most young fellows of my age. I have never been able to see that it would have been any crime to marry Lady Eudora. You take such extreme views of things that are done every day. No one but you will think any the worse of me for marrying a rich widow."

But Eda was not to be convinced by such logic as this, and she answered, decidedly, "Say what you will, you cannot deny that it is a sin, as well as an act of cruelty, to marry a woman whom you do not love sincerely."

Mark made her a warning gesture, for in her excitement she had raised her voice, and he did not know who might overhear her. "Every one is not as romantic as you are; and people often enter the holy state of matrimony without caring much about each other, yet jog on together very comfortably. You ought to have seen enough of the world by this time to know that."

"But what you say doesn't make it right," Eda persisted; "and marriage is too solemn to be entered upon without a deeper feeling than merely liking each other."

"Sophie is satisfied. She is not as silly and sentimental as you are," he hastily told her.

Eda shook her head. Sophie might not be given to sentiment, but she had made revelations this afternoon which proved that she had deep feelings, and a faith in Mark's affection as implicit as the Lady Eudora's had been, and perhaps as insecurely based.

"Mrs. Lavalle is content because she thinks that you love her for herself. But do you, Mark—do you?"

He was about to answer boldly in the affirmative, when his eyes met his sister's, and her anxious searching gaze embarrassed him. There were moments—and this was one of them—when Eda looked so like their dead mother that recollections were evoked he would fain forget.

"Don't torture me, there's a dear good girl! I don't think I'm capable of what the French call a *grande passion*, but I will make Sophie a good husband. She shall have everything she wishes for!"

Eda was not satisfied—how could she be, with such evasions? And at last he broke from her clinging arms, and, throwing himself into a chair, covered his face with his hand.

"It's no use preaching to me now, child; one can't always fight against circumstances. Perhaps this poor Sophie isn't—isn't quite the woman I should have chosen; but I was so situated that I could not help myself. There! you know all now, so tease me no more."

"Have you lost your secretaryship?" she could not resist asking.

"Lost it!" and he smiled bitterly; "I wish I had, months ago. Eda, I was gulled all along; the whole affair was a deception, although I, like many others, believed that everything was correct. Why, it was actually kept afloat with my own money, and I—fool that I was!—never knew it till the clever

manager absconded, with my last hundred in his pocket to pay his travelling expenses."

And this was the end of the money with which the Earl of Chessington had released his daughter from her unworthy suitor! Was it not retribution? Eda could not profess to regret what had happened, nor did she testify any interest in the lengthy explanation her brother entered into, to prove that it was not through any want of sagacity on his own part that he had been so thoroughly duped.

"Are you in debt?" she asked, when he paused.

"Certainly not. A man is not his own master when he has a swarm of creditors at his back. No one can say that I am extravagant or unprincipled."

"But, Mark, what should the loss of your money have to do with your marrying Mrs. Lavalle?"

His face twitched convulsively. "Suppose you spare me any more cross-questioning. *You* may be brave enough to bear a heavy loss coolly, and not to mind finding yourself penniless just as you believed you were on the high road to fortune; but I cannot be so strong-minded. On the contrary, I felt very thankful that a kind-hearted, sensible woman is willing to give me another chance of making my way in the world."

"And you would marry Mrs. Lavalle that you may speculate with her money? Oh, Mark, don't—pray don't do this!"

He put his finger on his lips. "Hush! she is coming. She should have told you that it is no use to speak of these things now, for *we were married the day before yesterday!*"

CHAPTER XXXII.

Eda could not dissemble as cleverly as her brother, and when the bride came towards her, eagerly questioning her face, she could not deck it with smiles. Neither could she utter the looked-for congratulations; it would have been a mockery to felicitate the woman whose property had been her principal charm in the sight of the young man to whom she had rashly united herself. She could only express a faint hope that neither of them would ever have cause to regret what they had done; and Sophie looked quite disconcerted at the coldness of her manner, till Eda, saying, "You are my sister now—it is very pleasant to have a sister!" kissed her so affectionately, that her spirits revived.

Impulsive in all she did, Mrs. Granton repaid her kisses fourfold, insisted on selecting from her jewel-box her prettiest chain and locket for her new relative, and would not let her go away without the costly shawl she had already pressed her to accept.

"We have taken a charming little villa at Sydenham," she said, "and talk of removing there next week. You must arrange to leave Mrs. de Courcy at once, and go with us. Of course Eda goes with us, dearest Mark?" she added, as he made some gesture of dissent and drew her to his side.

"No, Sophie, I think not. We shall be delighted to have Eda, but not just yet. No third person must be admitted till our honeymoon is over."

A flush of gratified vanity overspread the bride's sallow face. "You hear him, Eda? He would have me believe that my society suffices for him. Is he not a flatterer?"

"I hope not," she was told, so gravely and earnestly that her own looks sobered. "I hope and pray that Mark will strive to prove himself worthy of the love you have given him."

"He is more than worthy; he ought to have married some one far superior to me," said Mrs. Granton, with such a look of adoration that her idol shrank from it, conscience-stricken and ashamed.

"If I am satisfied with my choice, *you* ought not to adopt such a disparaging tone," he said, lightly. "Aren't we keeping Eda too long?"

"I will send for a cab for her; but before she goes we had better fix the day for her to come to us. I cannot bear, dear Mark, to think that your sister is working for her bread while we have plenty."

"Eda is so independent that I doubt whether you will be able to prevail with her to give up her situation."

"But she is not comfortable at Mrs. de Courcy's," Mrs. Granton persisted; "she told me so this afternoon. You will come to us, Eda dear, will you not?"

There was a moment's pause, for Eda longed to hear her brother endorse the invitation; but he had stooped to play with a pet spaniel of his wife's, and she involuntarily said to herself, "He does not want me!"

And she was right. Mark always felt uneasy when his actions were viewed by the clear light of his sister's honesty. She knew but of one way of walking through life, and with her face set heavenwards went steadily on, gaining wisdom from every slip or stumble; while Mark had found out fifty crooked paths, each of which was to bring him to the summit of earthly felicity. When with his sister he was frequently seized with fits of remorseful affection, and while these lasted he was wont to acknowledge her worth, and promise himself what he would do for her as soon as he was in receipt of a good income. But these were indefinite resolutions, forgotten as soon as she had left him, and never likely to be fulfilled.

"I could not leave Mrs. de Courcy unless she were provided with some one to take my place," she said, in answer to Mrs. Granton's reiterated entreaties. "And my brother is quite right when he declares that a third person would be *de trop* just now. Presently, if you continue to wish it, and Mark also, I shall be happy to pay you a visit."

With this arrangement Mrs. Granton was obliged to be satisfied, although she tearfully complained to her husband that it was hard to find Eda determined to be so cold and distant, instead of responding to her advances.

XUM

And so Eda went back to the De Courcy mansion with an aching head and perturbed spirit. Unconsciously to herself she had built great hopes on Mark's marriage, often whiling away a dull hour in pleasant fancies of what might be if he made a prudent choice. The bride Eda pictured for him was to have a been a good, gentle woman, whose love was to exercise a wonderful influence over him. In the warmth of a happy home his good qualities were to expand, and those defects of character to which she could not blind herself were to be gradually eradicated. But the castle she thus built in the air had crumbled away, and he was actually united to a woman whom he had only known for a few weeks, or months at farthest.

It was some time before Eda could realise to herself that Mark was married—actually married; and when she received a letter commencing "My dearest sister," and ending with "Most affectionately yours, Sophie Granton," she asked herself again and again if it could be really true that this middle-aged widow was her brother's wife.

But she answered the note which was written to announce the removal of the newly-married couple to Sydenham as kindly and warmly as she could, promising to pay Sophie a visit in the new house the first time she had a day at her disposal. A foreboding that the poor bride would soon find out her mistake, and stand in need of all the sympathy she could give her, was upon Eda; and though she strove to banish it as an injustice to Mark, it would not be driven away.

A vague reluctance to tell the tale of her brother's marriage kept her away from the Allonbys so long, that Doris, who was sincerely attached to her, put aside her household cares for a whole afternoon, in order to walk to Mr. de Courcy's, and inquire the reason of her long absence. Fortunately, the little girls were just going out in the carriage with their mother, and Eda was at liberty to entertain her friend, and chat with her freely. Mrs. Wells, too, with a consideration she never testified to any one else, sent up some tea and two or three dainty little dishes, averring that such a young lady as Miss Granton deserved everything a body could do for her; and Doris, who rarely found time to enjoy herself, leaned back in the soft chair Eda brought her, and forgot for once to be particular about the crumbs or a crease in her bonnet-ribbon.

There were many questions asked and answered. Fritz was well, and busy; such lots of people had been to look at his new picture that it had been quite a task to keep the stair-carpets commonly decent; but they all predicted that it would be a success. Gran was well, and in high spirits at her boy's prospects: when would Eda come and talk them over with her? The rest were tolerable, except Harry; he had been ailing for some time; and Flossy—silly little Flossy!—her father was beginning to feel annoyed at Richard Atwood's attentions to her; not because he disliked the young man, but because he was not in a position to keep a wife, but spending all he earned as fast as it came. However, Flossy was fond of him, and had actually fretted herself ill, or fancied she was ill; and how it was to end she, Doris, did not know; as Richie no sooner found that he was likely to lose her than he grew furious, and positively refused to give her up. Eda busied herself for a few minutes at the tea-table before she commented on this last bit of news, which poor Doris had told without the slightest suspicion of the pain she was inflicting, and then looked up, very pale, certainly, but speaking in calm firm tones.

"Are you quite sure that Mr. Atwood has been actually paying his addresses to Flossy? Take time to consider before you answer, for I want to know the truth—the exact truth."

Doris began to flush and look uncomfortable. Eda's changed face was awakening her to the truth. "If I ought not to have mentioned this, I am very sorry. I cannot say what Mr. Atwood's intentions may have been; but—forgive me if I grieve you, dear Eda—I know that both Flossy and her parents have for some time believed him to be attached to her. Fritz says——"

"Go on," said Eda; "I have a great respect for Mr. Allonby's judgment."

"Oh, but this is only an opinion he expressed, and may be incorrect," Doris answered, dubiously.

"Unless you think he will be displeased with you for repeating it, I should like to know precisely what Mr. Allonby said," Eda persisted.

"No, I don't think he would be angry; it was only this—that he is afraid Richard Atwood is one of those young men who suffer themselves to drift into dilemmas through their own weakness. They like to hover about a pretty girl, and don't trouble themselves as to the consequences till it is too late to retreat with honour." Then Doris stopped suddenly, and put her hands together with a startled look. "Ah! I know now why he and Gran were so anxious for me to come to you. They thought you had heard this, and were stopping away from us because you are unhappy. But I would have stopped away if I had dreamed that I should make so much mischief!"

Eda kissed her cheek. "You have not made any mischief. It is only right that I should know this. Neither am I so unhappy as I should have thought such tidings would make me; but I am grieved deeply—grieved for Flossy; and for Richard too," she added, remembering that not a week had elapsed since she had received a letter from him couched in terms of the greatest affection.

When Doris, still looking concerned at the consequences of her revelations, had left her, Eda walked to a mirror, and stood for some time steadfastly regarding her own features. Beside the face there

pictured she saw the fairer one of Flossy Devon, and comprehended why she was forsaken. Richie had been wavering in his allegiance when he so eagerly besought her to marry him. He had recognised her good qualities, *and his own weakness*, and perhaps this was the first and only struggle he had made to conquer it.

However, she had truly told Doris that the discovery cost her few pangs on her own account. Ever since her last interview with Richie she had been feeling more and more keenly that it was not to a man who had no stability that she could entrust her future life. It had been a pleasant dream, from which she awakened as soon as she saw him as he really was—neither the ideal lover of a girl's imagination, nor the brave good man whose calm earnest affection should be her stay and comfort through life. There was something like contempt mingling with her sorrow when she gathered his letters together and returned them to the writer, without the addition of one accusing word. Surely his own conscience must reproach him more sharply than anything that could be said by the young girl whom yesterday he wooed and to-day deserted!

(*To be continued.*)

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 15. An Important Question.

Chapter to be read—Acts xv.

INTRODUCTION. Have seen Paul and Barnabas finishing one missionary journey. Had gone through great deal. Long journeys, dangers, persecutions. Had met with cruel reception from Jews, but hearty welcome from Gentiles. Now take rest for a while with friends in Antioch (xiv. 28). But now a difficulty arises: Till now, all Gentiles who turned to God were admitted into Jewish Church. What was the outward rite for that? Remind how circumcision was instituted in Abraham's time (Gen. xv.), and how no uncircumcised person could partake of Jewish feasts, in temple (Ex. xii. 48). But now Gentiles are being converted in great numbers and in different parts of the world. Must they all be circumcised?

I. The Question Asked. (Read xv. 1—5.) Who were they who considered circumcision needful? What was Judea the head-quarters of? Would expect to find the strictest notions about the observance of the law, &c., in Jerusalem, the head-quarters of the doctors (Luke ii. 46), scribes, lawyers, &c. This, a most important matter, must be fully discussed. Who shall go up from Antioch? Surely those who have been doing the work among the Gentiles. A few others from Antioch had better go up too. So, now they start (ver. 3); the brethren accompany them a little way on their road, and then take leave of them. They pass on, telling the tale of their missionary success in all the towns as they go. The tidings received with joy in Samaria, where Philip had done so much. At last the deputation from Antioch reach Jerusalem, are cordially received by apostles and elders, *i.e.*, heads of the Church, and their tale is told. Notice that they told not what *they* had done, but God by them. Success made them humble. Who were the rigid observers of the Jewish law? The Pharisees therefore insist on the observance of the Jewish law by the converts, but what law? The moral law, as taught in the Commandments, is binding on all, but Pharisees want converts also to keep the laws of ceremonies and sacrifices. So, a day appointed for the discussion.

II. The Question Discussed. (Read 6—18). This, the first meeting or Council to discuss Church questions. A good deal to be said on both sides of the question. God *had* chosen out Jews alone, required circumcision and observance of law, but, had there been no indications the other way, viz., that Gentiles might be received as such? Who took up the cause of the Gentiles? St. Peter had already been taken to task for preaching to them, now again declares what God had taught him. How had God plainly shown his wish for the Gentiles? (Acts x. 44.) If, then, the Holy Ghost given them upon their repentance and belief in Jesus Christ, what more *could* be necessary? This yoke of circumcision, therefore, not necessary. Who follows St. Peter in the debate? Picture first St. Paul, the chief speaker (xiv. 12), then St. Barnabas, standing up and making a speech, telling of the wonderful way they had been received by the Gentiles, when rejected by Jews. Describe the effect upon the meeting, the still silence. No more objections raised (ver. 12). Now the chairman speaks, to end the debate. Who is he? Called the Lord's brother (Gal. i. 19), was first Bishop of Jerusalem. He shows how a people was specially chosen from among the Gentiles at the call of Abraham (Gen. xii. 1), but that the tabernacle of David, *i.e.*, the true people of God, being fallen down; the Jews having rejected Christ, must be re-built by admission of Gentiles. Explain that Gentiles, nations, and heathen, all are the same word, and turn to such passages as Is. xlix., 1, 12, &c., to show the promises to Gentiles in the Jewish Scriptures.

III. The Question Decided. (Read 19—33.) Ask of whom the council was composed. Apparently no vote taken, the whole meeting being of one mind, so St. James announces the decision. Let the children

notice the three things to be abstained from. Remind how Gentiles were all idolators. Those who became Christians must therefore come out from them in every possible way; not even eat meat which had been offered in sacrifice, because would be dishonour to God (1 Cor. x. 28). These matters being decided, a deputation from Church at Jerusalem sent to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. Who are they, and what do we know of them? Barnabas selected with Matthias (i. 23), and Silas, afterwards Paul's companion.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.—(1) *The advantage of deliberation.* Important matters not to be settled off-hand. Advice of Christian friends always to be sought, coupled with prayer for guidance of Holy Spirit. (2) *The freedom of Christians.* The Jewish ceremonial law passed away, have the liberty of the Gospel (Gal. v. 1), but liberty for what? to serve Christ with willing service, which is perfect freedom. (3) *The purity of the body.* Christians to be free from sin in eating, in marriage, in estimate of human life, *i.e.*, to remember their bodies are God's, to be accounted for as much as minds and souls. Do we glorify God with our bodies?

Questions to be answered.

1. What was the important question, and who raised it?
2. Who formed the Council, and who presided?
3. Give the arguments for the circumcision of the Gentiles.
4. Give the arguments against it.
5. How was the question decided?
6. What practical lessons may be learned?

THE GIANT'S CRADLE.

PART I.

"COME, girls, the evening has grown cool; let us have a walk. I have not had a rise for the last half-hour, and am tired lashing the water."

Winding up his line, Gerald sauntered towards a green bank, where his cousins sat working.

"Oh yes! I'm so glad!" exclaimed Sylvia. "Do take us to some pretty place we've not seen before."

"I'll show you the Giant's Cradle; we'll just have time to go there and back before dark."

"Is it very far?" asked Clara; "for, you know, we oughtn't to keep Aunt Mary waiting tea."

"Oh, never mind; she's quite used to that."

Which indeed was true; but Sylvia and her sister had only lately come on a visit to the country, and had not yet found out that Gerald never thought of any one else when following the fancy of the moment. The evening was pleasant, and, chatting merrily, they followed the windings of the river through meadows and corn-fields, crossed the stream by a half-broken wooden bridge near a mill, heard the miller's great dog bark from the yard, hurried past the gate and were soon out of his reach, on a wild path which led across the hills. After following this rough track for some time, they came out close to another part of the river.

"Now, girls," said Gerald, "look up, and you shall see the Giant's Cradle."

A rocky bank rose abruptly to a considerable height above the stream, adorned with ferns, heaths, and small shrubs of various kinds, whilst large lichen-covered stones protruded here and there in every picturesque form. About half-way up this bank a narrow space of green mossy grass was surrounded by four large grey rocks, shaped like the sides of a huge cradle.

"What a beautiful place!" exclaimed Sylvia. "It was well worth coming all the way to see!"

"But won't you climb up and get into the cradle?"

"It looks very difficult," answered Clara; "my head gets dizzy on heights. Let Sylvia go first."

Assisted by her cousin, Sylvia gained the gigantic cradle in safety. "Oh, Clara!" she cried, "you must really come too; it is so lovely up here! With Gerald's hand I think you could manage."

Clara was tempted to try, and, with a good deal of help and encouragement, reached her sister.

"Now," said Gerald, as he climbed down, "'tis so jolly up there you won't mind staying for a while, for the breeze has got up well, and I see the fish rising by dozens. I'll just put up my flies and try a cast."

"Don't go far, Gerald, please, for we've a long way to go home, and it must be getting late."

"Time enough yet," he replied. "Never fear, I'll be back soon," and going up the river to a deeper part, he commenced fishing.

Depending on his word, the girls gave themselves up to the full enjoyment of the scene. Beneath flowed the stream, brawling over rocks and stones, and making a musical murmur which suited well with the stillness of the hour. The sun had just set, but a golden glow still remained in the sky; and as the sisters lay on their soft mossy bed, listening to the roar of the water and gazing at the bright sunset hues, they could imagine themselves suspended in mid-air far above this world, yet with an unclimbed height between them and the realms of sky. For some time they amused themselves with these pleasant fancies, and endeavoured to picture what the giant was like who, tradition said, had been cradled there, when the increasing shades of evening recalled their thoughts to the realities of life, and Sylvia

began to fear Aunt Mary would be uneasy at their absence.

"I wonder," said Clara, "has Gerald forgotten us. It would not be pleasant to spend the night here, though it is such a nice bed."

"No, indeed!" replied her sister. "But I dare say he is having good sport, and does not remember the hour. Let us stand up and see if he is within sight."

But no living creature was to be seen, though from their lofty station they could command the windings of the river for a considerable distance.

"Hadn't we better call out?" said Clara.

They did so as loudly as possible, but echo only replied, as the last syllable of their cousin's name was reverberated from rock to rock. Again and again they strained their voices, but with the same result. However, their cries had not roused the echoes alone, for just as they were dying away a terrific roar sounded immediately overhead. Grasping each other's hands, and trembling violently, the sisters ventured to gaze upward, and saw on the very edge of the dizzy height the head and horns of an angry bull. Evidently the animal had caught sight of them in their rocky cradle, for he pawed the ground, and bellowed furiously.

"Oh, Sylvia dear! do you think he will jump down?"

"No, no, it is impossible! I believe we are quite safe here; just try and keep quiet."

But Clara could not be persuaded. "Oh, I wish we were out of this! It is very cruel and ill-natured of Gerald to desert us in this way."

"Oh no! something must have happened to delay him, or he never would have left us so long. It will be quite dark soon, and we shan't be able to find the path. I really think the only thing we can do is to try and climb down at once, and make the best of our way home."

"Oh, Sylvia! I never could get down without Gerald; besides, how could we walk all that lonely road by ourselves in the dark, and pass the mill, where the great dog would tear us to pieces?"

"God will take care of us, Clara, if we trust Him; and the sooner we set off the better, for the evening is falling very fast. I will climb down a little way first, and help you."

Slowly and cautiously Sylvia stepped over the side of the rocky cradle, and, by clinging with her hands to shrubs and projecting stones, managed to get a short way down, while Clara looked on in terror, begging of her to take care.

"Don't fear, dear; I shall soon have good footing, and be able to give you a hand."

At that moment both were startled by a prolonged bellow from the enraged bull, who seemed to understand they were escaping.

"Don't mind, Clara—he can't reach you," shouted Sylvia; but ere the sentence was finished her foot slipped from its precarious hold, and clutching desperately at the tough branches of a plant of heather, she struggled vainly to regain her footing, until at length the roots loosened gradually from the scanty earth in which they grew, and there was a heavy fall.

Poor Clara was so terrified that for several moments she could hardly understand what had happened, but as soon as her senses had sufficiently returned, she called out, "Sylvia! dear sister! speak to me, if you are not killed!" There was no reply.

The poor child never thought of her own desolate situation—she forgot the furious bull and the steep precipice. Her own desire was to reach Sylvia, and without hesitation she commenced descending the bank. Avoiding the dangerous and slippery rock where her sister had fallen, and creeping round each stone, taking advantage of every crevice and bush, she soon found herself standing safely on the green grass beside the little river; and so absorbed was her mind, that she never knew how she had accomplished the perilous descent. There lay Sylvia, pale and still; and though Clara raised her head, dipped her handkerchief in the stream and bathed her hands and temples, there was no sign of returning life. What was to be done now? and where was help to be found? The only house they had passed on the way was the miller's, and there Clara determined to go as fast as possible. It was hard indeed to leave her sister alone in such a state, but she could think of no other plan; and oh! how cruel Gerald's desertion seemed at that moment! There was no time for hesitation or delay, however, and, with one parting look at Sylvia, she was soon speeding over the moor.

(To be concluded.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

93. What female ancestor of our Lord lived at Bethlehem?

94. What Apostle is it speaks of journeying into Spain? Quote passage.

95. Where does St. Paul make reference to Sodom and Gomorrah in his epistles?

96. What prophecy was delivered by Enoch, the "seventh from Adam?"

97. Who is the first archer mentioned in the Bible?

98. What lawyer is mentioned as being one of St. Paul's workers?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 224.

80. "Keep thy foot when thou goest into the house of God" (Eccles. v. 1).

81. "Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah" (1 Kings xix. 16).

82. Amos (chap. vii. 14).

83. St. Barnabas was uncle to St. Mark (Col. iv. 10).

84. In Amos v. 8.



(*Drawn by* M. FITZGERALD.)

AT THE WINDOW.

'TIS Spring-tide. The balm-breathing morning
Is filling with perfume the air;
And blossom and leaf are adorning
The shrubs and the trees in the square.

A fair maiden sits at her casement,
Thrown open to catch the fresh breeze;
Her glance wanders down to the basement:
I wonder what's there that she sees!

See, a youth has just come round the corner,
And wistfully looks at the door;
The throb of her heart seems to warn her
She's seen that young fellow before.

Her hand, that the needle was plying,
Is fixed, as it were, with a spell—
Well, well! There's no use in denying—
You're watching that youth, I can tell.

Ah, me! 'Tis the old-world story
Repeated again and again;
'Twill be told till the world shall grow hoary,
And while there are women and men.

Fair girl, in your face there is sadness,
The shadows of thought on your brow:
Your eye does not lighten with gladness;
Some sorrow is troubling you now.

Come, listen a while to the warning
Of one who is grown somewhat old,
Nor turn from my grave words with scorning:
My heart is not callous nor cold.

You love—so perhaps your heart tells you;
But what says your head in reply,
If that to which Fancy impels you
Your duty and reason deny?

Love well, but love wisely. In *one* sense,
'Tis wisdom; in one it is not.
For "love in a cot" is all nonsense,
And Love's flame will ne'er "boil the pot."

Our passions should ne'er be our masters:
The heart should the head still obey.
But our life will be filled with disasters,
If the head to the heart shall give way.

J. F. W.

TWO-EDGED PROVERBS.

BY REV. P. B. POWER, M.A., AUTHOR OF "THE 'I WILLS' OF THE PSALMS," "THE FEET OF JESUS," ETC.

"OUT OF DEBT OUT OF DANGER."

"DEATH" and "Debt" are two of the most important words in our language. They are important in themselves—they are doubly so when united; and they are thus united, and more than that, they are inseparably united, by the ordination of God. He hath joined them together, and no man can put them asunder.

This proverb is pre-eminently a double-edged one, as we shall see when we come to look at it in reference to the all-important matters of the soul.

But not going at present so far as these, let us look at it for a few moments as regards our ordinary life. Debt is a dreadful word as regards even our present life.

I know it is not a dreadful word to some. There are people who think nothing of debt—nothing of incurring it, of not being able to pay it—nothing of other people losing by them, or perhaps even being ruined by them; they would rather go into debt for the merest trifle than go without it; they do not care what wrong they do their neighbour while they gratify themselves.

It would be little use to remind such men of this proverb; their moral powers, their very consciences, are warped. The dishonesty of their character reaches farther than the mere fact of carelessness about debt. These men are a pest to society. These are they who make the honest man pay for the dishonest; and who, by so doing, have taken so much bread out of the mouth of the honest man and his children. These are they who have ruined many a tradesman, and who, in fact, are nothing but respectable thieves, quite as deserving of imprisonment as the man who picks a pocket or commits a forgery. I see very little difference between many a debtor and many a thief, and I believe that, if we got our choice to have the kingdom cleared by magic of all the dishonest debtors, or all the confirmed thieves, we should be vastly better off by keeping the thieves and getting rid of the debtors.

But now as to debt itself.

What is debt? No matter how it may have been incurred, it is ever the same thing—obligation—a claim to be satisfied; it is a demand, and one which we must acknowledge the justice of. Debt is something very stern, and the debtor is the man on whom its hand is laid, and its voice is, "You must!"

And next, as to what debt does. We are not speaking now of those spoken of above, who only make sport of liability of any kind.

It cramps a man, and disheartens him, and fills his mind with brooding thoughts, and it takes away his energy and life, and even what property he seems to have it takes away from him, for he knows that as long as another man has a claim upon his substance it is not really his own.

Men who are driven to their wit's end by debt, who feel that when they do earn something it is not their own; who feel that they are always the servants of other people, and are getting nothing for it, are always disheartened, and not half men for their work.

Perhaps you say, "But they *have had* the

money." Very true, but Hope and Expectation are the two great sweeteners of labour, and what energises a man generally in his work, is not what he has had, but what he hopes to get. Eaten bread is soon forgotten. The borrower, as the Scripture says, is servant to the lender; and he feels—though not justly—as though he got nothing for his labour.

A curious instance of this may be seen on board ships going long voyages. The men consider that the first month they are working for nothing; and the reason is, because they have had a month's pay in advance. And so at the end of the first month, there is generally great rejoicing, for from that out pay seems to begin again.

The man in debt seems always to be working for somebody else, and not for himself, and so he has more or less of the downheartedness of a slave—very little "go" in himself or his work either.

This is some of what debt does; and now a word as to what it may do, and will do.

It may break a man up altogether; it may so dispirit him, as to prevent him working it off, and so escaping from its clutches; it has frequently done this. At any rate, it may keep a man from ever rising in the world. He cannot keep up with others with this pack upon his back. This old man of the sea wears a terrible pair of spurs, and entirely declines to get down from the poor debtor's shoulders; he keeps saying, "You go on, but I won't get off."

It is of the very nature and essence of a debt to exact a return-payment; sooner or later it will do that. The debtor has always this prospect before him, and if to the original debt be added interest, the matter is still worse. As the Hindoos say, "Interest never sleeps;" it lives step for step with ourselves. But under any circumstances, the man in debt has always something disagreeable before him; and it may be something very disagreeable indeed. He cannot tell, in many instances, when his creditor will come down upon him—he lives in danger always. He is ever at another man's mercy; the sword is always suspended by only a hair over his head; even though the calamity do not come, he lives in danger of its coming, and in all the misery of feeling that the demand which he cannot meet must come at last, and may come at any moment.

But now "Out of debt, out of danger." There is a sense of freedom and elasticity in being out of debt; we become our own masters again; we reap the fruit of our own labour; we are not afraid of writ, or bailiff, or broker, or auctioneer, or anybody, so far as this matter is concerned.

As to our old creditor, we are quite glad to see him. We used not to care particularly about a squeeze from his hand, never knowing exactly whether he might not give us another kind of squeeze before long. But now we not only let him give us a squeeze, but we give him a squeeze in turn—grip for grip. We don't squint, or turn our heads, or try to go down another street, or pretend not to see our old creditor; ever since he put that magic "paid," or "received," and ornamented the bottom of the paper with a portrait of the queen, we have felt quite warmly towards him, we quite laugh at the idea of being afraid of him.

So much then, although it be but very little, of the truth of that very common proverb, "Out of debt out of danger."

But like many other proverbs, it stretches itself away into the things of the other life. If it be true that in the matters of this life debt is danger, much more so is it of the life to come. Debt is, indeed, fearful danger in the all-important matters of the soul.

No doubt there are many who do not care about their spiritual debts. Some deny them altogether. Some seem to think that God will never exact them. Others suppose that things will come right somehow. And more, and these are not a few, are thinking that with their few farthings they can pay millions of pounds; and that when the day of reckoning comes, they will not come off so badly after all. They will either pay all up; or if they cannot do that, they will pay up all they can, and then Christ will do the rest.

The debt which man is under is the terrible Law debt. He is a debtor to keep the *whole* law—to love God with *all* his heart and soul and strength; and perfectly, without flaw or failure of any kind, to love his neighbour as himself. And these two commandments are exceeding broad, running out into the very possibilities of things, without any abatement of command, because of our weakness, or the warped condition of our minds, or anything else.

I expect that every reader of these lines has incurred a tremendous debt on both these scores—as regards God and man. The debt has grown with our daily lives, from our first infancy until now; and by this time it has reached a huge amount. Childhood, boy and girl-hood, man and womanhood, perhaps old age, have all added to it; and now the height of it, if seen aright, reaches as it were to the very heavens.

And all this debt is upon men without their knowing anything much about it, unless they be awakened to a knowledge of it by the Spirit of God. The devil keeps it out of sight. He never tells men of their danger, until it be to mock them with it, when it is too late, or to make them distrust the saving power of Christ, when they are about to come to Him for relief. And the occupations of life keep this out of view, and many men think they have no time to give to such things. And there is a secret but very practical unbelief,

which makes men doubt whether they can be so bad after all. And so the debt sits lightly, until the time comes for it to be revealed in all its immensity, and all hope of its removal is gone.

Even one sin arms all the law of God against us, and brings us under all the power of its curse; and we have to do not with units, but with hundreds of thousands of sins.

Here then is the debt; and next let us consider the utter hopelessness of dealing with it. As the law is making continual demands upon us, even if we fulfil them, we are only unprofitable servants, we have merely done that which it was our duty to do. We have no overplus of merit—there is no thanks to us for doing our duty. So, as the demands are always upon us, from the moment we rise in the morning to when we lie down to sleep at night, and as the very utmost one could do would be to fulfil them—even supposing he could do that—there is no opportunity for getting anything together with which to pay off the old debt. The Romanists have invented a plan of their own, which is very profitable to their priests, but not worth much to those who pay them. They say that the saints were so good, that they left the balance of their merits to the Church, and the Pope sells them out to poor souls to get them out of purgatory.

The best way to deal with our debt is to look at it as it is; to be quite hopeless about paying it; not to try to make it smaller in the least degree. In a word, the best—indeed the only thing to do—is to become insolvent.

Things must come to a head sooner or later. This question of the debt must be settled; we shall be called upon to pay, or to take the consequences; and it is sheer madness not to get out of the difficulty in the one way in which we can.

And that way is, as I have said, by becoming insolvent. But it must be done now, at once. It will not do to declare ourselves insolvent for the first time before the Judge. It will be too late then. The appointed way is to come and say, "I have nothing to pay;" then Jesus says, "I will pay for you;" and at that moment all our debt is discharged. Then, so far as the east is from the west, so far are our transgressions put from us. Then all handwritings are blotted out against us—then there is no more any condemnation to him that believes.

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Only to thy cross I cling."

This is the voice of the man who is to get out of debt in God's way. The one to whom you owe the debt will count it paid, and then there will be an end of it. For God will look at all the merits—at the death of Jesus as yours, and Jesus having paid for you, He will not exact it from you again.

And now, "Out of debt out of danger," indeed. In the blood of Christ upon your past, you carry with you a receipt in full for all that put you in danger, and that justly made you afraid.

You may be joyous, because you are safe—because none can bring any accusation against you. God is just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. He has been satisfied in His own justice, and will Himself see to it that you shall not be condemned.

And so we may look our Great Creditor in the face with holy confidence, and meet Him with holy joy; and be light-hearted and free from care. Danger there can be none, for if God be for us who can be against us? Out of debt out of danger is as true of the other world as of this.

THE CATACOMBS, AND THEIR TESTIMONY TO THE FAITH.

BY THE REV. THOMAS JACKSON, M.A., PREBENDARY OF ST. PAUL'S, AND RECTOR OF STOKE NEWINGTON.

"Of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." HEBREWS xi. 38.

THE sources from which evidence is derived as to the authenticity of the Holy Scriptures, the veracity and good faith of the inspired writers, have been recently at once deepened and enlarged—the researches of Layard, Botta, and Rich, and a host of minor explorers, into the sites of Babylon and Nineveh, the patient and precious work of the Palestine Exploration Fund, may be cited as illustrations of this remark. In fact, scarcely a year elapses without new facts being brought to light, which vindicate in some peculiar way the truth of our Inspired Record. Among such sources, the Roman catacombs are rich in evidences alike novel and interesting.

By catacombs we understand passages and chambers cut out of stone beneath the surface of the earth. Most likely they were at first mere quarries, formed in excavating the soft stone called *tufa*, which hardens when exposed to the action of the weather, and forms the material of the strongest and most permanent cement ever invented. Those of Naples are covered with Christian symbols. They contain chambers, vaulted, and of considerable extent. According

to some dispassionate and fair writers, these chambers were used as churches in the times of persecution under the heathen emperors of Rome. They are enriched by paintings of religious subjects, which have wonderfully survived considering the dampness of their underground situation. As to the catacombs beneath the capital—Rome itself—they are specially interesting to the student of Christian antiquities, because they were evidently used, like those at Naples, as places of worship, and as cemeteries, in the first three centuries of the Christian era, before the recognition of the faith by Constantine the Great. Sometimes the heathen authorities of the city granted a transient truce to the believers at Rome, of which they availed themselves to cover the city with spacious churches. But to these followed days of reactionary tumult, when the sanctuaries were plundered and burnt, and the loud and bitter wail of Christian matrons and maidens arose as they were made the spoil of the lawless soldiery, and saw their husbands and fathers and brothers dragged to the amphitheatre to be torn to pieces by wild beasts.

It was then that the Christians fled by thousands to the catacombs. These had been already partially used by the heathen citizens for purposes of interment. Holes had been made in the wall, generally three, one above another, in a row, a little larger than the space required for an ordinary coffin, in which the dead were placed as on shelves. The front was then fastened up, and made air-tight by means of a thin layer of bricks cemented with stucco. It is quite an error to suppose that the practice of burning the dead was ever exclusively adopted by the Roman people. There were several entrances to these enormous excavations. In some quarters they extended into a volcanic stratum of porous marl, underneath the stratum where pozzuolana is found. The subterranean streets were sometimes excavated one under the other in several storeys, and were wide and lofty enough for a carriage to pass. The materials taken from the burrowings being composed of small chips of the marl, were raised by means of rope and basket through the look-out holes, and spread over the country above.*

A story is current at Rome that an Italian gentleman, exploring some intricate ruins in the suburbs, slipped down a ravine hidden in brushwood and climbing plants, and when he arrived at the bottom, saw that it was impossible for him to retrace his steps. Having a lantern or a candle with him, he struck a light, boldly followed the course of the narrow passage, and at length found himself before an ancient door, mildewed and rotten, from behind which came the sweet strains of a rich religious service. Having been in peril of his life only a few moments before, filled with fear lest he should wander into the intricate mazes around him, and perhaps be starved to death, or suffocated with poisonous gases—for the soil about Rome is volcanic—his joy now was intense; he had no difficulty in pushing down the door, and, after scrambling up a slimy staircase, he emerged safe and sound into the crypt of one of the Constantinian basilicas.

If we may believe the guides, these galleries run for twenty miles underground. Some say that they extend even as far as Albano, Ostia, and Civita Vecchia, a distance of sixteen miles, in one direction.

Instead of speculating further concerning the origin and extent of these mysterious excavations, it is proposed to weigh and illustrate their testimony to the evidences and doctrines of our holy religion. This testimony is of two kinds: first, that derived from the catacombs themselves; and secondly, from the manifold traditions handed down concerning them. The first is almost indisputable, for no one yet has had the hardihood to contend that the early Christians chose to live days and weeks in subterranean galleries in order to forge inscriptions. The second sort of testimony is more open to question, because all traditions, unless they are reduced in a formal way to writing, are apt to be exaggerated, sometimes by the fanaticism, sometimes by the carelessness, and sometimes by the bad faith, of those who hand them down.

In order to understand the subsequent argument, let us suppose ourselves residents at Rome about the time of the Emperor Nero. The city is one of the most splendid that was ever reared by human hands. Its nucleus stands upon seven slight eminences on the banks of the Tiber—these eminences being, in point of fact, nothing more than projections of the table-land through which the yellow stream has gnawed its way. But Rome, like London in modern times, has enormously outgrown these limits. To this day ruins of homesteads, temples, villas, and aqueducts, stretch for twenty or thirty miles round. It is said of the Emperor Augustus, that he found Rome of brick and left it of marble. It was shortly afterwards enriched by enormous buildings—temples, market-places, amphitheatres holding from fifty to a hundred thousand spectators, race-courses placed not upon some breezy down but surrounded by buildings rich alike in material and design palaces of emperors, some of them constructing their houses on the roofs of those of

* Mr. Francis Wey, whose most interesting work upon Rome has supplied the materials for this geological sketch of the catacombs, supposes that six millions of men, women, and children, were interred in them, and that they measured, including the various bye-lanes and cross passages, altogether a length of three or four hundred miles.

their predecessors, baths of great splendour and extent, in which every appliance of luxurious ablution was provided—all these visible symbols denoting the power and grandeur of Imperial Rome. Just as the capital was about to culminate in architectural dignity, the military power of Rome being as it were crystallised in the buildings of the city, an event took place which was to make the Romans conquer themselves, and eventually break up the empire. At Bethlehem-ephrata of Judea there was born a child. An old Roman tradition says that about the hour the Saviour came into the world, the Emperor Augustus woke in the night troubled by a strange dream, the point of which was that there had been born in Syria at that moment a little child that was eventually to be acknowledged, throughout the universal world, King of kings and Lord of lords. For years there had been a strange floating idea that out of the East would come a Supreme Ruler. That prevalent idea gave Vespasian, the son of a second-rate Swiss banker, the imperial purple. At any rate, shortly after the great Feast of Pentecost, Christianity had penetrated to the capital. Whether any apostle before St. Paul preached the Gospel at Rome is doubtful; but among those who witnessed the outpouring of the Holy Spirit are mentioned "strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes." That is, Jews by ancestry, and Jews by the adoption of that faith, who usually lived at Rome, but who had patiently traversed many lands that they might worship in the central shrine on Mount Moriah. These men, on returning to their families, proclaimed the tidings of the new salvation. But by whatever instrumentalities the Gospel had been introduced into Rome, a flourishing Church had been founded there. St. Paul's words, in addressing the disciples in his Epistle, express strongly his confidence in their numbers, goodness, and purity. He addresses "All that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the Gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers; making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you. For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me."

(To be concluded.)

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 16. New Mission Work.

Chapter to be read—Acts xv. xvi. (parts of.)

INTRODUCTION. Ask a few questions on St. Paul's first missionary journey. Where he started from; where he went; who went with him; what results there were; what important question arose and how it was settled. Now, a year or two having elapsed, time to re-visit the Churches, and see how they are getting on.

I. A Dispute. (Read Acts xv. 36—41.) Where did St. Paul propose to go, and for what purpose? (ver. 36.) Whom would he naturally wish to accompany him? but whom did Barnabas wish to take also? Remind of the relationship between Mark and Barnabas. Why was not St. Paul willing to take him? But two years had elapsed since he left the work, surely he had time to change and regret his departure. His willingness to go now a good sign of renewed earnestness. Still, Paul unwilling. What trials and persecution had accompanied their first journey? probably more in store for them. Mark had been tried and found wanting; might do well at home, but lacking in the perseverance needed for missionary work. Should Paul have yielded and taken him? Which should come first—feeling for a young minister or the interests of the mission? So he decides against taking him. Whom did he choose instead? See past account of Silas. Sent by the Church at Jerusalem with Judas to confirm the decree about circumcision (ver. 22). When Judas returned, Silas, evidently so attached to Paul, remained with him (ver. 34), so now is honoured by being chosen his companion. Which party receives the commendation of the Church? (ver. 40.) So Paul and Silas depart on their journey.

Practical Lesson. Let the children see how in important matters public good must be preferred to private affection. Duty must always come before pleasure; this may apply in many ways, *e.g.*, in choosing a companion for some work entrusted to us; think of our duty to our employer before the kindness to the friend, &c., not what we *wish*, but what is *right*, should be our motto.

II. A New Convert. (Read xvi. 1—8.) Once more come to Derbe. Who was found there? What did Paul do to him? His mother being a Jewess, he was circumcised as a Jew. What character did Timothy bear? From 2 Tim. i. 5, iii. 15, see the

early training he had had from mother and grandmother, who had taught him the Scriptures. So now the party of three move on—Paul, with his two young friends. What pleasant talks they would have after the day's work; what profitable reading of the Scriptures, and united prayer. "A threefold cord not quickly broken." They go through most of the country where had been before, but where may they not go? (vers. 6, 7.) How the Spirit stopped them we know not—perhaps by direct voice, as to Peter, when sent to Cornelius (Acts x. 19); perhaps by message of an angel, as to Paul afterwards (xxvii. 23); perhaps by some hindrance put in the way. A wider field going to open to them.

III. A NEW COUNTRY. (Read xvi. 9—15.) Ask had God in those days often manifested His will, and recall some of the dreams spoken of in the Bible. Point out how God's own servants always understood the meaning of their dreams, *e.g.*, Joseph, Daniel, Paul, while others had to seek interpreters, *e.g.*, Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, &c. Now, at Troas, Paul has a dream. What was it?—a man of strange appearance, speaking a different language, but show from xxi. 27 that St. Paul understood Greek, this man's language. What did he ask? and what help did he want? Next morning Paul tells his dream, and the friends talk it over. No doubt as to meaning. Immediately decide as to the call, and now they see why they were not allowed to go elsewhere. Ask the name of the writer of the Acts, and point out from the word "we" in ver. 10 that Luke had now joined them. Now another voyage commenced. The party of four friends sail direct across the Ægean Sea to Neapolis, the port of Philippi. What new country was this? Had now left the tribes of the East to visit those of the West. What is the first place in Europe they come to—a very important place for trade, and a Roman colony? Now picture the little party beginning their work in Europe, as yet altogether heathen. Whom do they find? Picture the friends sitting on the grass by the riverside, the water sparkling in the sun, the flowers and birds, &c., talking to the women in groups. Point out the contrast to the East, where the women were shut up. Have not as yet heard of one woman converted. Now the first in Europe to receive apostles is a woman. What was her name and occupation? Who opened her heart? She, already in some way a worshipper of God, more disposed to hear of Jesus Christ. She attended, was baptised, brought her household, showed her love to God by love to man, and exercised Christian hospitality. No slight matter to receive four strangers into her house, but notice her invitation, and see its warmth. They are constrained to come in and abide, *i.e.*, make her house their home for the present. So here the party stay while preaching at Philippi.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.—(1) *To obey God's voice.* We no longer spoken to in dreams, but many indications of God's will by unexpected openings, strong wish of parents, &c. Way may be dark and unknown. (2) *To make most of what means of grace we have.* Lydia worshipping God to the best of her ability was further instructed. So the wise men, seeking a king, found a Saviour. Paul's zeal for God directed aright. So will be always. We shall know if follow on to know. They who seek shall find.

Questions to be answered.

1. What disagreement arose between Paul and Barnabas, and what lesson does it teach?
2. What new converts were made, and where?
3. Say all you can about them.
4. Describe the visit to Philippi.
5. What practical lessons may we learn?

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE ordeal Eda dreaded had to be met but too quickly. As soon as Richie received her packet he came to Mr. de Courcy's, obtained admittance by representing that he was the bearer of a message from Miss Granton's brother, and was shown into the morning-room, to which she was summoned to receive him.

It was a trying interview, for Richie met her with all those tender looks, those soft caressing words, she had once thought irresistible, and yet made but the feeblest efforts to exonerate his conduct. In fact he did not appear able to see how much he had been to blame. He certainly had idled a deal of time with Flossy Devon—"a fellow must have somewhere to spend his evenings, you know, Eda dear"—and she was such a vain little puss that a man could not say a civil word but she fancied him in love with her; and now her parents had taken it up, and he was—yes, he certainly was—awkwardly situated; but if Eda would be patient he would set it all right in a little while.

It was difficult to make him comprehend that Eda was shocked at his flippancy, and positively refused to regard him in any other character than that of Flossy's affianced husband.

"If you loved me you could not talk so coolly of giving me up," he told her.

"I do *not* love you, Richie," she answered, frankly. "It has been a mistake on both sides. I erred when I thought I could be contented with such affection as you proffer, and you wronged me when you imagined that I could be content to spend my life with one who is false to his word, and who glibly talks of making it *all right* when he is meditating a most dishonourable action."

"Had you consented to be mine when I asked you, Eda, all this bother would have been avoided." And as Richie reproachfully told her this, he would have taken her hand, but she immediately withdrew it, and seating herself at a little distance, endeavoured, with gentle earnestness, to awaken him to a sense of his unworthy conduct.

"I know that if I lose you I shall lose the best, the sweetest of wives, and only have instead a dressy silly doll, of whom I can never make a companion!" was his reply. "I was mad when I gave Flossy reason to think I cared for her; but I have been a weak fool all my life, losing golden opportunities through acts as rash and as bitterly rued as this will always be."

Eda thought of the words she had once heard her mother apply to him—"Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel"—and her eyes filled with tears as she bade him adieu. He was reluctant to let her go until he had extorted a promise from her to give him time—to wait and see how things turned out; but she was firm. Pity him she did, with her whole heart—so handsome, so lovable, and yet so utterly devoid of principle; pray for him she would, earnestly, but with her prayers would mingle a thanksgiving that she had been saved from marrying a man whom she could not have respected.

When she went again to the Allonbys she knew that Gran listened for a sorrowful intonation in her voice, and that the artist furtively watched her with much anxiety. So she nerved herself to tell the story of her intercourse with Richie curtly, but faithfully. If Flossy ever suspected or learned that she had not been first in the affections of her betrothed, it might be a relief to her to know that there never had been a positive engagement between him and Eda, who was careful to make her hearers understand that she acquitted him of any deliberate treachery to herself. Friends from their childhood, Richie had fancied he loved her till a fairer face came in his way. She could not trust herself to say more, for she was but a weak woman, after all, and it stung her to be obliged to feel that she had been forgotten for such a butterfly as Flossy Devon.

"God help them both!" said Gran, with a sigh. "They neither of them know what is before them. They'll marry, as lots of young couples do, thinking more of themselves than what they are taking on their shoulders."

Mr. Allonby said little, yet in the clasp of his hand at parting there was such a depth of sympathy, that after one quick glance Eda could not trust herself to meet his eyes again. He insisted on being permitted to escort her across the park, but there were few words spoken between them until he was leaving her at Mr. de Courcy's door, when Eda contrived to say, "I am not unhappy about this affair. Pray make Gran understand this."

"She does already. She was the first to assure me that you were too sensible to grieve for the loss of a friend who has proved so unworthy."

"But don't be too hard upon Richie," she pleaded. "Your cousin is a charming little creature, and I trust he will do his best to make her happy."

"If you can forgive him," Mr. Allonby replied, "it will be easy for me to do so—for me, who have never been able to think with patience of you as the wife of Richard Atwood."

With these words he left her, and from that time the one disturbing element passed out of Eda's life. She heard of Richie occasionally, for Doris could not refrain from giving her details of the wedding—the pretty little bride's first "at home," &c. But in a short time any mention of Flossy or her husband was always accompanied with a sigh and shake of the head; and Eda divined that the spoilt, dressy girl had developed into a slatternly wife, and the wavering man who had married her into a selfish, careless husband. Gran might well say "God help them!" when they made such a mockery of wedlock—that truest and holiest of all bonds—as this.

To turn from one unblessed marriage to another—Mark Granton and his Sophie had been settled at Sydenham for some weeks before Eda was able to pay them her promised visit. To her regular duties as governess she was now supplementing those of housekeeper, for Mrs. Wells had grown weary of her toils, and accepted a less onerous situation. To his lady's astonishment and disgust Mr. de Courcy refused to have her place filled up, sharply telling his wife it was high time she managed her household herself, and tried to find out how it was that their domestic affairs were so frightfully mismanaged.

After two or three squabbles, Mrs. de Courcy consented to accept the keys of office, and promised to do her best; but she was too indolent to attend to the duties that devolved upon her, and by a little dexterous management she contrived to impose them upon Eda—effecting this so indirectly that it was difficult to avoid compliance.

"Do come to my help for half an hour, will you, dear Miss Granton?" she would say; "I'll not detain you longer: but there are so many orders to give and accounts to look over that I am quite bewildered." And when she had fairly set her obliging helper down in the midst of the confusion she had assisted to create, she would remember some note that must be written, or some engagement that must be fulfilled, and slip away to return no more.

"Really, housekeeping was not half as unpleasant



(*Drawn by* F. BARNARD.)

"Leaving her at Mr. de Courcy's door."—*p.* 264.

a task as she had anticipated!" Mrs. de Courcy would tell her visitors, with beaming smiles. "And they must all see that her servants were kept in better order, and her domestic affairs worked more smoothly, than when poor Wells was at the head of them." But not a word did she say of the labours of Eda, who from the first was overwhelmed at the waste, the extravagance, and dishonesty, she kept discovering. She laid these sad revelations before Mrs. de Courcy, but without arousing that lady from her languid indifference.

"Yes, it's very sad, Miss Granton—very; but it is no use worrying oneself about things one cannot alter. Tradesmen and servants always do cheat their employers; every one knows it."

"Is not that a very sweeping assertion?" asked Eda; "and is there not a remedy for it in the hands of those who are defrauded? If ladies made it their rule to pay all bills regularly, and overlook the household expenditure with more care and punctuality, such things could not be, could they?"

"I'm sure I don't know!" Mrs. de Courcy answered, helplessly. "I have always found so much to do since I have been a wife that I had no time to spare for housekeeping; and if one pays a person to attend to it, why should one be worried about how many pounds of butter are used in the kitchen, and so on?"

"There is an immense number of unpaid bills," Eda reminded her. "What is to be done about them?"

But the lady only gave her shoulders an impatient shrug. "Good gracious, the people can surely wait! I cannot tease Mr. de Courcy for money just as he has lost so heavily in various ways. He says that if we go on at the present rate we shall soon be ruined."

How glibly the words fell from her lips! How little she seemed to think that they might speedily be realised! When, at the cost of more than one severe headache, Eda had contrived to glean the sum total of the heedless lady's liabilities, she stood aghast. Mrs. Wells had considered herself an excellent servant; but it had never entered into her head that she was helping to drag her employers downwards when she put aside long-standing accounts, and sent creditors away with civil but false excuses, rather than risk displeasing Mr. or Mrs. de Courcy by recalling to their minds some folly or wanton piece of extravagance.

But there would have to be a day of reckoning; and Manon had coarsely hinted on more than one occasion that before long her master and mistress would have to reduce their expenditure. This was so true, that when Eda had done her best she saw that she was only stemming a torrent that must presently overwhelm the thoughtless couple, whom she knew not whether to pity or censure.

She was not sorry to shake herself free of these anxieties for a few hours, though Mrs. de Courcy audibly murmured at Miss Granton being so inconsiderate as to wish to go out for a whole day; especially as she knew that Mr. de Courcy talked of bringing friends home with him, and no one else could arrange the table for a dinner *à la Russe* so prettily. But for once Eda was firm; she was yearning to see her brother, and would not any longer deprive herself of that pleasure for the convenience of her selfish and exacting employers.

Rose and Violet, who were to spend the term of her absence with their indulgent grandparents, went away in high glee at the prospect of a happy holiday free from Manon's snubs and scoldings; and scarcely less exhilarated at her escape from the school-room and the countless appeals to Miss Granton that came from up-stairs, down-stairs, and my lady's chamber, Eda took the omnibus to town.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

When she reached Sydenham such an affectionate reception awaited her that it was like exchanging the frigid zone for a warmer climate. Mark and his wife vied with each other in kindly attentions to their guest, whose unaffected admiration of the villa and its tasteful surroundings flattered and pleased them. Luncheon was served before she had half finished inspecting the improvements the always busy Mark had made or projected. Surely he must be content now! What more could the most ambitious desire than such an adoring wife and such a home as this?

And Sophie—had he studied her happiness as faithfully as he had promised to do? Eda gazed at her as she sat presiding over the tray—the most hospitable of hostesses—and felt tolerably satisfied that so far all had gone well. The fastidious Mark had evidently dictated sundry improvements in his wife's toilet, for her hair was now dressed in a manner more becoming to her strongly-marked features, which were also softened by a head-dress of lace. Her costume, too, was of a tint that harmonised with her muddy complexion, instead of rendering it more prominent; and altogether she looked very different to the West Indian lady whose bright draperies had rather shocked the quieter tastes of the young Englishwoman.

When they rose from table Mark looked at his watch, and his wife's brow clouded; but instead of directly noticing the action, she asked Eda if she would like a drive through some of the beautiful scenery in the neighbourhood. When she responded in the affirmative, Mrs. Granton turned quickly to her husband.

"You will drive us towards Beckenham and Bromley, will you not, Mark? I am sure Eda will be pleased with that road."

"Drive her there, then, yourself, my dear; you

know the pony-phæton will not hold three of us comfortably," he answered.

"Say at once that you intend to keep that appointment, although I asked you not to do so," Mrs. Granton retorted, with the gleam in her eyes which Eda did not like to see.

"Ladies have queer notions of business," said Mark, good-humouredly. "They think engagements can be made and set aside just as the fit takes one."

"Men should not make engagements so foolishly," Mrs. Granton told him. "The fellow you are going to meet is, by your own showing, a notorious speculator, who wants to practise on your credulity for his own benefit. My agent, Mr. Edwards, said so only the other day.

Mark bit his lip. "Mr. Edwards is excessively kind to interest himself in my affairs; but you may tell him, with my compliments, that I am capable of managing them without his assistance."

"But are you obliged to leave us?" Eda interposed. "It is so long since I saw you that I shall feel very sorry if you run away before I have had half an hour's chat with you."

Mark declared that he too was sorry, but business must be attended to; and he was sure that she and Sophie would be able to entertain each other better without than with a cynical member of the other sex. He would return as early as he could. "At midnight?" Mrs. Granton queried. "As soon as he could;" and in the meantime his dear little sis was to enjoy herself, and tell Sophie if there was anything she wanted that they could supply.

Kissing his hand to his wife, who looked vexed and sullen, he went away; and Eda, affecting more cheerfulness than she felt, proposed that they should set off for their drive at once. Mrs. Granton, who had thrown herself on a sofa, and was gnawing the lace of her pocket-handkerchief like a pettish child, shook off her ill-humour, and ringing for the pretty little basket-carriage her indolent habits rendered almost a necessity, drove through several of the charming lanes in the vicinity, smiling and wondering at the beauties Eda discerned on every bank and hedgerow.

"I wish you were going to stay with me!" she exclaimed. "I should often drive out if I had such a pleasant companion."

"But do you not go out every day?"

Mrs. Granton sighed. "It is so dull to drive about the country alone. I sometimes wish I had stayed nearer town. I would sooner live in the heart of the City than spend so many solitary hours. Mark is seldom at home."

Eda said something vague about men being so wedded to the activity and bustle of a business life that they could not resist revisiting their old haunts.

"But my income is large enough to keep us without anything else; why then should Mark enter upon schemes for making money that he really does not require?"

"It may vex him to feel that he is entirely dependent upon his wife," said Eda, after a little pause. "He may wish to increase your income by his own exertions."

"But it is with *my* money he speculates, and against *my* will. I do not care how many cheques I draw for his own use; but when I see him eager to take shares in new companies which a man more experienced than himself assures me cannot stand, how can I help being vexed with him?"

"Quietly and kindly tell him this, and ask him to go abroad with you. Perhaps a few months spent in France or Switzerland would wean him off these fancies."

"It would be very nice to go abroad," mused Sophie. "I should like to see Paris. Yes, it is a good thought; I will mention it to him. If he will consent, how delightful it will be! You ought to go with us, dear Eda. I often reproach myself about you. It does not seem right that you should be working while we are living in ease and comfort; but Mark says you always were so independent."

This remark was heard in silence, and neither of the young women spoke again till they drew near the villa, when Eda exclaimed at the beauty of its situation.

"Yes, it is very pretty; but I never could enjoy anything by myself. I spend a great many dull hours in the house you call so charming."

"Why not fill up some of your leisure with gardening? My little pupils and I have converted the leads outside the school-room window into a fernery, and it often affords us an hour's amusement. Or botanising would be delightful in these lanes."

"Alone?" asked Mrs. Granton, rather bitterly.

"Well then why not go to town with Mark sometimes, and while he transacts his business make some for yourself? You draw beautifully; copy some of the landscapes at Kensington or the National Gallery for the walls of your own drawing-room. You would find it a most engrossing occupation."

"No," said Sophie, abruptly; "occupying myself might sometimes banish *ennui*, but it would not uproot my troubles. Besides, Mark would not like me to go to London with him. He does not care to be seen with his ugly wife."

"Nay, dear sister," cried Eda, ashamed and sorry; "I am sure you are doing him injustice!"

"Am I? Then how was it that he did not introduce me to the gentleman who accosted him at the Crystal Palace on the only occasion that he took me there? He said that the stranger was merely a casual acquaintance, but I afterwards learned that his name was Atwood, and that Mark has known him for years."

"I can quite understand his not wishing to make

you known to such an unscrupulous person as Richie Atwood."

"But he let him stand and gape at me rudely, and I know that when he whispered the inquiry 'who is your companion?' Mark must have answered it with an equivocation, for there was quite an impertinent smile on his face when he nodded and walked away. If Mark had boldly said, 'This lady is my wife,' his friend would have behaved respectfully. I tell you, Eda, he is ashamed of my ordinary appearance. Indeed, I sometimes suspect——"

But Eda's finger was on her lip. "Dear Sophie, don't say any more, but strive to think the best of your husband. If you are gentle and patient with him he must learn to appreciate you."

Mrs. Granton smiled faintly. "Excellent advice this; but my West Indian blood catches fire so quickly when I am vexed or ill-used that I cannot help saying what I think and feel."

"You have not been married three months yet," her sister-in-law reminded her. "Has there been time to accommodate yourselves to each other's whims and tempers and prejudices?"

"I suppose not; and it is a shame to entertain you with complaints of fancied neglect," cried Sophie, more cheerfully. "And, after all, Mark is very good to me. If I am pettish he always bears my ill-humour without murmuring; or if he stays away from me more than I like, he often brings me some token that I have been affectionately remembered during his absence. Remind me to show you the French bon-bon box he bought me yesterday. It is the prettiest thing of the kind I have ever seen."

Did Mark think he should always be able to still his wife's reproaches with soft words and sweetmeats? She was beginning to distrust him already; to consider herself neglected, and to feel dissatisfied at his demands for money to be applied to purposes of which she disapproved. Eda congratulated herself—rather sorrowfully, it is true—that her brother had been tacitly opposed to the plan of her taking up an abode with him; for she began to comprehend how difficult a position she would have held when both husband and wife made calls upon her sympathy.

Mark was still absent when Eda, who had protracted her stay as long as she could, very reluctantly left Sophie to her loneliness, and returned to Mr. de Courcy's. She would have liked to see her brother again, to hint to him that his repeated absences were scarcely kind, and pray him to be more considerate to his wife. But he did not give her the opportunity, and she knew not where to find him in town, even if she resolved to brave his displeasure, and seek him there. Her vague fears that his domestic happiness was already tottering made her so restless and uneasy, that a few days after this visit to Sydenham she took advantage of having a commission to execute at a jeweller's for Mrs. de Courcy, and went to see Gran, whose sympathy always sent her back to her duties cheered and comforted.

(*To be continued.*)

ENGLISH SACRED POETRY.—II.

PERIOD OF THE PLANTAGENETS.

IN our last paper we gave a sketch of the history of sacred poetry in the times of our Saxon forefathers; we now propose to continue our retrospect through the reigns of the Plantagenets, that is to say, from 1066 to 1485. During this long period we shall find very few poets who confined themselves strictly to sacred poetry, and who could be called sacred poets in the sense in which we speak of Cædmon or of George Herbert, but we shall find many writers who, like Chaucer and Lydgate, have interspersed the general body of their writings with verses dedicated to religious subjects. These passages we shall endeavour to point out; and we doubt not that a brief inquiry will be of real service to those who care to know something of early religious poetry. For, in the first place, these writings are not easily accessible to most readers; and in the second place, many of these old poets are very voluminous, and, on the whole, very uninteresting.

The Norman conquest completely changed the face of our country: it introduced a new phase of civilisation, and if it created a new life, it entirely destroyed the old. Its effect on literature was singular. For a time it seems to have completely crushed that fresh and vigorous genius of which we have such remarkable specimens in Cædmon and Alfred. It introduced a heavy pedantic school of writings, remarkable only for their learning, and valuable only for their historical interest. What poetry has come down to us of that epoch is for the most part in Latin, and in very bad Latin too. It is not till we come to the reign of Henry II. that any native poetry worthy of the name makes its appearance; and the first poems we can mention are certain metrical lives of the saints, which exist in MSS. in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. They were most probably composed by the monks to amuse, no doubt, their cloistral leisure, and possibly to edify their less-gifted brethren, who, unable to employ themselves by writing, were fain to amuse themselves by reading. These MSS. give an account of the various Roman Catholic saints, such as St. Swithin, St. Wolstan, and St. Christopher, and are almost

ludicrous in their bald precision of detail. With one specimen we shall pass these worthies by, and turn to their more interesting successors. Here is a specimen of the life of Saint Christopher :—

"Seynt Cristofre was a Sarazin in the londe of Canaan,
In no slud by him daye mi fond non so strong a man:
Ffour and twenti feete he was longe and thikk and brod inough.
Such a mon but he weore stronge methinketh hit weore wough.
A la cuntre where he was for him wolde fleo,
Therfore him ythoughte that no man ageynst him sculde beo;
He seide he wolde with no man beo but with on that were
Hext lord of all men and undir him non othir were."

About this time, too, appeared a series of poetical, or, to speak more properly, rhythmical versions of Genesis, Exodus, and the Psalms, executed in pretty much the same style as the verses we have cited. Contemporaneous with these productions—though it is difficult, by the way, to settle with any accuracy the chronology of this kind of literature, much of it still existing only in MSS.—we have a few hymns, some of which are very touching in their simple beauty, as, for instance, this stanza in an elegy on our Saviour's death :—

"I syke when y singe for sorrow that yse,
When y with wypinge bihold upon the tree,
Ant se Jesu the suete
Is hert-blood for lete
For the love of me."

The following stanza, too, on His passion and death is worthy of quotation :—

"Jesu for thi muchele might
Thou ȝef us of thi grace,
That we maue day and night
Thenken of thy face
In myn herte it doth me good
When y thinke on Jhesu blod
That ran down by his syde;
From is harte doune to ys fote.
For us he spradde is harte blode
His wondes were so wyde."

We now pass on to a very remarkable production—a sacred poem, in the French language, by the celebrated Robert Grosthead, or as it is now spelt, Grostête, bishop of Lincoln. It is an attempt to adopt the measure and style of the Troubadours—a race of minstrels who sprang up about the twelfth century in the South of France, and wrote love-lyrics—to the purposes of religious song. This piece, according to Warton, professes to treat of the creation, the redemption, the day of judgment, the happiness of heaven, and the torments of hell, and is a religious allegory. This poem, which is written in Norman-French, was translated into English verse, possibly by the celebrated Robert de Brunne, about the reign of Edward I. It is interesting, but heavy, and will scarcely bear quoting. The next poet of any consequence is Adam Davie, who flourished about the year 1312, that is to say, in the reign of Edward II., an important period in English literature. This poet is, perhaps, the most really poetical of any who appeared before Chaucer. His work consists of Visions: "The Battle of Jerusalem;" "The Legend of St. Alexius;" "Scripture Histories of Fifteen Tokens before the Day of Judgment;" "Lamentations of Souls;" and a secular poem entitled "The Life of Alexander." Of his life nothing is known except that he held the office of Marshal of Stratford-le-Bow, near London. There is a MS. of these poems—which, as far as we know, has never been printed—in the Bodleian Library; it is unfortunately much damaged, and parts of it are, as Warton laments, illegible. Though an account of the old English Mystery Plays does not strictly fall within our province, it is difficult, in treating of English sacred poetry, to pass them by without notice. Most of our readers probably are aware that our first scenical representations were dedicated to Scriptural legends. Many of these plays have come down to us; the most interesting are those known as the "Coventry" and the "Chester Mysteries." The latter are twenty-five in number, and were performed by the trading companies of the city. Though to our more refined tastes the composition of these dramas is often rough and uncouth, the dramatic incidents ludicrous and even profane, they were doubtless received with profound reverence by our ancestors. A good deal of buffoonery was expected, and introduced, but in spite of this it is easy to see that the general tone of these works was intended to be grave and pious, and was received as such by those present at their representation. It is dreary work to read through any of them continuously, and not the sort of study we could recommend as a pleasant pastime to anybody. Still, the adventurous reader will every now and then stumble on passages of singular beauty, both of sentiment and expression. Could anything be more touching in its simplicity, for instance, than the following?—

"That Lorde that is ever omnipotent
To govern you in goodness, as he best may
In hevyn we may hym se.
Now God, that is hevyn kynge
Send us all hese der' blyssynge
And to His tower He mote us brynge,
Amen, for charyte."

We have now arrived at Chaucer, but before proceeding at once to the poems and verses he has dedicated to the sacred muse, let us briefly sum up the characteristics of the Anglo-Norman poetry. What we admired in the Anglo-Saxon genius, we find in the Anglo-Norman, though we find it with modifications. That vivid *abandon* has now become toned down. Sacred poetry has lost in intensity and spirit, but it has gained in learning and form; it has become more solid and sententious, and more a work of art in the modern acceptation of the term. The Saxon and the Norman were essentially distinct, and their national characteristics are naturally reflected in their poetry. There is a coldness and want of

fervour about the Norman; he is dry and bald, and realistic. The Saxon, on the other hand, though too often dull and lethargic, has imagination about him—has deep feeling. A large mass of Norman poetry has come down to us, a considerable portion, too, of Saxon poetry; and it is curious to see how the Saxon always tends to the religious, the Norman to the secular. The one is pious, grateful, contemplative; the other brilliant, superficial, worldly. It was not till there was an incorporation of the Saxon with the Norman elements—and this is very noteworthy—that our poetry again assumed a definite religious tone. English sacred poetry is the expression of the complete amalgamation of the two nationalities. Without the Saxon, poetry would probably not have become religious; without the Norman it could scarcely have become bright and buoyant. Chaucer represents this amalgamation.

Geoffrey Chaucer, the father of English poets, was born, according to the inscription on his monument in Westminster Abbey, in 1328. Into his secular poetry, and into the events of his life, it is obviously not necessary to enter here. A great deal has been written about this great poet, but there is one feature that has not received half the attention it deserves, that is to say, his eloquence, his fervour, his genius as a sacred poet. There are most delightful passages dedicated to the glory of God scattered throughout his works. His most beautiful sacred poem—for there can be little doubt that this work belongs to him—is "The Lamentation of Mary Magdalene." She is represented as bewailing the empty sepulchre of our Saviour:—

"My Lord is gone that here in death was laied
After his great passion and death cruell.
Who hath him thus again betraied?
Or what man here about can me tell
Where He is become, the Prince of Israel,
Jesus of Nazareth, my ghostly succour,
My parfite love and hope of all honour?"

She concludes that the Jews have stolen him away, and blames herself for not having sate and guarded his sepulchre:—

"Since all my joy that I call His presence
Is thus removed, now I am full of mone.
* * * * *
Alone here I stand, full sorry and full sad,
Which hoped to have seene my Lord and King."

She hopes that her bones at least may rest on the blessed spot where His rested. Returning then to the cruel Jews, she draws a terrible picture of the evils and cruelties they heaped on our blessed Lord, and then goes on to describe the crucifixion: how He was crowned with thorns and given vinegar to drink, while she knelt down at the cross witnessing His sufferings, but unable to relieve them—

"Then kneeled I doune in paine's outrage,
Clipping the cross within mine armes twain.
His blood distilled doune in my visage,
My clothes eke the droppes did distain.
To have died for Him, I would full fain;
But what should it avail if I did so?
* * * * *
I wept, I bledde, and with myselfe I fared
As one that for his life nothing had cared.
I, looking up to that rueful roode,
Saw first the visage pale of that figure.
But so piteous a sight, spotted with bloode,
Saw never yet no living creature,
So it exceeded the bonds of measure.
Then 'gan I there mine armes to unbrace,
Up liftyng my handes full mourningly,
I sighed and sorē sobbèd in that place,
Both heaven and earthe might have heard me cry."

She declaims against the wicked Jews, and mourns that she could not have borne some of the woes of her blessed One. With Him she has lost everything. She will not rest till she has found Him; she will go through "hote Inde" and the farthest parts of Egypt, even into the wilderness; she will care not for food or raiment—

"I am best content
His crosse with nailes and scourges withall
Shall be my thought and painē speciall."

She will go to His mother, and mingle griefs with her. Yet no; she will not go to her, for the Virgin does not as yet know of His disappearance. She then passionately calls on her Lord to appear. He will not answer, and she must die of grief. The poem concludes by her farewell address to her loved Saviour:—

"Adiew my Lord, my love so faire of face;
Adiew my turtle dove, so fresh of hew;
Adiew my mirth, adiew all my sollace;
Adiew, alas! my Saviour Lord Jesu.
* * * * *
Adiew the fairest that ever was bore,
Alas! I may not see your blessed face!
Now welaway that I shall see no more
Thy blessed visage so replete with grace,
Wherein is printed my perfite sollace.
Adiew mine heart's root and all for ever;
Now farwel, I must from thee disever."

Such is this beautiful poem, of which we have given large extracts, because we are not aware that it has been noticed before, and will probably be new to most of our readers. Another of this poet's works, too, merits especial attention. No one can ever realise the profound pathos and tenderness of dear old Chaucer till they have read that most touching of all legends, the "Prioress's Tale," which has been modernised by Wordsworth. Nor in an account of early English sacred poetry must we pass by Chaucer's glorious picture of the country parson in the Prologue to the "Canterbury Tales," which has been so vigorously modernised by Dryden. The thorough piety and cheerfulness of this true poet, his gratitude to God for all the blessings which surrounded him, both in the world of men and in the works of Nature, are always finding their expression in some form or other.

But we must pass on to John Lydgate. Lydgate is in many respects one of the most remarkable of our early poets; certainly he is one of the most voluminous. He was born about 1370, was educated

at Oxford, Paris, and Padua, finally became a monk at Bury St. Edmunds, and wrote about two hundred and fifty-one works, or, as Warton puts it, was the author of a small library. Perhaps the most beautiful, certainly the most earnest, of his religious poems, is his "John Lydgate's Testament," from which the following verses are extracted:—

"Tary no longer, toward thy herytage
Haste on thy way, and be of right good cheere;
Go eche day onward on thy pylgremage,
Thynke howe short time thou shalt abidë here.

"Thy place is byld above the sterrës clere,
None erthly palace wrought so stately wyse;
Come on my frende, my brother moost enteere,
For the I offred my blode in sacrifyce."

There are many beautiful little passages scattered up and down his miscellaneous hymns and poems, written in that simple quaint style which makes the perusal of these ancient bards so fascinating, and relieves the monotony of their general tediousness. Lydgate died about the year 1461, and with him died the school of Chaucer's immediate followers, and the poetry of mediæval chivalry.

These names close a period somewhat uninteresting in the history of sacred poetry; our next period will be more fruitful in interesting names and in interesting matter.

THE GIANT'S CRADLE.

PART II.

THE darkness was rapidly increasing as timid little Clara sped over the rugged path which led to the old mill. She, who had hardly ever walked alone before in this wild and desolate scene, and at the solemn twilight hour, forgot to think of real or imaginary dangers, and was only anxious to reach her destination as quickly as possible. Several times she mistook the way, but at length, after many turnings and windings, the mill appeared in sight, with its great ghostly-looking wheel revolving slowly in the water. Clara directed her steps towards the miller's house; a walled yard was before the door, and as she laid her hand on the latch of the little gate a deep bark startled her and made her tremble. Looking through the bars she beheld the dreaded dog standing near the house, as if to guard the entrance. How was she to pass the angry animal? and yet Sylvia's life might depend on obtaining speedy assistance. Nerved by this thought, she resolutely raised the latch, and entered the yard. Immediately the dog made a violent rush, and Clara, not perceiving that he was chained, uttered a piercing shriek, attempted to retreat, but in the confusion of the moment stumbled over a heap of stones. It seemed ages to the terrified child until she saw the door of the house open, and the miller—who had been startled from his supper by her loud scream—cross the yard. The dog retired to his kennel, growling ferociously, and Clara remembered no more until she found herself lying on a bed, with a kind-looking woman leaning over her. As soon as she was sufficiently recovered to speak she told her story, and, tired as she was, insisted on accompanying the miller to the Giant's Cradle. But on arriving at the place, what was her astonishment to find no Sylvia there! After the first surprise was over, she concluded that Gerald must have returned and taken her away. The miller, however, had his own fears—that the little girl, in attempting to raise herself, might have rolled into the river and been carried down the stream by the current. He therefore hurried back to his house, carrying the exhausted Clara, and leaving her there, promised, when he had made some further search for her sister, to take her home early in the morning. The poor child was much in need of rest, and when the miller's wife placed her in bed, over-fatigued in mind and body, she sobbed herself to sleep, and for a while forgot all grief and anxiety.

When Gerald left his cousins, with a promise to return soon, he threw his flies several times on the water without success.

"I can't understand why the fish won't take, such a splendid evening," thought he. "There's a fine breeze; and if I went a bit further up, to the deep holes, I'd be sure to get a good dish."

On the way he met a boy with whom he was acquainted, fishing also, and inquired if he had caught anything.

"I never had a better evening's sport," he replied, opening his basket, and displaying to the astonished eyes of his friend several fine trout. Immediately there followed an animated description of where they were caught, and on what flies; and together they proceeded a considerable distance up the stream, till the approaching darkness reminded Gerald that it was time to look after his cousins: not that he had forgotten them, for now and then it had occurred to him that he was acting selfishly in staying so long away; but it was such a pity to leave off fishing when the trout were taking so well, and each one he caught encouraged him to try for another. Now, however, becoming suddenly conscious that it was really getting very late, he bade adieu to his friend, and hurried back to the Giant's Cradle, wondering were the girls very tired of it by this time, and would they reproach him with breaking his word. But what was his astonishment and consternation to find Sylvia lying insensible at the foot of the rocky bank and Clara nowhere to be seen. He called and

searched, but it was of no use; and, shocked at the consequences of his inconsiderate selfishness, Gerald tried to think what was best to do under the circumstances, and determined to go to the house of a farmer who lived at the other side of the hill, and ask assistance to carry his cousin there. Climbing a gate at the end of the glen, in order to take a short cut across the field, he was running along at full speed, when suddenly from behind the hill a low threatening roar was heard, and, looking round, he beheld a huge bull following at no great distance. The only chance of escape was by flight; and as the gate was now a long way off, Gerald turned quickly, and, closely pursued by the infuriated animal to the very verge of the precipice, managed to save himself by dropping to a shelving rock, from which with some difficulty he descended to the ground, and once more stood close to the spot where Sylvia had fallen. But where was she now? Had the earth opened and swallowed her up during his short absence? for he could not imagine any other way by which she could have disappeared so suddenly. It was needless now to make another attempt to reach the farmer's house—he must first find Sylvia; and after spending more than an hour in searching behind each rock and shrub, and following the stream as far as the wooden bridge, he thought it best to take the homeward path, hoping that Clara, at least, when tired of waiting for him, might have tried to find her way alone. On he went, slowly and carefully, calling his cousin's name every now and then, through the thickening darkness, until at length, reaching home, he rushed in, and anxiously inquired if they had yet returned. Alas, no! Gerald's mother had already passed some hours of watching and waiting, and now his return with such tidings redoubled her anxiety.

Wearily and painfully the hours of darkness passed, and when the dawn of morning enabled the search to be renewed, Gerald set off again to go over the same ground. Near the mill, to his great delight, he met Clara on her way home, conducted by the miller. She looked pale and ill, but, rushing up to him, inquired eagerly for Sylvia. Alas! Gerald knew less than herself; and her account of the fall and strange disappearance of her sister only increased his apprehensions. Clara's safe return was, of course, a relief to her aunt's mind, but the terrible suspense about Sylvia still continued. And yet it was all very simple, and the mystery easily explained. The farmer who lived behind the hill had been surveying his crops on that evening, and while sauntering along the river-bank on his way home saw a little girl lying, as he supposed, in a faint, and carried her to his cottage. All his efforts failed to restore consciousness, and gladly would he have sent a message to her friends, had he known to whom she belonged; but Sylvia and her sister were as yet strangers in the country. The miller it was who, having discovered where the child had been taken, brought the information about the middle of the day, and Clara and her aunt hurried back with him, in the utmost anxiety, to the cottage. A doctor was at once called in, who spoke of a hurt in the head, and gave but small hopes of recovery. Immediately her mother was summoned, and as soon as possible took her place by Sylvia's bed-side, at the farmer's house. But it was many days before she recognised any one, although consciousness in a degree returned. These were sad times for poor Gerald, and in the bitterness of his sorrow and self-reproach he prayed earnestly that God would spare his cousin's life, and enable him to act differently for the future.

And his prayer was answered; for, notwithstanding the doctor's opinion, Sylvia began to show signs of amendment. It was a happy day when she was able to be moved to her aunt's house, and still happier when Gerald was allowed to see her for the first time. Gradually she recovered entirely from the effects of the fall; but Gerald has never forgotten what he then felt, and when tempted, as of old, to please himself without considering the feelings of others, he has only to call to mind that memorable evening's expedition to the Giant's Cradle.

S. T. A. R.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

99. When our Saviour first saw Nathaniel, reference was made to his praying under a fig-tree. Give a passage to show that trees or groves were planted for that purpose in very early ages.

100. Of what was the "red pottage" made for which Esau sold his birthright to Jacob?

101. Where is an unfaithful friend said to be like a "broken tooth, and a foot out of joint?"

102. Quote a passage in which one of our Lord's followers calls Jesus by the title of "Son of Man."

103. What present did Abraham give to Abimelech as a witness of his having dug the Well of Beer-sheba?

104. What prophet is recorded as having visited the town of Beer-sheba in after years?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 240.

85. Agabus (Acts xxi. 10, 11).

86. Jacob (Deut. xxvi. 5).

87. "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye might say to this sycamine tree" (Luke xvii. 6).

88. Cana in Galilee (compare John i. 45 and xxi. 2).

89. "Till ye be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain" (Isaiah xxx. 17).

90. Gen. xv. 17.

91. "Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink" (2 John ii. 12).

92. Gen. xiv. 23.



(*Drawn by* CAROLINE SLADER.)

FIRST FLOWERS.

BY ANNE BEALE.

DELICATE Margaret, sweet and fair,
Tenderly culls in her small parterre
Earliest flowers that blossom there,
Lily and white pink, with dew-tears wet,
Primula, hyacinth, violet,
Snowdrop, and others her hand hath set.

Pausing she severs her first-blown rose—
Smiles in the sunbeam, for well she knows
Whither her daintiest floweret goes.

Pipes the sweet thrush to the morning hours,
Threads she the maze of her garden bowers,
Slowly arranging her choicest flowers.

Through the low porch with its leafy screen,
Past the old cedar so darkly green,
Into the grass lane the hills between.

Humble the cottage the maiden seeks,
Tender the greeting she gently speaks,
Lovely the flush that o'erspreads her cheeks.

"Flowers, sweet flowers—a rose once more!"
Cries, as she passes the open door,
One young as she, but sorrowing sore.

Fragrance and colour the room invade,
Happy the nosegay and blest the maid,
Thus to enliven affliction's shade.

THE UNSPEAKABLE GIFT.

BY THE REV. W. COVINGTON, M.A., VICAR OF ST. LUKE'S, SHEPHERD'S BUSH.

WE now invite our readers to enter upon the consideration of a very solemn subject, the gift of God's Spirit—a gift which, if it be a fact, is one of the most momentous facts in the history of the Christian life—a gift which, if it be not a fact, leaves Christianity shorn of one of its most essential blessings. For, consider for a moment how much rests upon the fulfilment of the Redeemer's promise. If it be not true, then hath Christ come upon the earth and lived and died and passed away leaving behind him no abiding presence to testify of Him. If it be not true, then were his last and dearest words of promise left unfulfilled. If it be not true, then are the hearts of his disciples desolate, and all those pleadings, those sacred pleadings, which they have felt within them; all those voices, warning against evil and leading on to good; all those holy influences by which alone they have felt themselves maintained in their up-hill walk through life—all these have their origin only in the excited fancy of a too vivid imagination—all these are but the product of some undefined quality resident in their heart. If, on the other hand, it be true that the promise of Christ has been fulfilled, that God does send his Spirit to dwell within a man, then, indeed, there is no more momentous question for each soul to ask itself than this—What is my part or share in this most precious gift?

It is in the earnest desire that I may, by God's blessing, enable you to answer in your own heart such a question as this that I venture now to write upon this subject.

Ideas and theories there are, of course, many, varying, and confused. I mention one or two false ones, to clear away the ground ready for the true. Some men think that the presence of God's Spirit is a thing to be apprehended by the senses, and utterly refuse to believe that he acts, unless they are sensible of his action. As well might they try to see the wind, or to feel a sound. As well might they expect to measure with the eye the pressure of the atmosphere, or to grasp with the hand a musical chord. Every part and portion of God's creation makes itself felt in that special department of being to which it is addressed, and in no other—the hand, the eye, the ear, each in its own province, experiencing those sensations which it has been created to grasp. Not otherwise in the spirit world must the things of the spirit be grasped by the spirit, and by the spirit alone. Hand and eye and ear must alike pass away with the body of earth—ashes to ashes, and dust to dust. Out of them shall arise the Resurrection body, with naught of fleshly taint, with naught of earthly stain—a fitter habitation for the ransomed soul. Not, therefore, to the senses of this frail tenement of clay will the Spirit of God address itself; only in that inner sanctuary of being, which is God's own temple, will its pleading voice be heard. And some men think that the in-dwelling of God's Spirit is to be a kind of magical power, to influence for good and to debar from evil; that henceforth, from and after the date of his first dwelling in their heart, it shall be impossible for them to sin, impossible to do wrong; and when they behold, as they will constantly, those whom they have been taught to consider as the truest Christians following a course of action which is manifestly an error, they say that such men cannot be led by the Spirit of God, and that consequently his indwelling is a myth. My readers, if his indwelling were a magical possession of this kind, God's whole purpose in the education of man would be upset. If the Spirit dwelling within a man took away from him his liberty of action, instantly man becomes a slave, no longer a free agent.

You say, perhaps, better to be a slave of good than a free agent in evil, but God says differently. God says, I want a free agent in good—want a man near me, who can, of his own account, deliberately reject the evil, and deliberately choose the good. I do not want a man who is only good because he is possessed by a power which compels

him to be so. Near my throne I want the man who has come through great tribulation, through the great testing time; who has washed his robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; who has hungered, and thirsted, and striven to overcome the evil and to grasp the good, and at last has won the crown. I will not leave him comfortless; I will come to him, and help him, and guide him into truth; but my guiding will not be the guiding of force, nor my influence a power irresistible, but only a gentle leading on, such as may help the man to choose or to reject for himself.

What, then, is it, some one will say, this indwelling of the Holy Spirit? If it be not sensible, and if it be not magical, surely it is nothing at all. My readers, this is one of the most sacred subjects upon which one man can speak to another; and I cannot but answer that he would be guilty of the most arrant presumption who should dare to say that he can define accurately, and decide exactly, how the Spirit of God is or is not to work. The words of the Saviour himself must surely be our guide in this—"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth; even so is every one that is born of the Spirit." In the visible world you cannot measure out the coming and the going of the breath of heaven; you can only stand by and watch a while. Now it is whispering softly through the summer breeze, and now is driving in wildest fury through the winter storm. "Thou canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth." It is an influence before which the reed must bend, and the oak break; yet an influence intangible and unseen.

Even so, saith our Lord, is the Spirit, is the coming and the going of the Divine influence. The human heart is like the chaos of the waters, rent and torn and troubled by the conflicting forces of creation, that are struggling to work out the second birth; and over the face of the deep there is brooding, as of old, the Spirit of God, working in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. It is true that we cannot see him; it is true that our senses cannot feel Him; but, nevertheless, we know that He is there by the wondrous power which He exerts upon the life, and the wondrous help which He is ever ready to give. But how, you will say, is this consistent with that other assertion, that the influence of the Spirit is not to be apprehended by the senses? The answer is simple enough: that that which is intangible in its operation may be very tangible indeed in its results. You cannot see the storm pass by you, but you know that it has passed where the oak lies prostrate. You cannot see God's Spirit succouring a man who is struggling and well-nigh falling before the attack of some fearful temptation, but you know that it has succoured him, when you see the temptation overcome. And you know that it was not in his own strength that he overcame when you see, next day, his brother, like him in all but his possession of God's Spirit, weakly yielding to the attack of something infinitely less formidable. The work of the Spirit is indeed to be known by its fruits—love, joy, peace, longsuffering, patience, meekness, temperance. These things are not innate in fallen human nature; but these are the things which God's spirit will, if unresisted, pour richly into every heart, and by their presence there you shall know that it is His home.

One other question men sometimes ask: "How shall I get possession of this Spirit of God?" Reader, I think that that is a mistaken question. I think it is put altogether the wrong way. If our God whom we worship were a distant Being, one who had to be sought after by long searching in order to be found; if he were a hard being, who denied himself, and concealed himself from all but the most pressing, then that question might well be asked. But such, blessed be His holy Name, is not at all His character. If there be any truth in the words of the Bible, if there be any truth in the Revelation of Jesus Christ, then our God is not a distant God, not a hard God, loving to hide Himself, but rather a loving God longing to reveal Himself, and the question which we must ask is not so much, How shall I gain possession of Him? but, How shall I let Him take possession of me? Ah! it will not do for us to think of God's Spirit as something far away from us, which we have to go long distances to fetch, which we have to struggle to gain. The presence of God's Spirit is all around us, like the very atmosphere which we breathe, like our native air. It is only when we close the windows and bar the doors, it is only when we insist upon breathing the tainted atmosphere of our own creation, that we keep Him out of the habitation of our heart. Only unbar the doors, and throw wide open the casements, and you will not need to ask, How shall I gain God's Spirit? for his Presence will come in, like a fertilising flood, and fill you full of God. Do you ask what difference will it make? What difference does it make when you open the doors and windows of some long-closed house, and let in the glorious air of heaven? For the moment, perhaps, you see no change. But presently there comes an alteration. You begin to breathe more freely; you feel that you are stronger, healthier than before. Life that was sinking and dying in the vitiated atmosphere begins to brighten and to revive, and soon, though it is hard to describe the difference, yet you are a changed man. Even so, my readers, will God's Spirit flood your heart, if you will but

let Him. It is not that you must reach Him, but that you must let him reach you. Only so many of us will not; we will keep him out; we will follow the guidance of our own hearts, sometimes even wilfully mistaking that for His guidance. May He help us all to get rid of our self-deceit, and just simply to give up ourselves, without one single reservation, wholly unto Himself.

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL.

BY THE REV. W. M. STATHAM.

CONTRADICTORINESS.

A VERY tame world it would be, you say, if everybody agreed with everybody: for your part, you prefer lemonade to still water, and would give it a little fizz up with your finger, when the effervescence subsided, rather than take it quiescent and flat!

But you must remember, my dear fellow, that we are not talking about the tameness of mental agreement! Of course, we all admit that variety of opinion produces quickened interest, and lends a charm to conversation. I do not in the least want to secure an Act of Uniformity in the intellectual world. It is amusing enough to see what were virtually Acts of Uniformity for trees and hedges, as in Queen Anne's time, when men shaped trees into the rude images of things! No, once and for all, let it be understood that the objection I took just now to your friend Mr. Frettall is that he does not agree with anybody, and not even with himself! If you happen to express as your opinion to-day what he himself said yesterday to somebody else, he will differ from it in some quick quaint way or other at once! Some "facet" or other of the opinion will now evoke a contrary opinion on his part, and he will unwittingly slay his former self. The fact of the case is, that in England conversation is like steam, it takes some considerable time to get up! And after all you must commence some way or other. Perhaps, for instance, you venture the harmless remark to Mr. F., that it is rather cool. "Cool, sir! He says, Cool! I've had all the windows opened at the top, and tried to get a breath or two of air in. Cool! Why, Jane, he says it's cool! Have you seen the weather-glass, sir? Robert, fetch me the Negretti. Cool!" Now, the last thing on earth you intended to do, when you tried to open up a pleasant little pathway of conversation by saying it was cool, was to lead to a contest of opinion! If you are a stranger you are surprised, and if you are not a stranger you will know what to expect. As the old song says, he does it, "acos it is his habit." It would have been just the same, for instance, if you had started on another track. If you had ventured a remark, say on distance, and had, unluckily for yourself, suggested that the cab distance was a good three miles! Instantly Mr. F. would have been down upon you, with distance-books and maps, and corroborations from Jane and Charlotte, and the boot-boy, and anybody.—"Three miles? How absurd! It is really wonderful that you've come across so often and then committed yourself to so foolish a statement! Three miles! Why it's not more than two miles and five-eighths and a sixteenth of the rest!" Perhaps it isn't. But you could have assured Mr. F. that it really didn't matter a button to you what the exact distance was, and that during the elaborate proof, which he would not stop or postpone, you would much rather have had a look at his *Times*, or taken a stroll into his conservatory. Of course, those who live with such people become accustomed to their contradictory peculiarities, and tread as gingerly as possible over all debatable ground. But it is fine fun, if you are in the secret, to see how eagerly the Mr. F's of the universe lie in wait like pointers to scent a good bit of contradiction! Perhaps game is scarce, and a real downright good bold assertion has not been made for some time; but presently one comes, which is like the starting up of a brace of pheasants, with a beautiful "whirr!" Pop, pop, pop, goes Mr. F., and his eye brightens with excitement, for has he not been waiting the best part of thirty minutes to have a good shot at somebody? The worst of such a contradictory spirit is, that it makes those around and about the F's of society speak with "bated breath and whispering humbleness;" they get so tired of the "superior person's" dogmatism and defiance, and proof-sheets, and general ammunition, that they draw back humbly, and say, "Oh! now I come to think of it, it cannot be three miles; no, certainly not quite three!" This rather enrages than satisfies Mr. F., who sees the target dropped down just as he was going to fire at it, and all he can do then is to utter some profound and searching remarks upon carelessly expressed opinions.

And now that your remark upon agreeing with everybody has fairly started me, *mon cher frère*, upon this Private and Confidential, just let me say that I have noticed in your children something of the same spirit. Indeed, when I was last at your most hospitable house, their mamma said, "Don't contradict, Edith." "Don't contradict, Arthur!"

at least three or four times. Of course, I should not have said it more than once, and so cured the disease immediately, for if a child wilfully contradicts a parent, the best receipe that I know is to suggest that "Bed is good for Bobby;" and although he may differ in opinion, it is probable that Bobby will not contradict again. The danger, however, is in the spread of the disease. For contradictoriness of spirit makes everybody uncomfortable all round; it promotes flushed faces, indigestion, spleen, naughty temper, turmoils about trifles, upsetting of gravy dishes, and what the advertisements on the pill-boxes call "general uneasiness of the system." Some people, do what they will, seem to be slaves to the spirit of contradiction. A kind of morbid fear of agreement—or perhaps I should say of agreeableness—seems to take possession of them, and they are, without intending harm by it, not only disagreers, but often very disagreeable. I have long thought that the somewhat vulgar game of "Aunt Sally" might be refined and popularised; and that in the back regions of the house, yard, or garden, Aunt S. might be fixed on the stick and flung at on the Greenwich-fair system of three shies for a penny. I am sure that contradictoriness and all latent budginess (and they are all forms of mental gout) might be somewhat successfully worked off in such a way. Aunt S. need not be so ugly as at the fairs, nor need the sticks be so heavy; and yet there might be room for active muscular exercise in flinging away at her head. How many homes might be restored to the restfulness of a beautiful tranquillity!

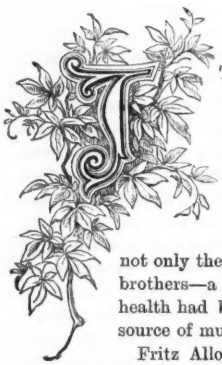
Well, you say, you've listened to my long expostulation against the contradictors in society, and you are still of much the same opinion as before, at least in one respect, viz., that the people who give in to everything, and almost fall to sleep when you are talking to them, are amongst the worst bores in society; their yea is not yea, and their nay is not nay! All they mean is, "Let me go my ways in peace—give me ease, give me ease!" Conscience and opinion seem alike to be sound asleep in them, and you think their state is dangerous!

Very likely, my dear fellow; but surely we have no need to point always to *opposites* as excuses for not removing "ills that be!" The free play of intelligent thought, the necessity of earnest inquiry, the delight of quick appreciation of argument, these are all possible without the presence of the ugly spirit of contradictoriness, which is much more a matter of temper than opinion! Of all tempers, the hot one that hastily boils over is not to be compared in unpleasantness to the one that keeps simmering and simmering, and letting little fizzings off in constant contradictoriness! We sometimes see small men try to be big ones by a spirit which keeps their dependents in awe of them, and we ourselves wince when we meet them: all thanks to those who now and then have pluck enough to have it really out with such people, and who prove indisputably that the distance *was* really three miles! In such cases, Mr. Frettall will probably say, "It was a pity that you lost your temper over it." But this is far too hard work to be undertaken often. Wars about trifles are too costly in time and spirit too. We ought surely to be able to suggest that it is hot or cold without the danger of a warmly-contested argument, and to predicate this or that in relation to trivial matters without a conflict of statistics! But it is the *spirit* beneath the contradictoriness that needs the first correction! Let the sweetening rod be cast into the bitter waters of the heart. And here let me suggest that whatever specific views people may take about Christian dogma, all must be at one in the conviction that a morally and a spiritually educated sensibility must be the result of true oneness with Christ. The much-abused word, "gentleman," has, after all, a beautiful idea at the heart of it. Men and women are contradictory because they are not gentlemen and gentlewomen. Probably they regard gentleness as weakness, fit only for invalids, who cannot fight. The rough force which can "put down" people is a brute force after all. Contradictoriness is generally loud; and as it cannot bear to be beaten, it rises higher in the gamut of sound as its own arguments get weaker and weaker. It is always a sign of a weak nature as well as of a proud nature. Alexander Smith speaks in one of his essays of people who, "break all the shocks of life on the buffers of their own vanity;" and so it is with contradictory people, for if some valiant opponent proves incontestably that they are wrong, instantly they take up the conversation to the lofty ground, that their view of the case, if not the correct one, ought to be right. We demur to these people chiefly when they spoil cosy little gatherings, and lord it over the so-called weaker vessels of home, which vessels, if smaller and less pretentious, often hold a much better qualitative amount of wisdom than the great contradictors of society. I believe the habit is almost incurable, save by the best of all remedies —a diviner life—one that is much in communion with Him who was meek and lowly in heart. Nothing is more beautiful than genuine gentlemanliness; nothing is more detestable than bumptiousness and overbearingness! I have often wished that this latter sort of character could go to "a man's school" for a few months. You remember, my friend, school-days, and how the pert cocky sort of fellows were tamed down after a while, till even their own mothers, who, by-the-bye, they had begun to domineer over at home, scarcely knew them, so improved was the condition

of their offspring. Alas! this remedy is unavailable for the bigger bullies of manhood's days. Life is made up of "dispositions," and the best presentation some people could give to others would be that of new Christian manners. A true Christian must often be reminded of "the gentleness of Christ," and he must often think of the beautiful prophecy concerning Him—"He shall not strive nor cry." Calmly patient, yet He never compromised with evil, and though "He opened not His mouth," His character ever witnessed to the truth! How much need we all have "to learn of Him who was meek and lowly of heart, that we may find rest for our souls." My dear friend, we agree in the main, though we seemed to differ at the commencement. The true gentleman is a Christian, and the snappish spirit of CONTRADICTORINESS, which makes all men and women and children uncomfortable, is alien to the genius of the Gospel of Christ.

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER XXXV.



It was a rare occurrence to find Mr. Allonby in Doris's sitting-room during the hours he had set aside for work, and Eda had frequently called again and again without seeing him; but this morning she found not only the artist there, but one of his brothers—a young man whose precarious health had been for some months past a source of much anxiety to his friends.

Fritz Allonby was looking unusually grave, and after shaking hands with his guest, and putting a chair for her near Gran's, he resumed his position beside the fireplace, where he could shade his face from observation.

Harry Allonby had been talking eagerly when Eda entered, and, undeterred by the presence of one who was no longer regarded as a stranger, he drew nearer to his brother, and resumed the discussion. "I have seen my doctor, and told him that I have a fair prospect of doing well in New Zealand if I go out there at *once*, and he says 'Go, by all means!' He seems to think that a sea voyage may set me up; besides, the climate is good; and that is a great inducement, isn't it?"

"Yes," said Fritz, thoughtfully, "it certainly is."

"Well, then, you advise me to accept Morison's offer, and go out with him?"

"Not advise; no, Harry, I cannot take upon myself that responsibility. Your doctor deals too much in doubtful replies to your questions. The sea voyage *may* strengthen you, and the climate *may* agree with you. He does not say positively that it will, but speaks as if he were borne down by your eagerness."

"Anyhow, I feel disposed to try the experiment," Harry answered, impatient at these objections; "and I would close with Morison at once, only I cannot go without more money than I shall be able to raise unaided. There will be the expenses of my outfit and the voyage; and I must have a few pounds in my pocket for emergencies——"

He paused, and anxiously regarded his elder brother, who did not make any direct answer, but addressed himself to the old woman, who had laid her knitting in her lap, and was letting her dim eyes travel slowly from one to the other of the faces so dear to her.

"We have not heard Gran's opinion yet. What should you say, Gran, if one of your nestlings flew so far away?"

"But distance is nothing in these days of rapid travelling," interposed Harry. "And if I did well, who knows but I might persuade some of you to join me? It's the *money* that is the obstacle. If I had that I should be all right."

"So would a good many of us," the artist rather sharply retorted; and quitted the room, leaving his brother half inclined to be cross at the tone he had taken.

"What ails Fritz?" he demanded. "He knows that I would have tried to content myself here, though I always detested the drudgery of the desk, if I had felt well: I thought he would agree with us that this New Zealand opening is just the thing for me! However, if he is determined not to help me, I must give up the idea."

"It may not be in his power to do so," said Doris, looking up from her needlework.

"But it is," the young man persisted. "I happen to know that he has not touched the cheque he received from that Manchester man for whom he painted a pair of landscapes. Can't you talk to him for me, Gran?"

"There 's no occasion for it," she answered, quietly. "I never knew Fritz hold back when either of ye wanted help, unless he had a good, a very good, reason for it."

"But it's awfully disappointing!" Harry urged. "I came here so sure of his help—so positive that he would enter into my plans, and do his utmost to further them; instead of which he has scarcely spoken, and what little he has said conveyed a hint

that I must stand on my own legs—he could do nothing for me."

"Have patience, lad," said Gran. "If you are to go, there'll be ways and means found for ye; if not, just remember that what we plan in our own strength isn't always best for us; and that we ought to be thankful if our Father in heaven takes the matter out of our hands into *His*."

"Of course you're right, Gran," was the half-laughing answer; "that's the aggravating part of it—that I can never say you're not; so I'll tell Morison he must let me have a little more time for consideration; and you'll ask Fritz to give me a decisive answer shortly, won't you? And now I'll run away, or Miss Granton will have no chance of a dish of gossip, and then Doris will be disappointed."

But Eda, having already outstayed the time she allotted to herself, said her *adieux*, and left Harry chafing under the hands of his sister, who had discovered a loose button on one of his wristbands, and would insist upon being allowed to sew it on tighter before he went away.

To her surprise she found Mr. Allonby in the street below, waiting for her.

"Did you say that you are going back to the jeweller's? May I walk with you?" And without waiting for her hesitating reply he drew her arm through his, and led her towards the Strand.

"Are you in a hurry?" he asked, when her commission had been executed. "Will you walk through the Temple with me?" And seeing that he had an anxious careworn look on his face, she assented.

As they paced up and down one of the solitary courts to which the sound of the noisy City rarely penetrates, Fritz laid his hand on his companion's. "Eda, dear little friend, I am in trouble; can you comfort and counsel me?"

She looked at him inquiringly; and he added, with a heavy sigh, "My own wishes are struggling with my sense of what I owe to those who are dependent on me. Will you call me selfish if I acknowledge that I am beginning to think it is now time those wishes were allowed to make themselves heard?"

"You are troubled about your brother. It has vexed you that he harps upon this voyage; and yet——"

"And yet you think, with him, that I ought to cheerfully give him the help he requires. And so I ought; but, Eda, must I always make these sacrifices for others? Always?"

"I think you are happier for them," she told him.

"I have been; but not now!" he answered. "I used to be pleased to think that I lived solely for my family. It was no trouble to me to deny myself for their sakes; and I cannot remember ever relaxing in my toils until the young folks were all fairly started in the world. But just lately——. I may tell you all that is in my thoughts, may I not, Eda? It will not pain you to know that you are very dear to me, will it?"

She did not answer; her heart was throbbing too tumultuously for speech; but he saw her cheek crimson, her eye droop, and he took heart from her confusion.

"Just lately"—she comprehended the delicate intimation—"new hopes and wishes have risen within me. I have dreamed of working for a dear little wife—of seeing the only woman I have ever loved beside me, and of having my life crowned and glorified by her affection. If this dream is never destined to be realised, tell me so, Eda, and I will try to forget that I have cherished it!"

The hand that lay on his arm began to tremble, but it was not withdrawn; and Mr. Allonby went on, "Only yesterday I told myself that I should soon be in a position to say to you—'Eda, will you be my honoured wife?'"

But here Eda suddenly checked him, and her face wore a doubtful look. "Do I deserve to hear you say this? Do you forget how short a time it is since you saw me——"

"I forget nothing," he told her, when she paused. "I have watched you too closely not to know that your regrets over that affair were more for Richard Atwood's dishonourable conduct than for yourself; and I have loved you too well, ever since I first knew you at Chessington, not to feel that such a heart as yours, dear Eda, would be well worth the winning. But I may not say to you now, 'Try to love me a little, until I can teach you to love me better'—I may not say this now."

"And why?" she asked, almost inaudibly.

He sighed. "Because within the last hour or two, as you have just heard, a fresh call has been made on me. Only yesterday I was telling myself that I was just rich enough to make the old home brighter and pleasanter for your reception, if I could prevail upon you to come to me, and still have a few pounds left for any rainy day that may come upon us. But if I meet this fresh demand, my own wishes must be set aside for a considerable time. Can I help feeling irritable and impatient? Other men are not tied and burdened thus, whilst I can never shake myself clear."

"You would not wish to!" said Eda, gently. "What would your home be without Gran or Doris?"

"Nay, bless them both! I have never classed either of them as among my burdens!" he cried, with a softened look. "Gran helped to make the home, such as it is; and Doris, when she might have married well, with no condition annexed but giving us up because we were too poor to be acknowledged, elected to share our fortunes, though they were at the ebb. I was not thinking of them when I spoke. Is it selfish to feel that I ought not to be

expected to defer my own happiness in order that Harry may try an experiment which may not be successful?"

"Poor boy, he looks very delicate!" said Eda, whose sympathies were divided ones.

"Do you think so?" asked Fritz, anxiously. "He was always Gran's cosset-lamb, because she fancied his chest was weak; but he has not complained until this last winter. Now you speak of it, he certainly does look far from strong, Eda!" And then he paused, and gazed in her face, with his own features working strangely.

"Dear Mr. Allonby—dear Fritz—we can trust each other, and wait a little longer!" she whispered, with modest blushes. "You will let Harry go, and I shall esteem you all the more for being so brave and generous."

"But I want you so badly, Eda! and every time I think of you harassed with those troublesome children, and not half appreciated by their parents, I feel that it is time I took you away."

"But I shall not mind such petty annoyances *now!*" And that last monosyllable spoke such volumes, that Fritz was consoled.

A few tender, earnest words, one long, firm clasp of hands, and then they parted; the artist to rejoice his brother's heart with the tidings that the money he required should be forthcoming, and to be rewarded presently by the young man's restoration to health in that genial clime to which he hastened; and Eda to ask herself, as she hastened back to Tyburnia, what she had done to merit the blessing of such affection as Fritz Allonby's. He was not the gay handsome ideal of her youthful visions, but he was the Christian hero with whom she could tread life's thorniest roads patiently, sustained by his love and fortified by his example. She had truly told him that no trifling vexations would harass her now that she had *his* tenderness, *his* manly devotion to rely on!

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Eda was still wrapped in her new-born felicity, and wearing brighter smiles than her lips had known since those first happy days at Chessington Park, when her brother called upon her, and abruptly proposed that she should resign her situation, and reside—for a time, at all events—with Sophie.

"You are not looking well," he said, without appearing to see her astonishment, "and the change of air and scene will brace you up again. Mrs. Granton will be very glad to have you, so there need be nothing said about obligations."

"But Sophie thought she would like to go abroad," Eda remarked. "Do you propose taking her?"

"Certainly not. She has a pleasant little home of her own: why should she wish to leave it? Besides, she is the last person who should propose travelling. Indolent and ill-tempered people, who are always on the *qui vive* for a quarrel, are nuisances at hotels, where you *must* submit to some discomforts."

"I do not see why a trip to Paris under your protection need entail upon your wife many of the unpleasantnesses you name; and it is very natural that she should wish to do as other people do," cried Eda—so boldly that her brother fidgeted on his chair, and looked annoyed.

"She shall have her wish some day; but just at present it is impossible."

"Why, Mark? You speak as if you had duties that keep you in town, and forget that your first duty should be to study the happiness of the woman to whom you are so deeply indebted!"

"Isn't Sophie old enough, think you, to take care of herself, without your playing the champion?" Mark demanded, with an offended air. "Seriously, Eda, your love of interfering is growing upon you. I never come near you but you have a lecture ready for me!"

Eda apologised, and then sat wondering to herself if what he said was quite correct, and if she was, as he asserted, fond of fault-finding. No one else accused her of it, and surely it could not always be through a petty passion for meddling that she found herself so continually in opposition to her nearest and dearest relation. Somehow, he contrived to grate upon her more than any one else did. Her sense of what he ought to be was always at war with stern reality; and to see her only brother overweeningly ambitious, greedy of gain, and careless of right, vexed and angered her till, perhaps, her irritability induced her to deserve Mark's reproach.

"You will come to Sophie at once? Say to-morrow," he urged, "and I will meet you at London Bridge, and take you down with me."

"But it is impossible!" Eda replied. "Little Rose has been ailing ever since I was at Sydenham, and the medical man who was called in this morning says she has the symptoms of scarlatina. I could not leave the child while she is ill."

"Why not? You are not her nurse; and it is very foolish to make a slave of yourself for other people's children."

"I love the child, and I could not resolve to leave her as long as she needs me," his sister responded. "Besides, you do not absolutely want me at Sydenham, do you, Mark? You said that Sophie is well."

"Yes, she is quite well—in health, I mean." And then he made so long a pause that Eda laid her hands on his, whispering, "What is it, dear Mark?"

"Oh nothing, nothing! only"—and now his vexation was audible in his voice—"only it would be a great relief to me if you would come and pay us a good long visit. The society of a sensible, energetic, unprejudiced woman like yourself, might make Sophie less intolerable!"



(*Drawn by* F. BARNARD.)

"Mark's despised and neglected wife."—*p.* 283.

He gave himself a shake as he encountered the reproving glance in his sister's eyes. "Perhaps I ought not to have said so much; but I am getting quite sick of my life. Sophie is too inert to employ herself as other wives do, and so she wastes her time in brooding over her fancied wrongs, and considers herself ill-used whenever I leave her for an hour or two."

"Then don't leave her," said Eda, drily.

"Absurd! Because a woman is jealous and ill-tempered, am I to pin myself to her apron-strings? Of course it is dull for her to be left alone," he added, hastily; "especially as she hasn't any resources in herself, but it is unavoidable. Perhaps, Eda, you will be able to rouse her a little, and give her some conception of what an English wife should be."

"That task should be yours, Mark. Only from her husband should such teachings come; if," she added, "Sophie really requires them—which I am unwilling to believe. And my own opinion is, that nothing is wanted but your affection and a little forbearance, for she is eager to please you, and loves you dearly."

"It is after a fashion, then, that I find very irksome. If you knew what a vile temper——"

"But I had rather not know!" cried Eda, promptly; and he checked himself.

"You're quite right; I ought not to bore you with a long story of what I have had to put up with lately. If you cannot come to-morrow, when will you? If some one doesn't play the peace-maker, and render the house more habitable for me, I shall be tempted to stay away from it altogether."

"That is a disgraceful threat, Mark!"

"Perhaps it is; but I am provoked to it by her constant tears and revilings. I did not marry to be the slave of a silly woman's caprices."

"As ye sow, so shall ye reap," was in Eda's mind while he was speaking; and very earnestly she prayed him to yield to Sophie's wishes, and take her abroad for a time.

"She may go to Paris, or anywhere she likes!" he answered—"I put no restrictions on her movements; but it must be without me. I have told her repeatedly that I cannot leave London just now. I am concerned in the management of a new company, and must, for my own interests, stay to watch over it."

"Why will you speculate, knowing that Sophie objects to it?" Eda rather abruptly demanded.

"Because I am bitten with the mania, I suppose," was the careless answer.

"But——" she was beginning to say, when he stopped her.

"Now, my dear Eda, you are trenching upon matters that do not concern you in the least. I certainly do not intend to let my energies lie dormant because my wife is miserly, and in terror lest I should lose for her a pound or two of her treasured cash; and I shall be glad if you will make her understand that I am not the sort of man who submits to be dictated to by his better half. It is unreasonable of her to expect it."

"I do not think Sophie is unreasonable."

"I suppose not; you always do take sides against me," said Mark—so irritably that Eda did not attempt a reply; and he began to draw on and button his gloves. By the time this was accomplished his good-humour returned.

"Well, little sis, when am I to tell Sophie that she may expect you?"

"I don't know, Mark. I cannot leave Mrs. de Courcy while Rose is ill."

"*Will not*, you mean!"

"Will not, then; for I do not think the child would be carefully or kindly nursed if I left her. Besides, I know that I am of use here; and I am afraid that I should not be at Sydenham."

"If you could keep Sophie within bounds I should not know how to be grateful enough to you."

"I have already told you that my sympathies are with her, and that I believe it to be in your own power to end all the unpleasantnesses at which you have been hinting. No one can take your place for you, Mark."

"This is no answer to my question. Will you come?"

"I will think it over, and let you know my decision to-morrow. I cannot say more."

Mark looked seriously offended; but though Eda was sorry to displease him, she would not come to any other determination. Here, her duties, though sometimes irksome, were clear; but she doubted both the prudence and kindness of involving herself in her brother's disputes with his wife. He had asked her to play the peace-maker—a difficult task when both parties are willing to be conciliated; and how much more so when one, at all events, was not disposed to make any concessions? And how could she counsel Sophie to submit herself to his will, while she was feeling that the unfortunate woman was justified in complaining of his neglect, and also in objecting to the hazardous schemes in which he was embarking.

"I will go and see Sophie," she finally resolved; "and if she gives me reason to think that my companionship will be of any service to her I will put all selfish considerations aside, and pay her a long visit. Knowing Mark better than she does, I may be able to come to her aid sometimes, and perhaps smooth over the rough places when he says or does anything to vex her."

But as Violet speedily sickened with the complaint that had attacked her sister, Eda was unable to carry out her intentions, and while she was debating whether to write or leave the matter still in abeyance, she was

sent for, one morning, to receive a visitor. Fritz Allonby had contrived to make several calls lately to satisfy himself that his brave little betrothed was not injuring her health by too close an attendance on the sick children; but on this occasion it was not her artist lover who waited to see her, but Mark's already despised and neglected wife.

(To be continued.)

THE CATACOMBS, AND THEIR TESTIMONY TO THE FAITH.—II.

BY THE REV. THOMAS JACKSON, M.A., PREBENDARY OF ST. PAUL'S, AND RECTOR OF STOKE NEWINGTON.

"Of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth."—HEBREWS xi. 38.

IN the sequel, the Apostle of the Gentiles arrived at Rome, and for "two whole years he dwelt in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him." But this truce with heathenism was not to last long. In the tenth year of Nero, the year following that in which St. Paul was released from detention, down came the long condensing forces of heathen prejudice and superstition. The Christians were persecuted with every variety of torture that the inventiveness of malignity could suggest. Some of them were impaled upon crosses, covered with warm pitch and tar, and then set alight to guide travellers on their road. There is no necessity to send down the plummet and line of exact investigation into this gulf of blood. Thousands fled to the catacombs. That these were already to some extent in existence is proved by the oration of Cicero for Cluentius, where he mentions some not far from the Esquiline Gate; and in his defence of Milo, where he speaks of a spot on the Appian Road, which was a "hiding-place and receptacle for thieves."

When the poor fugitives had made their way amid peril and tears into these gloomy recesses, it is but reasonable to suppose that where the galleries approached sufficiently near to the surface, and had been extended into woody regions comparatively distant from the more populous quarters of the city, openings would be made to admit light and air, and to mitigate the horror of the place. Dr. Burton informs his readers that Baronius mentions the cemetery of Priscilla being discovered in his time near the Via Latina; and his description may be applied to all the rest. He says, "It was quite a subterranean city: at the entrance was a principal street wider than the rest, and on each side were several other streets, which again branched off into lanes and alleys. There were *fora*, as in cities, and more open spaces for religious meetings, which were ornamented with pictures of saints and apertures for light."

Thither went down these persecuted men, with their wives, their sons and daughters, carrying a frugal stock of food, drink, and clothing. The little children were put to rest in the holes and corners of the underground precinct. The principal avenues were dimly lighted by lamps, which could be instantly extinguished did any danger arise from the footfall of an intrusive stranger. Sermons were preached, and the holy sacraments administered in some of the larger chambers. These were lighted by many lamps, to give a cheerful aspect to the scenes of praise and prayer. Hence the old custom throughout Western Christendom of lighting numerous candles when the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is celebrated. In later times as we know, this custom has been perverted and abused, and candles lighted, not to give light, but, in the brightness of mid-day, to give some imaginary additional virtue to the ceremony; and individuals also think their prayers more acceptable if they purchase a taper and set it alight in front of some altar. The tomb of a martyr was often selected, and used as an altar-table; hence, perhaps, the origin of the expression "altar-tomb." These were chiefly constructed of terra-cotta. The marbles of Pentelicus and the porphyry of Egypt were a monopoly in the hands of the heathen. This may have been the reason why the relics of saints and martyrs were preserved beneath the holy table in so many ancient churches. They sang hymns of praise to Christ, they used written forms of prayer, they said or sang the Apostles' Creed. Diligent students of the antiquities of sacred music consider that many of the melodies used in the Temple services at Jerusalem were incorporated into the public worship of the primitive Christian Church. To these tunes were chanted the responsive anthems of loyal praise, which they lifted up, a pure incense, to Christ their adorable Lord and God.

There is reason to believe that many of the saints who were pointedly proscribed by the heathen authorities, passed months and years without ever coming into the upper air; there they died and there they were buried, each sleeping in his coffin-like recess till the morning of the resurrection. Meanwhile the heart of the great city above beat on and on with its accustomed

throb. The captive from Britain was forced to fight till he died in some gladiatorial show, to glut the wild and cruel passions of the Roman women. The Imperial government was tolerant to this extent to religious services, that it was ready to incorporate into the pantheon all the gods of all the nations over which the Roman eagle brooded, but utterly proscribed any faith which claimed to be exclusively divine. The vestals still lighted the sacred fires; the augurs still examined the entrails of the beasts slain in sacrifice, or drew imaginary squares and circles in the heavens from which their omens were to be derived; the long trail of the triumphal procession, glittering in purple and scarlet and gold, still traversed the Forum, as when the seven golden candlesticks and the Ark of the Covenant of the rifled Temple at Jerusalem were insultingly borne aloft to show the completeness of the overthrow of the City of God. Little children were still slain, to make poisonous and abominable brewage. The sophist wrangled in the schools of rhetoric. Men were marrying and giving in marriage, as when Noah entered into the ark. The crimes of society were seething as in a caldron. Many, no doubt, thought no change at hand. But in the meantime the stone hewn out of the mountain without hands had begun to roll; Bel was about to bow down, and Nebo to stoop. Beneath the earth were rising to heaven the songs of Christian love, upon the earth the louder cry of the blood of the martyrs. In despite of all the expedients that the subtle policy of the Imperial Government could suggest, the temples were gradually deserted; the oracles lost their inspired voices; the fascinations of idolatry faded into thin air; the last faun ceased to haunt the groves—so that the religion which went forth forlorn and insulted from the hillock of Calvary to the tomb of the Arimethean, within three hundred years ascended the throne of the Cæsars, and grasped the sceptre of the civilised world.

Now how is all this to be accounted for? Why did grave patrician men, and delicately nurtured gentlewomen, light-hearted childhood as well as hoary age, why did they flee to these catacombs, leaving the light and enjoyment of the Italian sky, and all the sweet pleasures of domestic life? Why were they contented to forego the sparkle of the violet and anemone in spring, the flash of the firefly and the evening star in summer, and the ten thousand splendours of column and arch piled on high throughout the city, the fountains of Egeria, the villas of Tusculum, the blue hills of Soracte, and the gardens of the Pincian slopes—in a word, all the pomp and beauty of the life of Imperial Rome? It was because their old faith in heathen mythology had been out-thrust and utterly trampled down by the expulsive force of a new and better faith. In obedience to the influence of that faith, sometimes overawing them by its majesty, and sometimes drawing them as with cords of exquisite love, they had become Christians, but with no feeble or transient conviction. To be a Christian in those days was to have a very intense and solemn sense of forgiveness through the blood of Christ, and a blessed hope of immortal life beyond the grave; but it was also to risk the loss of all things. It was for a man to see his property confiscated, and his life hunted like that of a partridge upon the mountains. It meant to the more timid and retiring an escape down deep into some dim catacomb, living there half a life, a sort of living death. Now how are all these phenomena to be accounted for? Is it to be supposed that a few Galilean fishermen invented this religion?—a faith, be it remarked, not propagated by the sword, but which conquered by suffering, so that it was well said, the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church. The more the whole story is dispassionately weighed and studied, the more the conviction will grow upon the mind that it was the light of a new Revelation, shining in the hearts and influencing the conscience and, through the conscience, the policy and conduct of men. In other words, that our Lord Jesus Christ, alike in His Person and work, was indeed the manifested power and wisdom of the rewarding and punishing God, not only to the Jew, but to the Gentile, Jehovah, Lord Supreme over all, blessed for evermore.

But the argument would be incomplete if we omitted to refer to the readiness with which the slaves and lower classes of the population accepted the new and rising faith. It was to them indeed glad tidings. The slaves lived in fearful bondage. They were liable—though in some cases educated men—for slight offences to be scourged, crucified, or cast into deep fish-ponds to feed the lampreys. Here came a blessed emancipation. The apostles did not indeed advise a slave to run away from a cruel master, but they said, "If thou mayest be free, use it rather;" and a Christian bondsman was not to be regarded a mere serf, a sort of domestic chattel, by his Christian master, but "a brother beloved." There is every reason to believe that hundreds and thousands of these men, grateful for the knowledge of their true humanity which had been taught them by their employers, would be glad to share their privations, would cheerfully give up the amenities of the capital, the pomp of festival, the dance, with its fascinating involutions, the sports of the hippodrome, and the combats and dramas of the theatre—would descend with them into these dens and caves of the earth, proving how forceful was the influence of the religion they professed. They were prepared to endure the loss of all things, if only they

could retain the blessed privileges of divine worship, of companionship with the good, and all the inward satisfactions which these privileges implied.

It has been already observed that many illustrious confessors of the Church were interred in the catacombs. We learn from Tertullian that the primitive Christians never adopted the custom, then a novelty in Rome, of burning the dead. They rather followed the example of the ancient patriarchs and Jews of burying their dead out of their sight. This shows how deep was the respect felt by the primitive Christians for the institutions recorded in the Old Testament. Nor were they unsupported by the customs of the more ancient inhabitants of Etruria and even Rome itself. In the neighbourhood of Cære, the city from which the Romans are said to have derived their knowledge of the accessories of Divine worship (hence our English word *ceremony*), are hundreds of tombs. Some of these, when opened, if we may believe the traditions current among the neighbouring peasantry, disclose some mighty Tarchun, reclining upon a massive couch of bronze, covered with rich ornaments of gold, and surrounded by furniture of elegant and varied design. As soon as the air is admitted the whole crumbles into shapeless dust. The Christians buried their dead as an act of faith in the resurrection of the body—an imperfect act, it is true, because the all-powerful Saviour can rebuild the body as much from the ashes of a funeral pile, or the deepest caverns of the ocean, as from a shelf in a catacomb. No interments were allowed in Republican or Imperial Rome within the walls of cities. Consequently the catacombs were largely utilised for Christian burial. There the solemn services of the liturgy were not likely to be disturbed by profane and scoffing intruders. All around were the silence and the horror of outer darkness. Anastasius, in his life of Calistus, who was Bishop of Rome in the third century, tells us that this prelate specially utilised a catacomb as a burial-place for many priests and martyrs. Some say that, in all, the mutilated remains of 170,000 martyrs were walled up in these gloomy galleries. This statement has been impugned as an obvious exaggeration. But it is not so improbable when we remember that Rome and the country round it contained at this period nearly three millions of inhabitants, and that the time of persecution lasted not far short of three hundred years.

Turning to the pictures and the inscriptions, we remark that their chief characteristic is tender and consolatory thought. Affection, says a discriminating visitor, sighs its regrets, and faith breathes in hope. There is nothing pompous, nothing to recall the dignities of this world; not a harsh word concerning their oppressors; much cheerfulness, much simplicity, much sweetness. In some cases birds and flowers, emblems of the joys of Paradise and immortal life, are painted on the space above the arch of the tomb. The cemetery of St. Calistus was lost for some hundreds of years, like a Pompeii of the primitive Church. Let us translate some of the inscriptions; here is one:—

> "The fifth of the Kalends of November
> Here was laid to sleep,
> Gorgonius, whom all loved and who hated none."

Here is another of great antiquity:—

> "Too soon hast thou fallen,
> Constantia! admirable for beauty
> And for her charms. She lived
> XVIII. years, VI. months, XVI. days.
> Constantia in peace."

The inscription to the memory of a young officer under Adrian, named Marius, is that

> "He lived long enough, for he spent his life and his blood for Christ."

Mark the memorial of an envoy from Gaul, and the illustration it affords to what has been stated concerning the fidelity of Christian servants:—

> "Here Gordianus,
> Messenger from Gaul, slain for the faith,
> With all his family.
> They rest in peace.
> Theophila their servant had this done."

Next comes a memorial of one of the sextons or grave-makers of the catacomb. His picture represents him carrying a lamp in one hand and a mattock in the other; around him are the tools of his business, and at each corner of his tunic is embroidered a cross.

Another records the worth of—

> "Adeodata, meritorious virgin, who rests in peace, Christ having willed it so."

Another is designated as—

> "Friend of the poor, tender and blameless soul, lamb of the Lord."

The symbols are a sort of continual sermon, illustrating Christian faith, patience, resignation, and hope. There is the anchor representing hope, the dove flying away with the olive-branch, an emblem of the Christian soul departing this life in peace; the fish; ΙΧΘΥΣ, the Greek word recalling the titles and attributes of Christ, and furnishing the initials of the formula, "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour."

These old worthies were diligent readers of the Bible. They represent the Good Shepherd bringing back the lost sheep; the raising of Lazarus; the holy Vine and Vine-dresser. The Old Testament furnishes the three children in the fiery furnace, and Jonah swallowed by a whale; Daniel in the lions' den; and Moses smiting the rock.

These few instances will suffice to show how overwhelming was the force of conviction upon the minds of these people. Most of them had been brought up amidst the revolting orgies of the Paganism of old Rome. Then they had been

converted to the faith of Jesus Christ; then in due time denounced, persecuted, proscribed, and driven from house and home, till they were hidden in the catacombs. There they had assembled for worship. There their little children had lived and died by tens of thousands, slain, not as at Bethlehem, by the sword, but by impure air and scanty diet, and the chagrin and anxiety of exile; there, in process of time, they were entombed themselves. One compares the cavities where the skeletons may still be seen to chests of drawers from which the drawers have been taken out. As already stated, the inhabitants of these subterranean abodes formed four hundred miles of streets, so that the whole upper city of Rome was actually mined by the catacombs. There they remain to the present day. Those of St. Agnes are not generally shown, because the labyrinth of them is so intricate.

Surely a voice speaks to us from the depths of these venerable tombs! It rebukes our want of faith, and our comparative indifference to the maintenance and extension of the Gospel. It addresses every drowsy spirit, and says, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light!" If the days of Nero and Diocletian were to return, would not many voices which now cry, "Hail Master!" be found no more sincere than the salutation of Judas Iscariot?

THE FIRST FALSE STEP.

CHAPTER I.

A GROUP of merry children were playing on the sands at Longmere, some chasing each other to the water's edge, some digging in the sands with their bright new spades, and one or two trying hard to induce the little dog Tiny to venture into the sea after a stone, or a piece of wood. But this Tiny resolutely refused to do; she would stand in the most provoking manner, with her feet just touching the water, her tail wagging furiously, and her little head on one side, as she watched the stone thrown into the waves, apparently all eagerness to follow it, but at the last moment she always changed her mind, and stood quietly beside her young master, as if she had never thought of anything so foolish.

"How stupid you are, Tiny!" exclaimed Fred Bartlett; "why don't you go after that bit of wood, floating quite close in to the shore, "go in, Tiny, or I will throw you."

"No, no, please don't do that, Fred!" said his sister Amy; "perhaps she is not the right sort of dog to swim, and if so you know you could never make her go into the water. If you throw her in she will be drowned."

"Oh nonsense! drowned, indeed! a dog can surely take care of itself; she will swim fast enough when she feels herself in the cold water. Here, Tiny," and he stooped to lift the little creature, who, seeming to guess his intention, began to try and hide itself behind Amy, shivering and frightened.

Amy took the dog up in her arms, "Now, Fred," she said, "I will not have Tiny teased, and perhaps half-killed, just to please you. She is as much mine as yours, because you know auntie gave her to us both, and I shall take her away with me. To-morrow you can bring Rover down to the water; he loves a good swim."

"Oh, very well, just as you like; I don't care about it, I am sure," and he turned away.

But all the same he did care, for Fred was a boy who liked to have his own way in everything, and if his pretty sister had not been there would have forced the little dog into the sea.

Amy walked off, talking to her little dog, who was soon running playfully by her side. She did not join any of the other children, but strolled slowly along towards some rocks situated just above high-water mark, and at some little distance from where she had left Fred and the rest. Towards this same spot Amy had turned her steps for several days past, and each time she had been trying to make up her mind to do that which this morning she had at last determined to do. It was a very little thing for her to take so long about, but Amy was rather a shy child, and could not always decide quickly when she had to act for herself.

She walked straight up to the high overhanging rocks, where seated, or rather lying on the sand, was a pale, interesting-looking lad of about twelve or thirteen years of age; his right arm was in a sling, and a shawl partly covered him, although the day was so hot.

He did not notice Amy as she came up to him, so she walked slowly past him, calling her little dog to her in order to attract his attention. He looked up then, and half smiled at Tiny's playfulness, as she danced round her young mistress's feet. This was quite enough for Amy; turning to the boy, she said, half-shyly, "I am afraid you have hurt yourself. I have seen you here for some days, and you never seem to get any better. What is it?"

"Oh yes, miss, indeed I do get better!" he answered, raising himself into a sitting position, and respectfully touching his cap with his left hand, "I walked here quite by myself to-day, and mean to go back too if I can."

"And how far was that?" asked Amy.

"Do you see yon white cottage amongst the sand-hills, miss?" he said, pointing to one about half a mile off, "that is where I am stopping."

"Then you don't live here?"

"No, I only came here to try if the sea air would make me strong again, and at first I thought it would be no good, but now I feel getting better every day."

"I am so glad of that," said Amy, kindly, "I like people to get better who come to this pretty place. Besides, it must be so dreadful to have to lie still all day instead of running about as we do. Don't you want very much to run about again, little boy?"

I must tell you that he was much older than Amy herself, but he looked so helpless lying there on the sand, that she could not help calling him "little boy," though it amused him very much, as he thought how tall he should look if he stood up beside this fairy-like little lady who was talking so kindly to him.

"Yes, indeed, miss," he answered, "it is very hard to lie here, when I want to be going about; but there is something I want to do much more than run on the shore here."

"What is that? do tell me, and perhaps I can help you."

"Thank you, miss, but it is nothing you can do for me. I want to get strong so that I can work, and help poor mother, and the little ones at home."

"But why does not your father work for them?" asked Amy.

"He is dead," the lad replied, simply.

"Oh, I am so sorry! Then you are the only one to help them when you get better. I shall tell papa about you, and I am sure he will do something for you. Papa is a *very* rich man," she added, "and always kind to poor people. I dare say he will come and speak to you if I ask him."

"I am much obliged to you for your kindness, miss, but a very good kind gentleman has sent me here, and has promised to find something for me when I get better, so I am nearly sure to get work."

"What sort of work would you like?" asked Amy, who had not the least idea what boys of that class did, as she fancied they were always at school like her brothers, and she knew this was far too respectable a lad to sell matches in the streets, or to black boots.

"What I should really like most," he said, speaking very slowly and with his eyes fixed on the water shining brightly in the warm sunlight, "would be to go to sea. Oh, how I long to be away in one of them big ships I sometimes see sailing past, and I watch them till my eyes ache with straining after them!"

Amy knew that he ought to have said "those" ships, instead of "them," but she did not quite like to tell him of the mistake, so she thought if she said it properly herself, and laid a little stress upon the word, that he might notice it, and remember next time.

"But many of *those* ships are lost; I often hear papa talk of dreadful shipwrecks, and the sailors all being drowned. Should you not be afraid of that?"

"No, I think not," he said, smiling, "leastways, I should like just to try one voyage."

"But I don't think you look strong enough for the sea," Amy said, putting on a very wise air, "sailors are always big and strong."

"So I shall be, miss, I hope by-and-by; there was not a stronger boy than me in King Street before I was so ill. It was that pulled me down, not my arm being broke."

"Is your arm broken?" exclaimed the little girl. "How dreadful that must have been! Did it not hurt you very badly? How did you do it?"

"It did hurt terribly at first. I fell off a balcony," he said, lowering his eyes before Amy's inquiring gaze.

"At your own house?" she asked.

"Oh no, our little houses don't have balconies," he said, smiling to himself at this young lady's ignorance, as he pictured the wretched room which was all he could call home.

"Then what where you doing on a balcony?" for Amy's curiosity was excited, and she was very much interested in this pale pleasant-mannered boy.

To her surprise he covered his face in his hand for an instant, and when he drew it away he was crimson to the roots of his hair.

"Do you really want to know, miss, because I dare not tell you a lie?" he asked, in such low tones she could scarcely hear the words.

"Yes, of course I do," she said, decidedly, little dreaming of what was coming.

The boy paused, then said, in a tone of misery, as if the words were wrung from him, "I was trying to *steal*, but thank God I was saved just in time."

As she heard these dreadful words, Amy jumped up from where she had been seated as if she had been stung.

"What!" she cried in horror, "trying to steal! Are you a thief? And I felt so sorry for you, and thought you such a nice boy! How could you do such a bad wicked thing? I must never speak to you any more now that I know what you are," and she moved sorrowfully away from him.

"Stay, stay!" cried the boy, rising up and eagerly holding out his hands towards Amy, "do not leave me without hearing my story, now that you know so much. Let me tell you how it was that I was driven to do such a wicked thing. Do listen to me, miss!" he implored, as she still kept her head turned away from him.

"You can't have had any excuse for stealing," she said at last, feeling very undecided as to what

she must do, for she longed to hear the boy's story, and yet felt that now she knew what he had done, she ought not to talk to him any longer.

"I know that too well," he answered, sadly, "and bitterly I have been punished for it, but if you knew what it was to have sickness and starvation staring you in the face——"

"Well I never, Miss Amy, here have I been looking for you everywhere!" broke in an impatient voice, "and wanting you to come home to dinner ever so long since. And here you are all this time talking to a common beggar boy, which you know your mamma would not allow you to do. Come along with me at once!"

"I am coming now, nurse," said Amy, quietly, "but this is not a beggar, I assure you. I shall come and speak to you another time, I must go now," she added, turning to the boy, who was now leaning exhausted against the rock, and watching her earnestly.

He touched his cap, and murmured "good-morning" as the little girl walked away, but when Amy turned after a minute or two to look at him, he had flung himself on the ground with his face hidden, and had she been nearer she would have heard the deep sobs which escaped from him as he lay there weeping with shame and regret.

(*To be concluded.*)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

105. What two Gentiles did Jesus especially commend for their faith?

106. What king's son was lamed by falling from his nurse's arms?

107. Who was the "chief man" on the island of Melita where St. Paul was shipwrecked?

108. Quote a passage from the prophets in which God is called a "Judge, Law-giver, and King."

109. On what occasions were messages brought to this earth by the Archangel Gabriel?

110. How long is St. Paul stated to have lived at Rome in "his own hired house?"

111. Where do we find it recorded at any time of Moses that he was "leprous?"

112. Quote a passage in which St. Paul speaks of his having written an Epistle to the Laodiceans.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 256.

93. Ruth (compare St. Matt. i. 5 and Ruth i. 22).

94. St. Paul. "Whensoever I take my journey into Spain;" "I will come by you into Spain" (Rom. xv. 24, 28).

95. Rom. ix. 29.

96. See St. Jude, 14, 15.

97. Ishmael (Gen. xxi. 20).

98. Zenas (Titus iii. 13).

HEAVEN.

NO poet, praying for the breath
Of inspiration, may unfold
The bliss beyond the gates of death,
Or with desiring eyes behold
The streets of gold;

Or picture that eternal stream,
Upon whose banks the angels throng,
Where, as in some delicious dream,
The soft low music floats along
Of sweetest song!

No mortal tongue can ever make
Those joys celestial understood,
Which Christ, for my unworthy sake,
Bought on the rough and reddened wood
With precious blood!

I *think* the landscape must be fair,
That flowers of fadeless beauty grow
To deck the bright and flowing hair
Of those whose robes were washed below
As white as snow.

I know that gladsome palms they bear,
Like victors when the strife is won,
And that they find safe refuge there,
Now all their toil is past and done
Beneath the sun.

His wondrous beauty they behold,
Whose love has led them all their days;
On harps with strings of shining gold
Those sweet seraphic singers raise
Their ceaseless praise!

And brightly every gracious brow
A crown of dazzling light adorns,
To purchase which Christ wore below,
Amid revilings, scoffs, and scorns,
A crown of thorns!

This is the heaven for which I pray:
When high above the stars we meet,
O Saviour, on Thy advent day,
May I, with Mary, find it sweet
To kiss Thy feet!

J. R. E.



(*Drawn by* M. E. EDWARDS.)

MORNING.

FRESH and sweet came the breath of the morn
Over the purple hills;
It rustled among the yellow corn,
And rippled the reed-crowned rills;
It stole the scent of the violets blue,
And rifled the wild thyme bed;
Then coaxed out the jasmine stars anew,
And played round the roses red.

Up! up! for morning is riding fleet
  Over the dark hill-side;
The golden sun is beneath her feet,
  And her robes are in crimson dyed.
She breathes on the waves of the restless sea,
  And they break into silver chimes;
And the rooks caw loud from the tall elm-tree,
  And the honey-bees hum round the limes.
She kisses the little ones in their sleep,
  Till they open their beaming eyes;
And through the casement the sun-rays creep,
  And out come the butterflies.

The breath of morning hath touched the cheek
  Of a maiden pale with care,
Who hears a voice in the breezes speak,
  Bidding her not despair:
What though the night spread her gloomy wings,
  Till a pathway one scarce can see,
New life and light each fresh morning brings,
  And a day of hope for thee;
After the night shall come the light,
  As life shall come after death—
O world! O world! read the legend aright
  That is borne on the morning's breath."

JULIA GODDARD.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.—VENUS'S FUNERAL.

VENUS was dead. Dolly was crying, and Sally was sobbing, and the boys were trying to hold aloof; but Tom looked very grave, and Will—tender-hearted Will—said, sadly, "Poor old thing! We'll dig a grave for her in the middle of the best flower-bed."

"Papa will be so angry, if we do," said Sally, looking up for a minute; "for we shall be sure to kill the flowers." Not that Mr. Woodward was ever really angry with his children in his whole life.

"We'll bury her under the sycamore-tree," said Dolly; "that will be better than the flowers, which die when the summer goes, for it stands there all through the winter, and its branches will keep off the cold." Dolly had always quaint fancies of her own, and to her the sycamore-tree at the end of the long weedy untidy garden was a wise old friend, with a strange language and soft whisperings, which she alone dimly understood.

So the grave was dug, and Jane, the servant (who was as much grieved as anybody else), went first, carrying the remains of the lamented Venus done up in a piece of old carpet, and Dolly and Sally went next, both weeping bitterly, and, last of all, Tom, carrying a spade, and Will, looking half ashamed of his own grave face. And when the cat was buried, and they were all walking back—those old-fashioned Woodward children—Sally stopped suddenly, and exclaimed, breathlessly, "Dolly! there's Netta at the study window, with mamma, and she's been watching us all the time!" They came to a standstill, with dismay upon their faces, and the colour rushed to Dolly's cheeks.

"Bother!" said Tom, energetically.

"Won't she laugh at us, that's all!" said Will, a little ruefully.

"And tell old Cockamoroo all about it, too—that's what she'll do."

"Tom!" said Dolly, solemnly, "you ought to be ashamed of yourself to speak in that disrespectful manner of grandpapa!"

"I don't care! he never did anything for us; and he has made a nasty stuck-up thing of her. I am sure you need not stick up for her, Dolly, she always snubs you enough; and she'll only laugh at you when you go in."

"Well, and I don't care for that," she answered, stoutly; "I am not ashamed, or afraid either."

"Afraid! No, I should think not," said Will, admiringly. And this was half the secret of her popularity with the boys, that "she was always good for fun, and never afraid." Yet she was not by any means a madcap, in spite of her love of fun; on the contrary, she was an old-fashioned, womanly child, full of fancies, and day-dreams, and hero-worship, and longings after vague things she did not comprehend; a girl in whom it seemed as if womanhood and childhood were so blended together that she would never grow more out of the one than it was necessary that she should grow into the other—both had come to her together.

Then, with flushed and slightly defiant faces, they entered the house. They were not going to be bullied by Netta, the boys thought; and if she attempted it "they'd let her know."

"I never saw a cat's funeral before," said the Beauty—she was always spoken of as the Beauty by those jesting young brothers of hers. "How grandpapa will laugh when I tell him about it! The idea of Dolly going out to bury a cat! I shouldn't have dreamt of such a thing when *I* was sixteen."

"Dolly's only a child," Mrs. Woodward said; "and a good thing too, for I can't afford to let her grow up yet; girls cost so much more when they cease to be children."

"I am certain I shall never quite grow up," said Dolly, hopelessly.

"Oh, won't you?" laughed Netta. "And," she added, "I wish you would not stare at me so. What do you do it for?"

"Because she chooses!" said Tom, valiantly, feeling that the fighting-time had commenced.

"Thank you!" she laughed, merrily. She was wonderfully good-tempered, though a little heartless perhaps, and with just a tinge of unconscious contempt for her less fortunate brothers and sisters. She did not mean to be unkind; but if fate or fortune set an example, why should she not follow it? It is such a common fault, this; not that she committed it knowingly, mind.

Mrs. Woodward had married against her father's wish, and, with the exception of Netta, neither she or her children had ever been welcome at old Colonel Wade's. Yes, he had been kind to the eldest son, Robert—had bought him a commission in the army, and occasionally sent him presents to India, where he was now stationed with his regiment. Netta had always been his favourite; her beauty won the day when she was a mere child, and, ever since, she had been petted and spoilt, sent to an expensive school, and, now that she had left it for good, lived with the colonel, who was to her the kindest and most indulgent of grandfathers.

CHAPTER II.—THE KEY OF EDEN.

THERE was no doubt about her beauty. Dolly looked at her longingly, almost envyingly, many a time. A graceful, aristocratic-looking beautiful girl, who would grow into a still more beautiful woman, was Netta Woodward. She was fair, with masses of golden-brown hair, which she wore twisted about her head in the fashion of a crown; she had soft eyes, and a quick, bright, almost saucy smile, and a graceful figure: a girl lovely enough to win all hearts before her, with the exception perhaps of those belonging to her Bohemian-looking brothers and sisters. They stood before her, now eyeing her almost scornfully, all but Dolly, who forgot everything in the one thought of "Oh, how beautiful she is, and how happy I should be if I were but like her!"

"I have only come for a few minutes," she said, "The brougham will be here for me directly. Oh, Dolly! mamma says that yellow rose up there is yours," and she pointed to the one flower on the one rose-tree in the establishment. "I want it to wear to-night; we are going to a party."

"I can't give it to you," said Dolly, decisively, looking at Netta's silk attire and her own shabby garments; "I want it myself. You have lots of other flowers."

"Nonsense, Dolly!" said Mrs. Woodward; "go and get it. It won't suit you, and Netta wants it." Mrs. Woodward was always ruled by the strongest will present.

"I don't want it for myself," answered Dolly slowly; "I want to give it to Mr. Fuller."

"Whatever do you want to give it to him for?" asked Netta, scornfully. "As if he'd care for a stupid rose!"

"He is going to China for two years, and I shan't see him again; and he has always been kind to me, and taught me French, and all sorts of things. No one ever sent *me* to school," and she looked straight at her sister.

"Dolly, you ought to be ashamed of yourself!" said Mrs. Woodward, half crying. "You know your father has not had the means."

"Tom," said Netta, "go and get me the rose at once."

"Shan't!" answered Tom, concisely.

"It's too bad of you, Netta, when you know it's the only thing I have to give Mr. Fuller," poor Dolly said, her lips beginning to quiver.

"Very well," laughed her sister, smoothing back her hair—that lovely rippling hair, with the golden tint upon it, which poor Dolly envied so much—"I don't care. I should like to see what this wonderful Mr. Fuller is like, for you seem quite in love with him. I suppose you think he'll come back from China some day, rolling in money"—Netta always thought of money in connection with matrimony—"and marry you."

Dolly stood still, staring at her sister, while the colour came slowly to her face and dyed it crimson. Then she looked out of the window at the sycamore-tree at the end of the garden, under which poor Venus had just been buried. It always seemed to her, in after years, as if a part of the old life went out from her in that gaze, and for the first time she understood that childhood is a sort of Eden, of which innocence, or ignorance—call it by which name we please—is the key. She looked out of her Eden for a moment, and for the first time, that morning. No one had ever mentioned love to her before as a thing that might appertain to her own life. It seemed like a bit of knowledge, of old-world knowledge, suddenly presented to her; and she lost her first sweet ignorance in that one long look out into the weedy untidy garden. Surely Netta was, unconsciously, a little cruel to her that summer morning!

Then the brougham came, and the Beauty rose and shook out the folds of her dress, and drew on her spotless gloves, while the children watched her reverently, and kissing her mother and brothers and sisters, she prepared to depart. And as she went Dolly roused herself, and, rushing to the tree, picked the rose, and flung it into her sister's lap as she was seated in the carriage.

"Here, Netta, take it. I did not mean to be unkind!" she exclaimed. But the Beauty flung it carelessly back, and, missing the girl, it fell on to the pavement—that rose poor Dolly had tended so carefully!

"I don't really want it, you little goose!" laughed Netta; "I was only teasing you." But when she saw the tears come into Dolly's eyes—brown eyes, and soft as were her own—she bent forward and kissed her, and said, "Good-bye, dear," in her sweetest tones, and fascinated that little dreamer her sister completely.

Then the brougham was quickly driven off, and Dolly stood watching it disappear, with the crushed rose lying at her feet. She had so speculated on the happiness of giving the flower to Adrian Fuller! Her beautiful sister had spoilt her dream, and Dolly was ready to weep—she did not know why, but probably it was more for the loss of the dream than the rose. *(To be continued.)*

DAVID, THE OUTLAW.

BY THE REV. W. HANNA, D.D., EDINBURGH.

INSTEAD of falling, as he did ten years afterwards, on the heights of Gilboa, had Saul fallen in that rout of the Philistines which followed the slaughter of Goliath, how would things have gone then with David? The sudden tide of popular applause excited by his smiting the Philistine might have lifted him easily and at once into the vacant throne. But would that tide have been broad enough, and strong enough, and sufficiently enduring, to have supported him for life upon that throne? Sooner or later would there not have arisen a division of opinion, a challenging of his right? In Jonathan, had he survived his father, there was a rival whose claims, though he might be ready enough himself to waive them, many might be ready to support. Even supposing that there had been no division, no rivalry, no disputing at the time of David's claim, his youth and inexperience must have operated against him. Strong as his hand was to smite the giant, had it strength enough to hold steadily for years so full a cup, thrust into it so suddenly? Vigour enough there might have been, even at that early age, to be its military chief; but would there have been wisdom enough to rule a rough community, unaccustomed to the royal yoke? Humanly speaking, we should have trembled for the result, both as to the people and as to their young king. But it was otherwise ordered. Ten years of persecution—seven or eight of them of outlawry—were interposed between the great feat in the valley of Elah and the crowning of him as king at Hebron—no short, no meaningless, no unproductive period of his life. It is almost impossible to over-estimate the dangers that it averted, the benefits that it secured. What, in the way of preparation for his great life-work, the forty years in Midian did for Moses, after his smiting the Egyptian—what the three years in Arabia did in like manner for Paul, after the commission given to him at Damascus—the same office did those years of persecution by Saul, his life as a fugitive and outlaw in the wilderness, discharge for David. Let us briefly survey this instructive period of his history, noting more particularly the features of character that it served to foster, and the special training for higher after-tasks of government that it supplied.

The scene with Samuel and the prophets at Naioth, the information given afterwards by Jonathan in the field, at last satisfied David that Saul's hatred was implacable, that it was the fixed and steady purpose of the king to take his life, and that there was nothing left for him but to put and to keep himself beyond Saul's reach. So great was his terror, and so hasty his flight, that it was as a solitary, hungry, unarmed fugitive, that he presented himself at Nob, near Jerusalem, the first place at which he stopped on his way southward from Gibeah. The high priest, Ahimelech, who lived there guarding the Ark of the Covenant, and surrounded with the children of the house of Eli, was greatly alarmed at the manner of his appearance. What could have happened, that the king's son-in-law, the idol of all the people, should present himself in such a guise? Seeing the suspicion and the terror pictured in the priest's countenance, David, in his turn, got alarmed. A man so timid might prove treacherous; could not be trusted with the truth. Why not leave him, then, to his fancies and his fears, and pass on from Nob? Because of the urgent need. That need, if Ahimelech were told of its origin, he might be indisposed to relieve. Under the strong and sudden pressure, at once of hunger and of fear, David invented the story of a secret commission; got the shewbread from the altar table, and the sword of Goliath from behind the ephod. Impatient to be off, he seized the food, he grasped the weapon, saying, "There is none like that; give it me;" and "fled that day for fear of Saul." But somewhere in the sanctuary, "detained that day before the Lord," Doeg, the dark-minded Edomite, the head of Saul's herdsmen, had been taking note of the fatal interview. David's eye fell upon him; the presentiment that he would tell Saul flashed at once upon his mind. A few months later, and that presentiment of danger was turned into a bitter pang of keenest

self-reproach, when the solitary survivor of the eighty-five priests of Nob fled to him in the wilderness, and told him how his father the high priest and all his family, and "all the women, and children, and sucklings, and oxen, and asses, and sheep," had been smitten by Doeg's own hand with the edge of the sword. David frankly and mournfully acknowledged that he had occasioned the catastrophe. He did all afterwards that he could for Abiathar. But he could not recall the dead, nor repair the evil done. The falsehood, by means of which he had deceived the high priest, how did it look when seen in the light of that terrible catastrophe it had brought down upon Ahimelech and all his house?

From Nob David fled to Achish, King of Gath. There, amid the fiercest enemies of his country, he fancied he might be safe. They might not recognise him; or if they did, the very fact of his being so obnoxious to Saul might create a feeling in his favour. He found himself mistaken. The king might have received him, but his servants not only recognised him as the David that slew Goliath, but as the future king of Israel—the future most dangerous foe to the Philistine. Too glad would they be to seize the opportunity now given, and cut him off. The peril was extreme. It forced David to have recourse, if not to a spoken, yet to an acted, falsehood—beating with his fists upon the doors, jabbering incoherently, letting the spittle run down upon his beard, feigning, and feigning effectually, that madness which in Eastern lands is so sure a passport to sympathy and protection.

Gath no fitting place of refuge, he sought one in the Cave of Adullam. In the days of Joshua there was a town of that name lying in the low country, not far from Gath, of which no trace has yet been discovered. But in the neighbourhood there is a singular cave, which has recently been very thoroughly explored, and of which the reader will find a most interesting account, by Lieutenant Conder, in the *Quarterly Statement* for January, 1874, of the Palestine Exploration Fund. From the association of the name with the neighbourhood, it has been conjectured that this must have been the cave to which David fled, a conjecture sanctioned by some of our best recent authorities. But would he not, in his great terror of the Gittites, have fled to a place somewhat farther off, and which offered not simply a cavity in the rocks difficult of discovery and access, but a district around it offering varied facilities of concealment and protection for a fugitive? The cave, besides, which he occupied afforded shelter and an occasional home not to himself alone, but to a large band of followers. Could the cave described by Mr. Conder have done so? Perhaps in point of space it might, though even that is somewhat doubtful. But the principal objection to its being the cave of David and his band is what Mr. Conder himself tells us of its "entire unfitness for human habitation." Our eye turns naturally to the traditional Cave of Adullam as meeting all the requirements of the narrative. It lies southward from Bethlehem—farther away from Gibeah—within a two hours' easy journey from the village, and on the very border of the wilderness which became David's haunt for years thereafter. Dr. Thomson tells us of the fearful gorge below, of the gigantic cliffs above, of the narrow footpath winding along the shelf of rock, and of the long leap he had to take to get at the low entrance into this cave, which is situated in the very face of an almost perpendicular cliff. The writer vouches for the exact accuracy of the description, even to the difficulty of the leap and the narrowness of the entrance. But once within, the caves of Khureitun "are vast enough," as Dr. Tristram tells us, "to afford concealment in their miles of labyrinth for any number of men." The most careful exploration of what is in fact a great network of caverns was made by Tobler in 1845. The main gallery was followed to its termination, and many of the countless side passages surveyed. From the entrance to the end of one apartment measured more than a thousand feet.*

Here was room for as large a company as chose to gather round the semi-regal outlaw. And it was by a very motley group that he was in the first instance surrounded: "Every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented." Not a lawless set of fugitives from justice, the refuse and offscouring of the people, but a band composed mainly, perhaps, of those whose bitterness of spirit and discontentedness sprang from injustices and oppressions to which they had been exposed under the loose capricious rule of a king who was fast becoming bloodthirsty, before whose murderous jealousy David's own family now fled from Bethlehem, and who gave the order for the slaughter of so many of his subjects at Nob. "Even the debtors in such a time of misrule were in most cases better men than their creditors. Nearly everybody is in debt in these Oriental countries. . . I hardly ever knew an estate in this country that was not found encumbered when the death of the owner brought out the truth; and very generally the creditors are cold cunning usurers, hated and hateful." The mere fact that a man was in debt may not have carried with it any imputation of dishonesty. In times of misrule the opportunities given to extortion may have multiplied; and some

* Ritter's *Comparative Geography of Palestine*, vol. iii. p. 98.

of David's followers, though driven into exile by such extortion, may have been among the best of the land. Whatever their character, and whatever their object in coming to him, and putting themselves as they did under him as their captain, it was open to David from the first to decline their companionship. So far as his own personal safety was concerned, it had been better, perhaps, that he had done so. Alone, or with a very few trusty followers, it had been much easier and safer for him to have moved about from one hiding-place to another. But except for self-protection, David had no desire to secrete himself. He would rather meet than shun the public eye, having done nothing towards his prince or any one of which he was ashamed. And if others came to him who had their own burdens to bear, their own tales of injustice and oppression to tell, what though there were not a few of them whom he might not, in other circumstances, have chosen as his associates would it be generous in him to cast them off? They came proffering submission to his guidance and rule. His acceptance of the position so tendered enabled him in the depth of his own oppressed condition to become a protector of others. It brought him into close, familiar, continued contact with that very class of his own future subjects with whose wrongs, whose sufferings, whose crimes it was most important he should be acquainted. He got thus a clear insight into their condition. The hidden fountains of their complaints, or their misdeeds, were laid bare. The opportunity was given to David of trying his hand in the most difficult of all kinds of government—the government of those who have thrown off the restraints of law: no useless part this of that training which fitted him to fill the throne. Perhaps those who first chose him for their chief had their eye fixed alone or mainly upon his singular fitness to be their leader in any strife—his wisdom, his promptness, his courage, his strength. And these were not wanting in the hour of need, nor did they fail to clothe him with the power their possession and display always give to a victorious warrior chief. But when David's hand was laid upon the rough elements around him, there was another spell that it exerted over them—the spell of that example of singular kindliness, strong personal attachment, generous forbearance from revenge, chivalrous loyalty to his prince, strong trust in God, which, day by day, and throughout all his wanderings in the wilderness, he displayed.

Among the first who came to David in the Cave of Adullam were "his brethren and all his father's house." The terror must have been an overpowering one which drove them from the ancestral home at Bethlehem. Such protection as his presence might give, David was ready enough to extend to his brethren if they were ready to share his exposures and dangers. But for such a life as his was now almost sure to be he felt that his aged parents were ill-prepared. One of his first cares, therefore, was to carry them away across the Jordan to the land of Jesse's grandmother, where memories of Ruth's story were still lingering. Presenting them to the King of Moab, he said, "Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, be with you, till I know what God will do for me." The king willingly undertook the trust. David left them in his hands, and we hear of them no more.

A singular obscurity hangs over David's mother. We do not know who or what she was. Her name is never mentioned. David, we know, had seven brothers, all older than himself; the eldest of whom, Eliab, is spoken of as Jesse's first-born (1 Chron. ii. 13). There were besides in the family Zeruiah and Abigail, who are said to be sisters of David (1 Chron. ii. 16), but never expressly called daughters of Jesse. One of them, Abigail, we are told, was the daughter of Nahash, as the other in all likelihood also was. But who was Nahash? Was this but another name for Jesse, as a Jewish tradition taught; or had David's mother, before her marriage with Jesse, had another husband, Nahash, to whom Zeruiah and Abigail were born? If, at Dr. Stanley's suggestion, we accept the latter alternative, which would put many years between David and his sisters, we can understand all the better how David seems to have associated with his nephews more familiarly than with his brothers, the nephews being more of his own age. Among these nephews particular mention is made of Abishai, as one of a distinguished three among the thirty captains who "went down to the rock to David into the Cave of Adullam" (1 Chron. ii. 15, 20). On returning from Moab David appears to have shifted his quarters from the cave dwelling to some position of strength in some rocky height outside the land of Judah. He was joined here by Gad, the prophet (an early friend, perhaps, and old companion in the schools of the prophets), whose word of warning and command was—"Abide not in the field; depart, and get thee into the land of Judah." From this time forward, for some years, there were so many shiftings of position that it becomes impossible to trace David's footsteps, or to note exactly the sequence of events. The district lying east and south of Bethlehem and Hebron, to which these wanderings were limited, was not a large one, David never seeming to have been farther than thirty miles or so from his native village. But though small in area, it presented a great variety of surface. There were some rich pasture lands in it, such as those lying round Maon and Carmel. There were forests, such as those of

Hareth and Ziph, long since swept away. It abounded in rocky heights difficult of access. "We were now," says Dr. Robinson, "in the wilderness of En-gedi, where David and his men among the 'rocks of the wild goats,' and where the former cut off the skirts of Saul's robes in a cave. On all sides the country is full of caverns, which might then serve as lurking-places for David and his men, as they do for outlaws at the present day." A large part of it, particularly that running down to the south-western shore of the Dead Sea, was utterly desert, seamed from east to west by wild deep gorges, down which in times of tempest the mountain torrents rushed, and crowned by many tall bold isolated cliffs, such as that of Masada, then, as now, the haunts of the "wild goats." "I had wandered," a modern traveller tells us, "through the Alps, the Pyrenees, and many other mountains, I had seen countries blasted by the curse of the Almighty—the plains of Moab and the land of Ammon—but had seen nothing to compare with this. Here is desolation on the grandest scale. In this striking and solemn waste all around is enveloped in the silence of death. The regular step of our camels returned a dull sound, as if the earth were hollow beneath our feet. The monotonous chant of the camel driver accompanied at times the step of this inhabitant of the desert, but was suddenly stopped, as if he feared to awaken the silence. Everything combined to make the scenery awfully sublime." One striking peculiarity of this region is the acoustic property of the pure clear air. Dr. Tristram had noticed this on his first ascent of Masada. "As I sat astride a projecting rock on the north peak I could look down from my giddy height, and yet so clear was the atmosphere, and so extraordinary its power of conveying sounds, that I could carry on conversation with my friends in the camp below, and compare barometers and observations." On his second visit to this neighbourhood he had occasion still more accurately to test this power. "Hayne had remained behind when we started for the ascent of Masada. When at the top we saw him on his way to join us at the foot of the next cliff, about 500 yards from the base of the rock, and 1,250 feet below us, yet at this immense distance of over 600 yards we not only carried on a conversation with him, but as he proved on joining us he could hear several of our remarks to each other."

It may have been from a cliff of this very height that David "cried after Saul" on his leaving the cave. Nor can we wonder any longer that when David "stood on the top of a hill afar off, a great space being between them," that he could converse so easily as he did with Abner and the king.

THE BROTHERS.

AN INCIDENT OF AUTUMN, 1874.

THEY left the garden as the sun
Sank o'er the mist-wrapt town,
Two boys, and by the hedges dun
They sought a chalky down.

Two little boys, who hand in hand,
Prattled as on they went,
Found leaves, old nests, and yellow sand,
Until the day was spent.

The shadows deepened, and the breeze
Sighed somewhat sadly round;
The brothers 'neath some old oak-trees
Stood frightened by the sound.

"Oh, brother, turn we now!" cried one,
"Night hastens on; 'tis dark!
I want my mother—let us run—
Call loud! call louder! Hark!"

'Twas vain! no greeting met the ear,
No welcome cry of aid;
O'er the wide down, with many a tear,
Far from the path they strayed.

Unselfish then, and with some pride,
As in their mother's stead,
The elder stripped himself, and tried
To heap his brother's bed.

And where a dimple marked the sod
Bade him lie down, while he
Beside him slept, secure that God
A Father kind would be.

Thus folded slept they, angel wings
Hov'ring around the pair,
While the hard north its snow-drift flings
To fleck their golden hair.

When brightened morn they found one kept—
Just kept—the vital breath;
His elder brother, he too slept—
The peaceful sleep of death.

M. G. WATKINS.

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

MRS. GRANTON was looking haggard and spiritless, and in answer to Eda's affectionate inquiries she admitted that she had come to town to consult a physician. Her mother had died young with some internal disease, and Sophie of late had had some reason to think that she inherited the complaint. Dr. —— poohpoohed her fears, but he had not succeeded in dissipating them.

She did not mention her husband until Eda had twice asked whether he had driven her from Sydenham. When the question was repeated, a red spot began to burn in her sallow cheek, her eyes flashed and darkened, and she restlessly locked and interlocked the long thin fingers of the hands that lay upon her knee.

"No, Mark did not bring me to town," she said. "I suppose he is well, but I have not seen him for these three days; and I don't expect that he will come near me till he wants some more money."

"Dear Sophie, you cannot mean this!" exclaimed her grieved hearer.

"Why not? You know as well as I do that it was only for that he married me," Mrs. Granton retorted, in the same cold hard tones.

"He has vexed you, and so you are inclined to think the worst of him," Eda said, gently. "But do not estrange him by such a taunt as this! Love begets love, and if you will but bear with his faults patiently you will have your reward."

Mrs. Granton's mouth quivered for a moment, and then her lips were compressed as rigidly as before. "You are very kind to say this, and to try to set us at one again. And, mind, I do not pretend to assert that I have not been to blame for many things that I have said and done; but the result would have been the same—it must have been the same. He married me for my money, and he hates me because I will not let him have it to squander."

"Do not let us speak of it," urged Eda, to whom this was all so unspeakably painful that she shivered as if with cold. "You are faint and tired with your journey; let me go and ask Mrs. de Courcy for some wine for you."

But Sophie wrapped her arms round her, and would not let her go. "I shall never be better; I do not wish to be! I am heart-stricken, and longing to die. Ah, Eda, I did love and trust him so fully!"

"Love him still! if he is in error, bear with him, and presently he will see his folly, and be grateful to you for your goodness."

"He might be if he were like you; but he is absorbed in himself. What room has he in his cold soul for kindly thoughts of the wife he has made so wretched?"

"You are speaking of my brother," Eda reminded her.

"Yes; and if he were here he would tell you, as he told me before he left Sydenham, that mine are the ravings of a madwoman. He called me mercenary, too, and covetous, although he knew that nothing delighted me more than laying the best of all I had at his feet, *until I found him out!*"

Eda tried to turn the current of Mrs. Granton's thoughts, to interest her in her own concerns—and told how patient in her illness the hitherto ungovernable Violet had shown herself. But though Sophie murmured a languid response, it was evident that she was not listening, for her mind was so concentrated on her domestic troubles that she could neither speak nor think of aught else.

"Three days!" she exclaimed—"three whole days he has been away, and not even sent me a line to account for his absence. Is not this a sufficient proof that he cares nothing about me?"

"You parted in anger," Eda reminded her. "Have you written to him apologising for any unkind speeches you may have made?"

Sophie's colour rose again. "How could I? The last time I threw myself into his arms, and entreated his forgiveness, he put me aside, and told me I bored him with my demonstrations. Does he wish that I were dead and out of his way? Yes, yes, I am sure he does!"

"Hush!" said Eda, firmly; "nothing can justify you in saying such dreadful things as these; you are husband and wife, bound to each other as long as ye both shall live. Why embitter your union with such harsh judgments?"

"Is it only I who am hard and unjust?" asked Sophie, irritably. "However, I will try to be more patient, more gentle," she went on, with a heavy sigh. "But what can I do while he avoids me? I do not know whether to call upon him at the offices of his new company, or to go home and wait till he relents and joins me there."

"Call at the offices by all means, and take him home with you," cried Eda, brightly; "give him a nice little dinner, sing him his favourite songs, and strive not only to make him happy, but to be happy and hopeful yourself."

Mrs. Granton shook her head dubiously, but she promised to be guided by the advice, and appeared soothed, if not inspirited by Eda's affectionate



(*Drawn by* F. BARNARD.)

"Clinging to Eda, hid her face on the young girl's shoulder."—*p.* 299.

speeches. She called her sister-in-law the dearest and fondest of all good counsellors, and seemed quite reluctant to leave her; yet when Eda made an allusion to Mark's proposal to her to take up her abode at Sydenham she positively negatived it.

"No, child; it would not be fair to let you come to us now. You could not take part with both; neither is it in your disposition to play the neutral. Besides, Mark and I often say things to each other that it would distress you to be obliged to hear."

"But if I could be of any use to you, dear Sophie, I would come as soon as my little pupils are well enough to be left."

"And make yourself miserable over troubles for which not even your kindly spirit could devise a cure? No, dear, you shall not be called upon for so great a sacrifice. You are Mark's sister, as you bade me remember a little while ago; do you keep your trust in him, if I cannot. I will not have you made more unhappy by our ill-judged marriage than I can help. Your sympathy has been very sweet to me, and I shall never forget how generously it has been proffered."

With these words she kissed Eda, and went away to wait in a cab near the City offices where Mark was generally to be found, until he appeared, and then prevail upon him to return home with her. He consented to do so; and had she been a discreet or forbearing woman the cloud might have passed over; but unfortunately for their domestic felicity she was neither. Mark's cold responses to her caresses fanned her smouldering resentment into flame, and they had not been together for more than a couple of hours when some fancied slight induced her to break into the angry reproaches that always disgusted and drove him away. When the outer door slammed after him, Eda's more prudent counsels were remembered, and Mrs. Granton spent the greater part of the night in hysterically bewailing the violence of temper that was still further estranging her unloving husband.

Eda had paused to wipe away a few tears, after her visitor's departure, before returning to her little charges—who were incensing the ill-tempered Manon by fretting for their more gentle governess—but as she was proceeding up the stairs, two of the female servants started from the drawing-room door, at which they appeared to have been listening, and came towards her with looks of concern and alarm. Mr. de Courcy was in a fearful passion, they whispered, and, as far as they could judge, was threatening his lady with personal ill-usage.

The tale was so extraordinary that Eda heard it with incredulity. Mr. de Courcy, on the whole, was as good-humoured as careless indolent men usually are. He was liable to sharp though transient fits of anger when a dinner was badly served or an order neglected, but he had never been in the habit of quarrelling with his wife.

Seeing Eda's disbelief, the frightened women bade her listen for herself; and it was certainly true that, mingling with the loud passionate tones of the gentleman could be heard Mrs. de Courcy moaning and sobbing, as if in terror. What could have happened to ruffle the current of the lives that seemed to glide on so smoothly?

"Has Miss Granton courage to enter the room and interfere in our lady's behalf?" one of the servants now asked; and while Eda was hesitating how to answer, the door was thrown open, and Mrs. de Courcy came out, her features distorted, her eyes quite inflamed with weeping. Without noticing any one, she passed quickly on, and locked herself in her chamber.

No one but her maid saw her again until the evening, when she came into the nursery where Eda sat watching over Violet, who had suffered a slight relapse, and was too restless, in consequence, to enjoy the sweet sleep of convalescence in which the healthier Rose was wrapped. Mrs. de Courcy's countenance still bore traces of the morning's agitation, although a little rouge had been carefully laid on to hide the pallor of her cheeks. Much to Eda's surprise she was in full evening dress; and, by her cloak, bouquet, &c., it was evident that she intended going out.

She went to the crib in which lay the sleeping Rose, laid one of her flowers beside the child's chubby face, laughing affectedly at her own conceit; then came and stood at the foot of Violet's bed, holding her perfumed handkerchief to her nose, as if haunted with some dread of infection, Violet watching her the while with childish pleasure in her sheeny skirts and glittering ornaments.

"And so you cannot sleep, *pauvre petite!*" Mrs. de Courcy said. "I am afraid you give Miss Granton a great deal of trouble."

"She does not mind it," said the little girl, slipping an arm round Eda's neck. "She is always good to me, isn't she?"

"Yes," said her mamma, more graciously than gratefully; "Miss Granton is excessively good, and we are all very much obliged to her."

"Miss Granton recollects having the scarlatina," Violet went on, eagerly; "and her own dear mother was alive then, and used to sit by her at night—sometimes all night—only think! Mamma, you never come and sit by me. Why don't you?"

Mrs. de Courcy began to make a jesting reply about being too inexperienced to play the nurse, but broke down in the middle of it, and coming nearer to the bed, kissed her little daughter with unwonted affection. "I am afraid mamma isn't half as good to you, my darling, as she ought to be! But never mind, you have Miss Granton, who makes up to you for all my shortcomings."

She was hurrying away, as if ashamed of the emotions she was evincing, but Violet caught hold of

her hand, and drew her back. "Kiss me again, mamma! I like you best when you talk like that. Will you hear me say 'Our Father' before you leave me? I think I could go to sleep then."

Mrs. de Courcy faltered something about Miss Granton and her own haste to be gone; but Eda chose to be too busy at the other end of the room to hear her, and as Violet was pertinaciously bent on having her wish gratified, she gave way. It was a strange contrast—the child in her simple night-dress, with her soft curls falling loosely on her shoulders, and her face so perfectly colourless that by the shaded light of the lamp it looked like marble, kneeling on the bed with her hands clasped in those of the fashionable dressy mother; but at last the simple petition had been murmured, Violet nestled down on her pillow, and Mrs. de Courcy looked relieved. She was her old frivolous self when she paused beside Eda to say good-night.

"Will you button my glove for me, Miss Granton? Thanks! I am positively too nervous to do anything for myself;" and she gave a little shudder. "Such a frightful scene with Mr. de Courcy this morning—ah! I know I can confide in you!—such a frightful scene that it horrifies me to recall it. I suppose the servants heard all, and told you what he said?"

"I am not in the habit of listening to anything the servants say," Eda rather stiffly replied.

"Oh, but they will chatter! I am sure Manon knows everything. I don't know why I keep her, for she is both troublesome and insolent. Mr. de Courcy has lost some money—I am sure I don't know how—or some one has been worrying him for money, that is it, I believe; and he declared this morning that we are ruined—absolutely ruined! He was so violent," she added, smelling at a *vinaigrette* fastened to her *chatelaine*, "that I was immensely terrified—at first. But men always exaggerate, don't they? It can only be a temporary derangement of our affairs, can it?"

She looked eagerly for a confirmation of this opinion; but those unpaid and long-standing bills were in Eda's thoughts, and she could not give it. No fortune, however handsome, could support for any lengthened time extravagance so reckless as that in which both husband and wife had been indulging. Finding, however, that she was expected to say something, she asked what Mr. de Courcy proposed doing.

"I am sure I cannot tell. He said such dreadful things, and raved so wildly, that at last I told him he was a monster, and left him. Things must come right," Mrs. de Courcy added, confidently—"they always do; and then I shall make him have my rubies reset, for they are so hideously old-fashioned I hate to wear them. Where is he?"

"Who, madam? Mr. de Courcy? I heard Manon say that he has been in the study, writing, or looking over papers, ever since the morning."

Mrs. de Courcy stood for a moment flirting her fan, and meditating. She was still trying to disbelieve the startling facts her dismayed spouse had told her. It could not be true! she kept telling herself—it could not be true that she, who had been wont to indulge herself in every caprice, was reduced to poverty. Her husband was cruel to say so. Perhaps people were pressing for their money: but what then? She had heard of noble lords owing immense sums for years, and yet keeping up their establishments, and behaving as if they were solvent. Or if the worst came, some of their relatives must step forward and help them.

She started from her reveries to fold her opera-cloak around her, and say, with an effort at a smile, "*Eh bien*, it is no use staying at home, and giving myself the blues. By-bye, Violet, my darling; and if papa should ask for me you can tell him that I had an engagement I was obliged to fulfil. Will you give me your arm to the bottom of the stairs, Miss Granton? I feel so weak this evening."

Eda accompanied her to the hall, but ere they could cross it Mr. de Courcy opened the study door. Unshaven, his hair and dress in disorder, his eyes bloodshot, his lip bleeding where, in his agony of mind, he had fiercely gnawed it, he stood glaring at his elegantly-attired wife, who suddenly lost her presence of mind, and clinging to Eda, hid her face on the young girl's shoulder.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Perhaps Mr. de Courcy, like many more of his kind, found solace in the midst of his troubles in heaping reproaches on the spouse who, after all, was not more guilty than himself. Both had been as selfishly bent on what they called enjoying life as if they had adopted the motto of the Assyrian king—"Let us eat, drink, and be merry to-day, for to-morrow we die." Of that morrow they rarely troubled themselves to think; they considered that they made sufficient preparations for it by attending a place of worship when the weather was neither too hot nor too cold, and subscribing to a few of the principal metropolitan charities. And so the hour of real distress found them utterly unprepared to encounter it.

"Are you going out for the evening, madam?" Mr. de Courcy tauntingly inquired. "May I ask if you intend to walk? Our carriages and horses—thanks to your extravagance—have been seized by a jobmaster with whom you have run me into debt in a most reckless and uncalled-for manner!"

Mrs. de Courcy disclaimed this faintly, and with increasing bitterness he went on—"Do you propose drawing down more disgrace upon me by exhibiting yourself in public now my ruin is in every one's mouth? Have you no shame, no good feeling? Do you forget that it is through your carelessness of my interests that I find myself in such a position?"

The virulence with which he spoke stung his wife

into retorting, and she boldly declared her disbelief in his statements. Provoked by her incredulity, he seized her by the wrist, and compelled her to accompany him into the study, where he had been engaged in separating, from the great heap of bills that had been sent in as soon as the news of his losses on the turf got wind, all that came from the tradesmen she had so extensively patronised. Whether her millinery had cost more than his own personal expenses was a question he did not choose to consider.

Not sorry to be released from her passive share in this scene, Eda went sorrowfully back to the chamber where Violet had fallen into a doze at last. She tenderly covered the arms that had been tossed above the bedclothes, and speculated with increasing sadness over the changing fortunes of these petted children. What would become of them now the wealth of their parents had melted away?

Presently Violet stirred, and remembering that it was near the hour at which her medicine was to be administered, Eda had fetched the bottle, and was carefully measuring it, when Mrs. de Courcy ran past the open door in the direction of her dressing-room.

One glimpse of her face as she went by, and, chilled with vague apprehensions, Eda hurried after her. Short though that glimpse was, it had shown a change so great, so alarming, in the ordinarily bland and smiling lady, that Eda's heart failed her when she heard a key click in the lock, and knew that the miserable woman had locked herself in. What was she about to do? Had the taunts of her husband, or the conviction that the direst poverty lay before her, turned her brain, and in her frenzy was she thinking to end all earthly misery by a wild plunge into the hereafter?

Eda was flying down-stairs in search of help, when she recollected that through Mrs. de Courcy's sleeping-apartment there was another way into the dressing-room. She ran thither; fortunately, that door was unfastened, and pushing it open, she found her worst fears realised. The wretched woman had been searching for a phial of laudanum purchased some time since to ease a distressing toothache, and had just found it.

Eda seized the hand with which she was raising it to her lips, and tried to wrest it away, but in vain. Never very strong-minded, Mrs. de Courcy had now lost all self-control, and did not seem to hear her expostulations. "I am too miserable to live! let me die! let me die!" she kept exclaiming, at the same time making frantic struggles to free herself. Eda, however, contrived to draw her by slow degrees across the corridor, and into the chamber of her sleeping children.

With clenched teeth and fixed eyes, Mrs. de Courcy strove with all her force to disengage herself, but the violence of her passion soon exhausted her, and when her gaze did fall upon the little sleepers, she commenced moaning pitifully, and at last dropped on her knees, and hid her face in the bedclothes.

And now the phial was extracted from her relaxing fingers, and the danger was over. In her relief Eda breathed such a fervent ejaculation of thanksgiving, and such an earnest prayer that God would pity and pardon the fearful attempt, that Mrs. de Courcy began to comprehend whither her madness had led her, and to shrink with horror from the gulf into which she had been rushing headlong.

"What was I about to do?" she gasped. "*To die?* Alas, I am not fit! Oh, Miss Granton, what a wretch I am! Pray for me again, for I dare not pray for myself!"

"Look!" she exclaimed, still more wildly, as Eda endeavoured to soothe her. "Look! Poor little Violet is waking! She will see me—she will guess what I have been doing. Take me away! Pray take me away! Don't let my own child know how weak and wicked I am!"

Assisting her to rise, Eda led her back to her own chamber, where, with the tenderest compassion, she waited on her till the tears that were raining down her face began to flow less hysterically. Then she persuaded her to be undressed, and the now faint and penitent woman permitted herself to be assisted to bed, and her aching head bathed with cold water until the pain that racked it was less intolerable.

As she was passing through the dressing-room to return to the nursery, Mr. de Courcy came quickly in, but started back on seeing her, and asked, "Who is ill?" *(To be continued).*

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 17. Paul and Silas at Philippi.

Chapter to be read—Acts xvi. 16—34.

INTRODUCTION. This lesson will give an opportunity for vivid picturing out of the various scenes, and also for earnest personal application to the children.

I. A Spirit Rebuked. (Read 16—18). Remind the children of Paul and Silas going to Philippi. What called them to Europe? At whose house did they stay? Where had they met Lydia? Would they leave off prayer because received an answer? So continue daily going to pray at the river-side. Whom do they meet? Remind how soothsayers are found in all countries; how Saul consulted the witch at Endor, though no witches

allowed to live (1 Sam. xxviii. 7, 9); children will often have seen gipsies pretending to tell fortunes. Which commandment do they break? For who is alone the Wonderful Counsellor? (Is. ix. 6). Tell children that at the time Christ was on earth evil spirits seemed to be allowed to enter into people in a peculiar manner, and remind how often Christ cast out evil spirit, and how the devils recognised Him as their master (Matt. viii. 29). So now with St. Paul. Picture the apostles day by day going to prayer-meeting; the girl and her masters coming away from the place of prayer; the crowd following the girl; the spirit in the girl recognising the servants of Christ; her pointing to the apostles; her cry day after day. At last, St. Paul in indignation turning back, commanding the evil spirit to come forth. In whose name did he speak, and with what effect? As Christ his master before had rebuked them (Mark i. 25.)

Practical Lesson. What evil spirits with us still? Spirit of sullenness, murmuring, discontent, evil temper, indolence, &c. Always have their backs turned to prayer. Must be met with prayer and determination; in whose name and strength? As Satan departed from Christ (Matt. iv. 10), so will these from us.

II. The Apostles beaten. (Read 19—24). Who would be vexed at the spirit having left the girl? No longer able to bring money to her masters. What did they do? Cannot make the healing of the girl an offence, therefore will bring a charge of disaffection against the apostles. Picture the men taking hold of the apostles, violently dragging them to the magistrates' court, the crowd surrounding and following, the charge made (ver. 21), the multitude excited, apostles not allowed to speak; the magistrates, without hearing the defence, ordering them to be scourged, and then imprisoned. What an end to their work at Philippi! one family alone converted, and the whole town excited against them as traitors! Let children see how like this was to the Jews' treatment of Christ. Could not bring charge against Him for His miracles, so accused Him before Pilate of treason, by whom was scourged and imprisoned.

Practical Lesson. *The benefit of a clear conscience.* If we were to be accused by our enemies, what could they find against us? Would it be true of us as of Daniel (Dan. vi. 4), that there would be no occasion of fault, except of undue devotion to God?

III. The Apostles in Prison. (Read 25—34). Describe the scene in prison; apostles bleeding from wounds, thrust into inner prison: prisons gloomy enough now, far worse then—thick stone walls, damp streaming down, strong bolts and bars, feet in stocks; describe painful attitude of feet at right angles to body, in cramped position. Enough to daunt the stoutest heart, and produce gloomy and desponding thought. Christ had warned of tribulation in world (John xvi. 33), but bidden to be of good cheer. How was it possible now? But what are the apostles doing? praying—as the Church did when Peter was in prison, for deliverance, if it be God's will; but also, is it possible, singing praises! What can they find to praise for? Perhaps for life still spared. Might have been killed, like Stephen, but surely for presence of Christ in prison, to cheer, support, and comfort. Nothing can really harm as long as trust Him. Now hymn suddenly stopped. What is this rumbling noise? Describe loud creaking of the doors, bars, windows, floor rocking, whole prison shakes, chains break, fall off prisoners; all darkness, confusion, dismay. Picture the gaoler suddenly aroused; the prison doors all open. Where are the prisoners? What *shall* he do? his first thought of suicide; his relief at hearing Paul's voice. Now comes in trembling. Actually entreats his prisoners. What does he say? Perhaps only thinking of having offended their God unknown to him, who has sent the earthquake; perhaps had heard them preach in the town, and now convinced of the reality of their message. Anyway, Paul fastens on his question, and tells him of Christ. Now picture the scene in the gaoler's house. The family aroused; lights carried about; assembled in the sitting-room; the prisoners brought in; preaching to the whole family; the eager listening. What outward evidence of belief required? (Mark xvi. 16.) So there is a midnight baptism of the whole family. How else does faith show itself? So gaoler now treats his prisoners as guests, and there is joy in the household, as well as in the presence of God. (Luke xv. 10).

Practical Lesson. *Joy in believing.* Have been speaking of young converts and old converts. Both full of joy: the gaoler at having heard of pardon and salvation, the good news of the Gospel; the apostles at the presence of Christ, and joy of Holy Ghost in heart. (Gal. v. 22). Press this home to children. Have heard of Christ all their lives; do they really believe, *i.e.*, look to Him alone for pardon and peace? If so, have they the other joy, which gives comfort and even happiness in sorrow, persecution, prospect of death? Must first have *desire* for salvation, like the gaoler, then all rest follows as Christ's gift.

Questions to be answered.

1. Give instances of spirits being cast out.
2. In what way are evil spirits still with us, and how are they to be subdued?
3. Show how the apostles at Philippi were treated similarly to Christ.
4. What had Christ said about tribulation, and how was it fulfilled?
5. Describe the scene after the earthquake.
6. What lessons may we learn?

THE FIRST FALSE STEP.

CHAPTER II.

VERY sad felt little Amy Bartlett as she walked home, and nurse could not succeed in getting a word from her as to the boy with whom she had been found in conversation, though she was herself very curious to know what they had been talking about. All through dinner Amy could not keep her thoughts from dwelling upon what had passed; and the more she thought of it all, the more anxious she became to know the boy's whole history; he had spoken so nicely, and seemed such a respectable boy, that she could not understand how he had come to do such a dreadful thing, and she felt sure he had some explanation to give her. But then Amy knew, as she had herself said, that there could be no excuse for stealing; did she not know that to break the commandment, "Thou shalt not steal" was a wicked sin, for which people were sometimes taken up, and sent to prison? She supposed he ought to be in prison too, but then she remembered his saying that he was only trying to steal, and had been prevented just in time. Amy recollected, too, as she ate her nice currant-tart at dinner, those dreadful things he had been saying about starvation, just as nurse had come up to them, and she wondered whether he was still hungry. She had once been out with her papa and brothers on the hills, when they had lost their way, and been two hours late for dinner, on which occasion Amy had been quite famished, so she thought she knew quite well what starvation meant.

This afternoon Amy waited until she saw him go into his room, then she ran in after him, and before he had time to settle himself to his writing, his little daughter stood beside him.

"Papa, are you very very busy to-day, or may I talk to you, just for a few minutes, before you begin to write?"

"Well, I suppose my letters must wait a little," Mr. Bartlett said, lifting Amy to her favourite post on his knee, "and my little Pussie must tell me what made her look so grave all through dinner, and now too. I hope Tiny has not lost her collar."

"Oh no, papa; it is quite a serious matter this time. It is a very dreadful thing indeed——"

"That you have been doing, Amy?" interrupted her father.

"No, that *he* has been doing, I mean that nice-looking boy. But of course you don't know what I mean, papa, and I must tell you. Three days ago, when we were all playing on the shore, I noticed a boy lying under the shade of the rocks, looking very pale, and with his arm in a sling, and I felt so sorry for him being there while we were all enjoying ourselves! I walked up to him once or twice, and thought I should like to speak to him, but he did not look at me, and I did not know quite how to begin."

"I thought, Amy, mamma had told you she did not wish you to speak to any strange children you might meet on the sands."

"Oh but you know, papa, that was because she was afraid of our catching measles, or something, but this boy was only ill from an accident. Besides, he is a very poor boy, not a gentleman's child at all."

"And do you think, then, that poor boys never have measles, or 'something'?" asked Mr. Bartlett, much amused.

"Yes, I suppose they do," said Amy, "but, indeed, papa, he looked so sad, I could not help speaking to him, and you know I could not catch a broken arm from him, could I?"

"No, I think you were quite safe as far as that was concerned; but what did this boy tell you was the cause of his broken arm, Amy?"

"Well, papa, that was the dreadful part of it. After I had talked to him a little, I asked him how he had hurt himself, and do you know he told me that—" and here Amy hesitated and blushed, as if she were about to tell of some fault of her own—"that he had fallen down off a balcony whilst he was *trying to steal.* Was not that a shocking thing for such a nice boy to have done? Nurse came just at that minute, and made me come away, but I did so want to stay and hear his story. He seemed so much ashamed of himself. I may go and talk to him again, papa, may I not? and, oh, I wish you would come with me."

Mr. Bartlett had listened very attentively to his little daughter, and had started, and looked quite pleased when she told him of the lad's confession, which was rather odd of him Amy thought, as she had expected him to be very much shocked.

"So Ned really told you of his own accord what he had been doing," said Mr. Bartlett, "that is just like the brave lad I took him for."

"Ned! do you know him, papa?" asked Amy, in great surprise.

"Yes, my child; I think I can tell you a good deal more about him than you are likely to learn from himself, if you really want to know his history."

"Oh yes, that I do; please tell it me, dear papa!—if you are not too busy," added this thoughtful little maiden. "It will not take me long," said her father, pulling out his watch, "and then you must run away and leave me to write my letters. You must know then, Amy, that Ned Roberts lives in one of those narrow little streets not very far from our own home; his father is dead, his mother has seven

children to support, Ned being the eldest. They got on very well till last winter, when two of the children were very ill for a long time, and Mrs. Roberts had to give up her own work to stay at home and nurse them. When they got well again she had the doctor's bill to pay, and found herself in great difficulties, which my little Amy would not understand, as she does not know what it is to want money, and even food. Well, things went on getting worse and worse, till after a time they were nearly starving, though they would not tell any one, or ask for help, as they had once been in a much better position. Ned came to me as office boy about three months ago, and a very quick bright lad I found him; I had every reason too to believe him honest, and I was very much pleased with him."

"But, papa, surely he did not steal from *you*," here interrupted Amy.

"You shall hear presently, dear, if you listen to me. I sometimes fancied Ned looked hungry and sad, so I tried to get him to tell me about his mother and younger brothers, but he never seemed to like talking of them. He was doing his work very well, and I was so much pleased with him for his extreme quickness and attention, that I was just going to raise his wages, when this sad affair happened."

Amy's attention here increased, and she fixed her eyes on her papa's face as he continued.

"Do you remember my being ill, and staying at home for a few days before we came here?"

Amy nodded her head, too much excited to speak.

"The last day before I went back to the office, Ned was sent up to me with some letters; I was sitting in the library, with the window open, I told the servant to send him up to speak to me, and he looked so pale and ill that I asked him if anything was wrong, but he said no. About two hours after Ned had gone, as it was getting dark, I had to go again into the library for something, and as I hastily opened the door, to my surprise I saw the figure of a boy escaping through the open window. I rushed after him, but was too late to catch him, as he had climbed like a cat over the railing of the balcony; in doing so, however, his foot slipped, and he fell on to the grass beneath. In the glimpse I caught of him, I fancied he looked like Ned, so instead of calling the servants, I quickly ran round to the hall-door, and was just in time to catch him, as, half stunned, he was rising from the ground. He did not try to run away, but burst into tears, and prayed me to forgive him, confessing at once that he had come there intending to rob me. And then the whole story came out, how he and his mother, with the younger children, were almost starving, how he had gone without food himself day after day, in order to take all he could home to the others, and had often fainted at night in consequence. That his little sister was ill again, and they could not afford to get a doctor for her, and that when he stood in my room that day he had suddenly felt tempted to do that which it shamed him now to tell me of."

"And his broken arm, papa?" asked Amy, whose ready tears were now flowing.

"All this time he never said a word about his arm, though the pain must have been great. After hearing his tale, and talking to him of the sin of which he had been guilty, I went home with him to see if his story were really true, and it was not till we got there that Ned fainted away, and I found that a small bone in his arm was broken."

"Was it all true, papa?"

"Yes, my child, and much more than Ned had told me," said Mr. Bartlett, gravely, "but I will not pain you by telling you all I saw and heard that day. You may be sure I did my best to help and relieve them, and that I never let Mrs. Roberts hear of the crime into which hunger and trouble had driven the son of whom she was so proud. I sent the next boy off for a doctor, and whilst we waited for him, the poor mother told me that but for Ned she hardly knew what would have become of them all, and that a better son never lived. As soon as I could get to speak to him alone for a moment, I made him promise me that he would not say a word to his mother of what had happened, for I saw he was feeling so keenly the shame and disgrace, that he would be certain to tell her everything as soon as I had left, and I would not have that poor woman's faith in her son shaken."

"But, papa," said Amy, with a very puzzled look, "you have always taught us that it was such a wicked thing to steal, and yet you helped Ned directly afterwards without punishing him a bit."

"My little girl, do you not think such a boy as that has been well punished by all he has gone through since he tried to steal from me that day? Before then he knew himself to be a truthful, honest, straightforward boy, whom his master trusted, and who did not even know the feeling of shame which has never left him since. You are too young, Amy, to understand what it means by losing your own self-respect, but when you do, you will know how much Ned Roberts has suffered. Besides this, he has been very ill, and his arm has given him great pain; he has also lost his place in my office, and been unable to do anything to help his mother."

"But she is not starving, papa?" Amy asked, eagerly.

"Mr. Bartlett smiled, "No, Amy, you do not think I could leave her in such a condition. She has been well cared for, and so have the other children. Ned is staying here with a sister of his mother's, who is very glad to take him for the sum I pay her weekly, and I hope he will soon——"

"Then *you* are the kind gentleman he spoke of, papa," interrupted Amy, and she told her father

what Ned had said. He seemed pleased to hear this, and promised to take Amy the next day to speak to Ned, who was so much better since first he came to the sea, that Mr. Bartlett hoped he would soon be quite strong again. Amy then told her papa what Ned had said to her as to his great wish to become a sailor, and Mr. Bartlett said he would speak to him on the subject, and see whether he had really set his heart upon it, or whether it was only a boyish fancy, from seeing the beautiful ships pass whilst he lay on the beach.

Nearly two years after this time, as Mr. Bartlett was leaving his office one evening, he was stopped by a tall, brown, healthy-looking sailor lad, who respectfully touched his hat, and asked if he might be allowed to call and speak to Mr. Bartlett for a few minutes. He was so changed, and so much improved, that his old master did not know him in the least until he smiled, but then there was no mistaking him, and the exclamation, "Why, Ned my lad, I am glad to see you back again!" sounded very pleasant in Ned Roberts' ears.

He found his way up to Mr. Bartlett's house that same evening, and gave a long account of his voyages and adventures, to which Amy too listened with great attention, sitting by her father's side, and fixing her bright eyes on the young sailor, as he modestly told the story of his life since he had left England. He liked being at sea very much, he said, though it was a long time to be away from mother, but it was a great happiness to find her so well, and comfortable, and next time he hoped to take a shorter voyage. Just as he was leaving the room, he shyly drew a little packet from his pocket, and asked leave to present it to Miss Amy, saying he had brought it for her from the West Indies, and hoped she would accept it. Amy opened it, and found a beautiful many-coloured shell, with lines like mother-of-pearl, with which she was greatly delighted.

Ned did not leave the house without thanking his kind friend Mr. Bartlett for all that he had done for him since that day, when, tempted by hunger and poverty, he had forgotten his duty towards God and man, and taken that first step in the path of sin which leads on from evil to evil.

"I always thank God, sir," he said, "that you found me that day just in time to save me, for where should I have been now if I had taken your goods, and had not been found out. The chances are I should have tried again and been caught, and have broken poor mother's heart. Oh, sir, I wish that every poor lad had such a friend as you, just to save him when he first begins to do wrong!"

"Indeed, I wish so too, Ned, for it is always hard to turn back when the first false step has been taken. But you will find a better friend than I can be, my lad, if you take all your troubles to God; He will never forsake you, and has brought you safely through all the perils of the sea, and will be with you to the end if you trust in Him, as I believe you do."

Ned Roberts became in time mate, and finally captain of a ship. He was a favourite with all the sailors under him, and an example to them by his steadiness and honest conduct; but it was noticed that he always took the greatest interest in the young boys who joined the ship; and many a mother has had cause to bless him for the care which has saved her son from the first false step.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

113. What was the name of the wife of Moses? and how many sisters had she?

114. What king visited a dying prophet's bed, and wept over him?

115. Do we possess any sayings of our Lord's not mentioned in either of the Four Gospels?

116. What was the name of Isaiah's son?

117. Upon what occasion did our Lord check the undue curiosity of one of His apostles?

118. What funeral was suddenly interrupted by an armed band, and with what result?

119. What king's body was fastened on the wall of Beth-shan?

120. Who is compared to one that taketh a dog by the ears?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 272.

99. "And Abraham planted a grove [a tree] in Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God" (Gen. xxi. 33).

100. Of lentiles (Gen. xxv. 34).

101. Prov. xxv. 19.

102. "Behold I (St. Stephen) see the heavens opened and the *Son of Man* standing on the right hand of God" (Acts vii. 56).

103. Seven ewe lambs (Genesis xxi. 30).

104. Elijah (1 Kings xix. 3).



(*Drawn by* F. S. WALKER.)

SPRING-TIME.

ONLY a little while, my darling,
Only a little while,
And the sky will clear and the woodlark sing,
And the fields in their freshness smile;
The dove will coo to his wondering mate,
The young lambs frolic and play,
And the winds now rough, will but sigh, love,
Their musical notes to the day;
Kissing the lilac, and 'mong the locks
Of the lady laburnum-tree,
Will hide-and-seek play with her yellow hair,
And *you* will be there to see.

Only a little while, my darling,
  Your own pet swallows will come
Back to the eaves of the summer-house,
  Back to their English home.
The martins will sit and twitter to you,
  When their nursery duties are done,
Of the three yellow beaks that have closed at last,
  At a hint from the setting sun.
The scent of the cowslips will mellow the air,
  And yellow-cups pant for the dew,
The bluebell and violet creep through the fern
  All stealing a glance at *you!*

All in a little while, my darling
  Mother! I know it well;
The lark and the dove will gladden their mate,
  The bluebells ring in the dell.
But I—well, the song I shall hear, mother,
  Will be sung very far away;
And the song be sweeter than dove's or lark,
  Let them sing how sweetly they may.

The yellow-cups there will be made of gold,
  That the children of Jesus twine
Into wreaths, to circle His fair calm brow
  Mixed with silver eglantine.
And the Saviour thinks of the old-world time,
  Till His pitying eyes grow dim,
For dew-laden flowers and moss-tipp'd buds
  Are the crowns now twined for Him.

All in a little while, mother,
  And spring will be coming to me;
Light in the east, and light in the west,
  And a great light over the sea.
The notes of all the birds in the world
  Will swell in one grand weird song,
The triumph of light over weariful night,
  The triumph of right over wrong.
A few more aches, and a few more pains,
  And the buds will burst from the tree.
All in a little while, mother,
  Your spring will bring summer to me!

J. R.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER III.—UP AT HAMPSTEAD.

THE house was very badly furnished, and, as a rule, it was always untidy; and yet there was an attractiveness about the poverty-struck rooms, and even about the very untidiness. And as for the garden! every one who knew them loved that rambling old garden, with the long reedy grass waving and nodding to the wind, and the one cultivated spot, the middle bed, which looked blooming whenever it was possible that flowers could make it look so; and the summer-house, with the dusty painted table in the middle, on which all lost books in the house were generally discovered, especially novels, for they were an indolent, ease-loving, novel-reading set. And there was the sycamore-tree—which was Dolly's favourite retreat—with the rickety seat beneath it, on which you had to sit down very carefully, and right in the middle, lest it should tip up at one end, and place you in a position more ludicrous than graceful. There was a tumble-down pigeon-house in one corner of the garden, too, which had always been a target for balls and stones; and as for weeds, and underwood, and overgrowth, and briars, and tall poppies, and fluffy dandelions, they were in *all* the corners. There was a fence round the garden, and from the bottom a view of the dear old church, and the green trees, and a country which has not even yet left Hampstead. The Woodwards had always lived there, for the locality is one that has long been popular with artist and literary folk, and to the latter class Mr. Woodward belonged. He was a clever man, but it had been his misfortune perhaps that he had been liked and made much of in society, and that his talents were ruined by brilliant flashes, made when he roused himself to the occasion, rather than by any sustained effort. Then he fell into a literary set, one of the best, perhaps, but a dangerous one for a young man having his own way to make, and then he, to crown all, married beautiful Annetta Wade, against the wish of her father, who accordingly did nothing for them; and then he found that, unless he worked hard and steadily, he and his wife would have a fair prospect of starving. They were such an indolent careless couple too; and though they accepted life and its burdens, and even its troubles, easily enough, they could not make themselves like work. Mr. Woodward could not, at least, and his wife always wore his likes and dislikes as closely as he himself did. Luckily, he had a sub-editorship offered him just when their second child was born, and things were at a very low ebb, and five years afterwards he became editor, but the post was not worth very much, for it was a small weekly paper, only circulating among a certain educated class. They had been able to keep a home together, but they had never had a sufficient sum with which to buy furniture, and the rooms looked bare and shabby, so that the children, as they grew up and realised the fact, were ashamed to receive visitors, though they were seldom troubled with them. Yes: Mr. Woodward occasionally brought home some one he had known in early days, or some

clever thoughtful man, to have a quiet talk and game of chess with him, but that was all; and the daring, laughing, Bohemian-looking children, kept all the prim and proper inhabitants away—they were half afraid of their saucy faces. The boys went to a day-school, but no one had ever spent a penny on education in favour of Dolly or Sally. But they were knowledge-loving children, and picked up things amazingly; and they could think, and the father was a clever man, and liked talking with his children; and what greater educators are there than thought and the companionship of a clever man? Once, long ago, when he happened to have a few pounds in his pocket, Mr. Woodward picked up an old cracky piano, and Mrs. Woodward indolently taught Dolly her notes, and somehow both the children, nay, all of them, had a knowledge of music in consequence; and once, Adrian Fuller—a great friend was Adrian Fuller, and a favourite with them all—had said it was a pity Dolly did not know French, and, half in fun half in earnest, gave her a few lessons. The result was that she had a pretty good knowledge of the language as far as reading it went, and Sally learnt quickly from her sister. So they picked up their education and yet remained children—a group of quaint old-fashioned children not easily forgotten. Children? Yes, but Dolly was almost a woman, and no one yet had realised it, not even she herself perhaps, till she stood over her spoilt rose on the morning that Venus was buried.

CHAPTER IV.—THE END OF A SUMMER DAY.

They were all in the garden, and had had tea beneath the sycamore-tree, but now the breeze was playing and whispering among its branches, and the long summer day was dying out. Mrs. Woodward said it was chilly, and was going in-doors. The boys had learnt their next-day lessons, and were throwing stones in at the door of the pigeon-house. Sally sat in the summer-house, with her elbows resting on the dusty table, reading the "Vicar of Wakefield," for the Woodward children always read grown-up books, and Dolly was at the end of the garden. She was leaning over the low fence, looking at the trees, and the crimson sky above the church, and felt as if she was waiting for something, as if she had awakened to new feelings and understanding since the morning; but the new life incident to them had not yet commenced. Above all too, she was thinking and feeling that when the twilight fell about the trees to-morrow night, and all the nights for many a month to come, there would be no Mr. Fuller talking politics with her father beneath the sycamore-tree, and she should miss him so! Just as Sally looked up to her, and set her life by Dolly's clock, so Dolly set hers by Adrian Fuller's. It was only a child's liking, though he was but six-and-twenty, and Dolly was sixteen, and could hardly be called a child, in years at any rate. She had known him since she was nine, and he had been the king of playmates to her, and was the king of heroes, and this losing him was the first great trouble of her life. She was not in love with him, in spite of her sixteen years; she was too much of a child to understand what that meant, save in the vague indistinct manner in which even a child understands it.

"Dolly, I am going in, the dew is too much for me."

"Very well, papa." She did not raise her head, but waited till Mr. Fuller came and stood close by her.

"What is the matter?" he asked, cheerily enough, and he followed the direction of her eyes, and watched the trees also for a moment; he knew the scene so well, and had sketched it many a time, but he never saw it with the shadows deepening on it as he saw it now, without a rush of feeling which reminded him that he was an artist at heart as well as by profession. Then he looked up at the soft sky and at the stars coming out one by one, and his thoughts reverted to the little figure by his side again. "Are you thinking what a different Dolly the stars will look down upon when I come back two years hence?"

"No, I was thinking how I shall miss you when you have gone," she answered, simply.

"Ah, you'll soon supply my place!" he laughed. "You'll be a woman before I return, and go and see your rich grandpapa, and forget all about Hampstead." He was as great a Bohemian as the Woodward children behind him, and there was something almost sorrowful in his voice as he spoke of Colonel Wade. "What jolly days we have had in this old garden!" he went on; "many a good romp and long drowsy afternoon, eh Dolly?"

"Yes," she answered, sadly, still watching the dim trees. "They'll never come again."

"No, I suppose not," he said, with a sigh, speaking rather to himself than to her. "It seems such a little while ago that I sent in my sketch on the chance of its being accepted for your father's paper, and that we made acquaintance, and in time he brought me home here. What a queer little girl you were, Dolly," he laughed, while she rested her head on her hand upon the fence, and turned her face away, as if she were not listening to him. "I remember you so well, you took to your heels the moment you saw me, but I propitiated you later on by teaching you how to spin a whip-top. We soon became friends, did'nt we?"

"Yes," she said, still with her face turned away; "and I wanted to thank you for teaching me French, and telling me what books were nice to read."

"Dolly," he exclaimed, "you are crying!"

"No," she said, but her head drooped lower and lower. After all she was such a child. "It is only——"

"Dolly! Dolly!" called Mrs. Woodward from the study window, "come in immediately. Your sister Netta is here!"

"Netta again, and at this time! Why, she said she was going to a party!"

"I will wait here," said Adrian Fuller. "I don't want to see her."

"Come along, Doll," shouted Tom; "here's Netta again."

"Mr. Fuller, you are to come in, please; mamma says so!" and Will and Sally came down the garden path.

"Very well," he answered, discontentedly. "I suppose I must pay my respects to the Beauty." He had never seen her as yet, and had taken his tone towards her from the children. Then he and Dolly, and that awkward Tom, with his mass of light hair pushed back from his grubby forehead (for he had been gardening after his own fashion, and showed traces of his industry), and quaint-looking Sally, still hand in hand with her favourite brother, went slowly down the moss-grown pathway towards the house. Adrian Fuller stopped for a moment, and the little crowd of children stopped with him, before they reached the house, and looked back at the garden, and at the shadowy view beyond, and up at the sky, with its many stars. "How lovely it is," he said. "We'll come out again presently. There is nothing more beautiful than the end of a long summer day."

"But it is a little sad also," said Dolly, gravely; and they went into the house.

(To be continued.)

THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF THE LORD JESUS.

BY THE REV. T. M. MORRIS, IPSWICH.

IV.—THE WORD OF DESERTION.

"And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"—MATT. xxxvii. 46.

WE come now to the period of darkness—a darkness which preternaturally descended about mid-day, and at the time of full moon. This circumstance is to be noted, because it is preclusive of the supposition that the darkness is to be accounted for as that consequent upon an eclipse of the sun. This darkness, which was of three hours' duration—lasting from the sixth to the ninth hour—*i.e.*, from mid-day to about three o'clock in the afternoon, was a physical circumstance which we must regard as intimately associated with the remarkable utterance of Christ which we have now to consider. This fourth word—*the word of desertion*—shows plainly that the waves and the billows were indeed rolling over Christ; it is a cry which must have fallen upon the astonished, if not terrified, ear of the universe, issuing as it did from the profoundest deeps of a voluntarily endured humiliation.

Up to mid-day the sun shone upon the scene of horror with which we are presented at Calvary. All things pursued their usual course. There was no supernatural portent to indicate that the critical hour of the world's history had arrived. But about the sixth hour—at noon—when the sun was shining in all its meridian splendour—a preternatural darkness descended upon the earth, wherewith all found themselves at once enshrouded. It was a warning sign that they were committing a sin of such unparalleled enormity that the sun could no longer shine upon it; that they were perpetrating a deed of horror which needed to be so veiled. This darkness must have powerfully affected the minds of all capable of thought, awakening a feeling which would, naturally enough, find expression in the traditional words of Dionysius, uttered on beholding this darkness in Egypt: "Either the Divinity himself is suffering, or sympathises with one who suffers."

In this cry of desertion we have the opening words of Ps. xxii., one of the most remarkable of the typical Psalms, and which, while finding partial fulfilment in the experience of David, received its final and complete fulfilment in the experience of David's Son and Lord. As we read the Psalm we see the sorrowful form of the Divine sufferer rise up before us. The Messianic character of this Psalm is so unmistakable, that one who would willingly exclude Christ from the Old Testament, says of it—"We have here *the programme of the crucifixion*." Yes, so wonderfully is this the case, that as we read this Psalm in the light of what actually transpired on Calvary, it wears for us an historic rather than a predictive character.

Christ from the first had suffered, but we now come to the very climax of His sufferings. The sufferings now became visible which had long burdened Him invisibly. The sinfulness, the unbelief, the ignorance, the perversity of men, everywhere and always so obtrusive from the very first, must have been occasions of continual suffering to the Redeemer; but towards the close of His life they were concentrated into greater intensity, and became the occasions of more extreme bitterness.

That suffering without measure should have

burst as a desolating tempest upon the head of the Holy One, is less surprising than that the Divine Saviour instead of remaining, as hitherto, unmoved, should have been so sensibly and visibly affected.

Does not this reveal to us the fact that Christ's sufferings consisted chiefly in *the travail of his soul?* His most extreme physical sufferings were those that He endured at an earlier period, and those He endured without a complaint, without the utterance of a word which had reference to Himself. But this exceeding bitter cry which smote against the black unanswering heavens tells us of the *agony of soul* which He endured, of a strange and terrible consciousness of desertion. No one can understand this cry, and what it expressed, who refuses to admit that Christ suffered and endured as our representative. He suffered for us, He bore our sins in His own body on the tree, the Lord laid on Him the iniquities of us all. Hence His sufferings had a special character, and may not be compared with any other sufferings, however extreme. Christ was then vicariously offering a sacrifice for us, and vicariously bearing our burden. Need we wonder, can we wonder, that so situated, He should have so suffered, or have thus exclaimed?

However regarded, this appeal must be taken as expressive of quite an unexampled state of mind. We may search through the successive pages of the world's history, and we shall find no parallel to this. For here we have the strange spectacle of one clinging to God in the exercise of faith, yet at the same time overwhelmed with a terrible sense of being deserted by God. We are amazed as we listen. Christ is now performing the very work which He came into this world to accomplish; in anticipation of this very sacrifice which He was offering—the sacrifice of Himself—does He say, "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God;" and yet, instead of seeing from the opening heavens a manifestation of the excellent glory, the descent of the mystic dove, and hearing the audible voice proclaiming, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," instead of this, there is the agony, and the chill horror of death; and from the cross, shrouded in preternatural darkness, there is heard ascending, to an apparently inattentive heaven, the cry of the God-deserted soul, "*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?*"

There is much here which is by us undiscoverable; yet is there much also on which we may, in devout meditation, profitably dwell. Let us, then, consider what this strange cry expresses. We have taken for granted throughout that we are listening to our Saviour here, crying from the very lowest depth of humiliation and suffering; and without violating their sanctity, we may reverently inquire, *In what did those sufferings consist?*

The cry which our Saviour uttered in this time of sore extremity has significance clinging to every word, and upon the force of every word should we thoughtfully dwell.

Why hast Thou forsaken me? What is the meaning of this darkening of my Father's face? Are not the sufferings of the cross enough? Will it not suffice that I yield to death and endure its agony? Must I even in the very death-struggle have my Father's face hidden—turned away? Why should my soul be thus disquieted within me? My God, my God, *why* hast Thou forsaken me?

Why hast *Thou* forsaken me? That the world should treat me thus I do not wonder, for I am not of the world. That even my friends should have forsaken me, and fled, I, knowing their weakness, can understand. But why hast *Thou*—the changeless One, whose name is love—why hast *Thou* forsaken me?

Why hast Thou *forsaken me?* I might have endured all else—pain and anguish, the assault of fiends, the ingratitude and cruelty of men, the recreancy of friends. Cheered by Thy smile, with the consciousness of Thy favour, I might have endured all this without complaint, but not this greatest woe of all—the hiding of Thy countenance—My God, my God, why hast Thou *forsaken me? Me,* the Son of Thy love, in whom was all Thy delight, who has come to do Thy will, and who is now, in all this shame and painfulness, doing Thy will—My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? *He was indeed made to drink the wine of astonishment.*

We see, then, that this fourth word of Christ expresses an *extreme sense of solitude, surprise, suffering, combined with a continued trust in God.*

This cry is expressive of an extreme sense of *solitude*—utter solitude and desolation—it is the cry of the soul that feels itself *forsaken.* In the moment of most urgent need, He feels—who can imagine what this means?—He feels Himself *forsaken of God!* To a large extent, and from the very first, Christ's had been *a lonely life.* He trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with Him. His character was misunderstood—His words, His work, His entire mission were misunderstood, not only by His enemies, but even by His friends and followers. Living no recluse life, having daily intercourse with men, He was yet, to a large extent, *alone.* But while even His true friends failed of discerning His real character, He did enjoy a certain measure of human sympathy, and by it was in His previously painful way refreshed. But from all this He is now shut off. Take the innermost circle of all. Where are they who, with Peter, declared that

they would rather die with Him than forsake Him? By one He has been betrayed; by another He has been blasphemously and repeatedly denied: and only one, of all the twelve, ventures near enough to the cross to catch word or look of the dying Christ.

For the last three years Christ has been ceaselessly going about, not only speaking wise and loving words, but healing all manner of sicknesses and diseases among the people. He has opened the eyes of the blind, unstopped the ears of the deaf, purged the leper of his uncleanness, raised to life the dead. But of these we find none at the cross—at least none uttering any word of protestation against the tragedy enacted, or of sympathy with the Divine sufferer. By all this ingratitude and unkindliness would the human heart of Christ be pierced. He who was so free to manifest sympathy would most keenly feel its want. But we are called to witness not the mere withholding of sympathy, but the infliction of the most cruel insult and injury. Christ was dying for *them*, who, with malignant looks and mocking words, were gathered round the cross, and who had personslly or instrumentally fixed Him to it. The wounds inflicted on the sensitive soul of Christ were more terrible to bear than all the bodily anguish of the crucifixion. Never was death endured under circumstances of such absolute desolation. But all this, heart-rending as it must have been, constituted the lightest part of that terrible burden which pressed upon the dying Saviour. Till now Christ could always say, "I am alone, and yet not alone, the Father is with me." The consciousness of the Divine presence was able to people and cheer the most dreary solitude. But now it is different—a terrible and unaccustomed sense of loneliness is invading His heart, the face of God seems hidden, and the shadow of a great darkness is resting on His soul. He is there *the forsaken, the desolate*, in a sense that, let us thank God, we can never understand. He has long known what it is to be despised and rejected of men; He feels now as if He were forsaken of God. Can we wonder that, thus situated—hung up between earth and heaven, isolated from both, can we wonder that, with this sense of absolute privation, there should issue from the depths of that awful solitude and silence the cry, "*My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?*"

This utterance seems expressive of *surprise*—of *astonishment*. *Why, oh why*, hast Thou forsaken me? The consciousness of the favour, the approval of His Father, had never been interrupted before; but now, in this time of darkness and agony, He seems unable to realise what has always hitherto been a stay and support to Him. This strange sense of desertion, desolation, abandonment, is what He cannot understand, it fills Him with perplexity and astonishment. He wonders not at the faithlessness of friends, or at the rancour of enemies. His wonder is this, that at such a time the face of His Father should seem hidden. *Why, oh why, is this? My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?*

This cry is to be regarded not merely as expressive of the most severe suffering, but reveals to us the fact that *the main element in our Saviour's sufferings was spiritual*. Not the torments of the crucifixion, great as they were, called forth this cry, but the invisible and unimaginable *agony of soul*—the *travail of our Redeemer's soul*—of which the old prophet spoke.

The bodily sufferings of our Saviour were of an extreme kind, but severe as they were, they were as nothing compared with those mysterious pains which He bore while offering Himself as a sacrifice for sin. In this, the extremity of mental agony, He had little thought, it is probable, of his bodily torture. If mere bodily pain could have subdued the soul of the Redeemer, it would have enforced an acknowledgment of its presence and power before this. When He was bearing, and well nigh fainting, under the burden of the cross, He could say to those who were expressing their sympathy, "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children." When first extended on the cross, the time, it is likely, when He was enduring the most acute physical pain, He could forget Himself and pray for His murderers. And now, we may be assured, it is not the pains of a mangled body, but the sorrowfulness of a deserted and desolate soul, which extorts this cry. It is suffering such as the soul only can experience, such as only the soul of the Redeemer could endure.

In thinking of these sufferings we must remember that the bitterest ingredient in the cup which our Saviour was then draining to the very dregs is to be found in this interruption of the consciousness of the Divine favour and presence. This is a great mystery, which we would not even seek to explain; but to the fact, however mysterious, we would tenaciously cling. Our Saviour, during this temporary period of desertion, was enduring what He only could endure, and what He came into the world, and assumed our nature, in order that He might endure. This was the fiery baptism to which He had looked forward from the first—it was terrible to Him, by all save himself it would have been intolerable. Well might He at such a time have used the prophetic words—"Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of His fierce anger?"

This must be regarded as the critical period in that great contest which was being waged between *the Redeemer* and *the Destroyer*. This is the hour

and the power of darkness. A crisis, this, of unparalleled interest to the world, and to the universe. The head of that serpent, within whose complicated and ever-tightening folds the world was lying, is now being crushed, but not without cost of suffering to the victor. At the very commencement of His public ministry, the Son of Man entered the lists with the great adversary, and there was a sharp conflict; but Satan, after his ignominious defeat in the wilderness, seems for a while not to have cared about renewing his assault upon Him who came to subvert his kingdom and to destroy his works. But now things are approaching their crisis; the controversy must be settled in one way or another, and the contest must be decided at Calvary, and while Christ is hanging on the cross. There, by dying, He is to vanquish him who had the power of death, even the devil. We can form no conception of the severity of the conflict which then and there took place. We see our redemption wrought out by our Suffering Substitute, and we know that His sufferings must have been extreme, from the fact that they extorted from Him the exceeding bitter cry, "*My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?*"

Here, then, we see Christ suffering as none but He could suffer, and suffering from a strange, mysterious sense of desertion—yet all the while professing faith in God, and claiming special relationship to God. Though the face of God be hidden, His hold on God does not relax. From the darkest depth of all, His cry is—"*My God, my God*, why hast Thou forsaken me?" As the Son of Man he seems amazed, bewildered, terrified, but He feels that God is *His* God still. He cannot realise what, till now, throughout His earthly ministry, He has realised, and what in times of greatest distress has been a joy to Him. But even now, when His Father's face seems hidden, and darkness has gathered around His soul, He can say—"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Is there not, occasionally, something corresponding to this in the experience of Christ's people? We may be placed in painful and trying circumstances, in which we may feel confused and bewildered. We may wonder what is going to happen next, what, indeed, will become of us. We may feel alone and desolate. Our heavens may be overcast, and our heart heavy, and yet we may feel that we have an interest in the unchanging love of God, though for a time we may fail to realise its sweetness. When things are at their worst we can say, "My God, my God!" and with the old patriarch, are ready to exclaim, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

Has not this — the very extremity of our Saviour's woe—a suggestion of comfort for us in the dark and trying hours of life? No such darkness can settle on us as settled on Christ—and to no such depth can we descend as that to which He descended. He descended to the lowest depth of all that we might not, and that we, when in the lower deeps, might be able to feel that we in Christ have One who is able to sympathise as well as able to save.

And is not this word a word of encouragement to those who believe not—those who are inquiring whether they may be saved? Christ thus suffered, and from this lowest depth of suffering thus exclaimed, that He might be able to save to the uttermost all who go unto God by Him. Yes, as sinners we shall ever have reason to praise God that for us Christ endured this extremest woe—and in the great travail of His soul, cried out—"*My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?*"

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 18. Paul in Greece.

Chapter to be read—Acts xvii.

INTRODUCTION. Question the children upon the events at Philippi, and the treatment received by Paul and Silas. Roman citizens beaten and imprisoned uncondemned by Roman magistrates, who, in fear lest apostles should inform against them, come and entreat them to leave the city quietly (xvi. 39). What a triumph for the apostles! So they take leave of Lydia and the brethren, and depart on their journey.

I. Paul at Thessalonica. (Read xvii. 1—9.) Let children trace their course on a map from Philippi through Amphipolis to Thessalonica. What did Paul do there? Must always preach to the Jews first; the message the same—that the Christ so long expected was not a mere earthly prince, but a suffering Saviour—who must die for sin and rise again; all which fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. The effect the same as before—a few Jews, and many of devout Greeks, and some of chief women. Persecution also followed from the unbelieving Jews, who could not endure the preaching of Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ; so they raise the old cry that apostles are preaching treason to Cæsar. Who took the alarm? the rulers, like Pilate, afraid

of being accused to Cæsar, the Roman Emperor, of encouraging disloyalty, require Jason, Paul's friend, to find bail for peaceable behaviour, as Paul and Silas could not be found. Where were they?

II. PAUL AT BEREA. (Read 10—15.) Picture Paul and Silas being sent away by night—the hurried farewells, and journey to Berea; their immediately going into the synagogue of the Jews, and beginning to teach them. Notice three things about the Bereans. (*a*) *They heard readily.* Remind of parable of sower, where seed fell on stony ground, and not having much depth of earth, sprang up quickly. The Bereans were easily impressed, disposed to listen, and heard attentively. (*b*) *They searched the Scriptures.* As Jews they had Old Testament, heard Scriptures read every Sabbath day, knew the prophecies about Christ, now compared the apostle's teaching with the Scriptures, to see if agreed, and finding they did agree, believed. (*c*) *They easily fell away.* Who came and disturbed the good work?

PRACTICAL LESSONS. (1) *Perseverance.* Jews earnest in putting down what they thought false doctrine; are we as earnest in spreading what we know to be true? Paul and Silas went on fearlessly, just doing their duty, not caring for consequences. What an example to all! (2) *Steadfastness.* Great danger in being easily impressed, unless really give heart and soul to God. Test of sincerity—not if moved by hearing Word, but of stand when Word is evil spoken of.

III. PAUL AT ATHENS. (Read 16—34.) Describe the character of the Athenians. (*a*) *Idolaters.* Beautiful city; capital of ancient Greece; full of beautiful works of art, &c.; centre of all luxury and refinement; one thing wanting—knowledge of true God; city full of idols. (*b*) *Philosophers.* Explain how they had many exceedingly wise men, always, like man in dark, groping after the light of truth. Notice these points in the speech:—(*a*) *He fastens on what was good in them.* "Too superstitious" (ver. 22) is rather "very much devoted to religion." This was in itself good, though the object of their worship was wrong. Let the children admire the clever way in which St. Paul begins with "The Unknown God," to whom he had seen an altar dedicated. (*b*) *God needs no temples.* Remind of Stephen's speech, how he showed that Abraham and other saints worshipped God acceptably hundreds of years before the Temple was built. He who made man cannot actually need anything made by man. (*c*) *All men are made by God for Himself.* All are of one blood, and their habitations settled by God. Ask what they were required to do after the Flood, and how they were dispersed. (Gen. xi. 8.) Also how Abraham was taken from his own country (Gen. xii. 1), and his descendants first settled in Egypt, afterwards in Canaan. So that we live and move only as God allows (see Ps. civ. 29, 30), and are intended to seek God, who is near to us all. (*d*) *Need of repentance.* Not a mere permission, but command to repent, because of coming judgment. Notice the effect of the sermon. How was it received? Incredulity by some, indifference by others, faith by a few (ver. 34).

PRACTICAL LESSON. *Take heed how hear.* We in favoured country, abundant means of grace, always hearing. Do we mock? delay repentance? or believe? Resurrection is certain, and unless repent must all perish.

Questions to be answered.

1. Describe the apostle's reception at Thessalonica.
2. What three points do you notice about the Bereans?
3. What lessons may we learn from them?
4. Describe the Athenians.
5. Name four heads of St. Paul's speech.
6. Give a practical lesson.

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER XXXIX.



AS Eda stood face to face with the ruined man, all other emotions were swallowed up in pity for him, and her quiet "It is I, sir; can I do anything for you?" was spoken in such gentle tones that, although he brusquely answered in the negative, he passed his hand over his eyes, and threw himself into the nearest chair, with a sigh that was almost a groan. He looked so unspeakably haggard and wretched that she could not resolve to leave him quite alone, but busied herself in putting away the ornaments Mrs. de Courcy had been wearing, till nearly an hour had passed away.

At last she ventured to inquire if she might fetch him a cup of coffee.

"Yes—no—it is not worth while," he roused himself to answer. "I do not think I have had anything since the morning. But no matter; I am neither hungry nor thirsty."

But Eda, who knew that no man could take a hopeful view of his difficulties while sinking with inanition, begged him to stay where he was till she had procured him some refreshment, and for this purpose she took her way to the kitchen. Despite the



(*Drawn by* F. Barnard.)

"How came this phial in the room?"—*p.* 315.

lateness of the hour several of the servants were still there—Mrs. de Courcy's smart maid amongst them. They were loudly and unfeelingly discussing the state of their employer's affairs, for, alas! the tie between the De Courcys and their domestics had been one of self-interest on both sides, and the faithful service that is given as much for love as reward was unknown in their establishment.

There was a hush when Eda entered, but it was induced by curiosity alone; and when she had told her errand, and offered to wait for the dry toast she had asked for, no one hesitated to resume the conversation.

The cook, a portly woman, whose perquisites had been enormous, began to bewail her wrongs loudly. "I never would have taken the situation if I'd ha' known that this would be the end of it. Fine trouble I shall have to get myself comfortable settled again! me toe, that's never lived except in the best of families! But when a master and missus disgraces theirselves, every one that has to do with them suffers for it."

There was an assenting murmur from those who stood round, which rose to audible complaints when Mrs. Cook added her conviction that they should all be sent about their business without a skurrick of their wages.

"And this for people that have never had a bit of feeling for nobody but themselves!" said one of the housemaids, sharply. "You might slave yourself off your legs, and what did missus care? There was Anne—the young woman who was here when I came—lost her health entirely through the hard work, and what did they do for her? Packed her off to the hospital, and never asked a single question about her from that day to this!"

Eda sighed; but she stayed any further details by saying, gently, "This is scarcely the time—is it?—to recall anything to Mr. or Mrs. de Courcy's disadvantage."

No one answered, but the girl who had been kneeling before the fire toasting the bread looked up and smiled in sympathy. She was a rough, awkward girl, employed in the scullery, and hourly rated by the other servants for her clumsiness, but her invincible good-humour enabled her to bear all their cross speeches with composure. She and Eda were old acquaintances, for she was none other than the much-enduring "'Ria" Ingle, on whom, as eldest daughter, all the care had devolved of her mother's large family during the hard-worked charwoman's repeated absences from home. They rarely encountered each other in the palatial mansion, where the governess and the scullion were so far apart, but Eda contrived to see the girl sometimes, and say a few encouraging words, or by some little gift brightened her toilsome existence; and 'Ria, who had always looked upon Miss Granton as one of the best and cleverest of young ladies, was ever ready to testify her gratitude by those good offices which the humblest may find opportunities of performing.

Though five minutes earlier she had been nodding with weariness, she now ran about with alacrity, preparing the tray which she insisted on carrying up-stairs for Eda, whose quiet "Thank you" sent her away sufficiently repaid. Mr. de Courcy was still sitting in the same despondent attitude, but he eagerly swallowed the coffee, and then made an inquiry for his wife.

Eda hesitated whether to evoke his compassion for her by divulging the state she had been in, or keep the secret even from him, but he did not press for a reply, crying, hastily, "She has gone to bed, I suppose. Poor thing, poor thing! Let her sleep, if she can."

He was evidently relenting towards his partner in folly, and Eda went away better satisfied. If this thoughtless couple would but cease these useless recriminations, and endeavour to support and console each other, there might be greater happiness in store for both than they had ever known while the gay world of pleasure stood between them.

Beginning to feel really weary as soon as she was once more alone, Eda sat down by the table in the nursery, trimmed the lamp, and opened her Bible, to read a few verses ere she aroused Manon, who had been lying down all the evening with headache, and went herself to rest. How quietly, how soundly the children had slept while the scene that might have ended so tragically was enacted close to them! As she sat turning over the pages of St. John's Gospel, she could hear the regular breathing of little Rose; and Violet too, who had been so restless a few hours ago, did not appear to have changed her position. But what indefinable impulse made Eda rise as she was thinking this, and go to the bedside to lean over the child and look at her?

Violet was dying! The little lips that had so lately murmured her evening prayer, and said her loving good-night to her mother with unusual affection, would never speak again! The hands that had so often been clasped round Eda's neck in merry caress or in penitence for some fit of waywardness were rapidly growing cold, and the warm little heart—so full of good feeling, despite her caprices—had almost ceased to beat!

After the first start of horrified incredulity, Eda flew for assistance. The nearest doctor was sent for, and was quickly in attendance, but he could do nothing. Before morning broke Violet de Courcy was no more, and her parents forgot all other losses and all dissension while they wept together over their firstborn.

CHAPTER XL.

It was not often that Eda was found wanting when her help was needed; but now the shock of her little pupil's sudden decease seemed to have overwhelmed

her. She could not weep, as Mrs. de Courcy did, nor sob and exclaim like Manon, who had rushed into the room when the alarm was first given. A strange oppression was upon her, and she longed to be able to get away to some quiet corner, where she might clasp her hands over her eyes, and ask herself if it could be true—if Violet was really no more.

But there was no escaping from the scene of confusion; for Dr. Edwardes, after a long and careful examination of the child, had sent for a professional brother, with whom he gravely conferred. Then Eda was questioned by both in a manner which bewildered and provoked her, because she did not feel able to collect her thoughts, and answer as promptly and coherently as she ought to do.

It vexed her to find that she could not even remember, when the question was first put to her, at what hour she had adminstered the last dose of medicine to the little girl.

"You say you were going to give the child a dose about half-past nine this evening, but you did not do so. Why?"

"I was interrupted," said Eda.

"Then you wish us to understand that you did not give it to her at all? You are sure? And yet you were in the habit of administering it with great punctuality. Did any one else give the dose?"

"No one had been in attendance upon her all the evening but myself," was the reply; "for her nurse was suffering with headache."

"Humph! will you let me look at the phial of medicine I sent you?"

"Eda sought for it in vain. It was not on the table, where she felt tolerably certain that she left it when she hurried from the room in pursuit of Mrs. de Courcy.

Some little time was spent in the search, and at last, heated and distressed, she was obliged to confess that she could not tell what had become of it.

"Are you quite sure that you did not give the poor child a dose from this phial instead of the right one?" asked Dr. Edwardes, holding up the one that contained the laudanum.

"Quite sure," she answered, emphatically, although unable to repress a little shiver as she recollected to what a terrible use the drug had so nearly been put.

"And yet," said the doctor, with unpleasant significance, "it is to an overdose of laudanum that my patient has succumbed; how and by whom administered is what I shall insist upon knowing. Take a little time for consideration, Miss Granton. If you have unfortunately made a mistake, would it not be as well to confess it?"

For a few seconds Eda stood and gazed at his grave and even accusing face like one in a dream; one startling event had followed another, till she felt too stupid to arrange her ideas. "I have not made any mistake, Dr. Edwardes," she said at last, slowly.

"How came this phial in the room? If you can explain that——"

But she was silent, for she could not do so without naming Mrs. de Courcy; and finding that she could not, or would not, say any more, the medical men whispered together for a while, and then decided to leave the affair in abeyance until the morrow.

Before they came again Mrs. de Courcy was raving with brain fever, and her personal attendant, professing to be afraid of infection, packed her trunks and left. But Manon, with a degree of unselfishness that surprised every one, volunteered to take the *soubrette's* place, and nursed her mistress with the utmost tenderness and devotion, refusing to leave her even to procure needful rest, but snatching half an hour's sleep occasionally on a sofa by her side.

Little Rose was hurried off to the house of her grandparents, and Eda's occupation was gone, for Manon jealously excluded her from Mrs. de Courcy's sick-chamber, and a strange woman, with a keen, watchful face, was in the nursery watching beside the dead child. Several gentlemen came in and out during the day, and were closeted with Mr. de Courcy, who had shut himself up in his study, his first passionate burst of grief having been followed by the deepest dejection. He was verifying Shakespeare's assertion that our griefs often come upon us in battalions; and he had yet to learn whither to go for help to bear his burthen.

Again Eda was visited by the medical men, in the school-room, to which she had retreated, and questioned as closely as before; but she could throw no light upon the circumstances attending Violet's death. She was asked if she could explain the disappearance of the medicine the little girl had been in the habit of taking, and on answering in the negative, a stranger who had accompanied Dr. Edwardes to the room, and prompted his questions, inquired to whom the work-box belonged that stood on the table where the phial should have been. When Eda told him that it was hers, he asked if she would have any objection to its being examined.

"None," she replied, and put her hand into the pocket of her dress for the key. With a cry of mingled surprise and consternation, she drew from it the missing bottle, of which Dr. Edwardes instantly possessed himself.

She saw that the circumstance was looked upon as a strange one, and yet a few minutes' thought enabled her to give a simple and truthful explanation of it. When disturbed on the previous evening she was in the act of measuring out the spoonful of medicine; and in her haste to follow Mrs. de Courcy she must have slipped the bottle into her pocket, and then totally forgotten having done so.

Dr. Edwardes "hemmed," looked across at his companion, and then, in ominous silence, they rose and left her. But Eda, who followed to the landing to see them descend the stairs, caught the purport of

two or three sentences they interchanged, and comprehended, at last, that she was suspected of having caused Violet's death by her own carelessness.

She learned, too, that an inquest would be held, at which she would have to appear, and submit to more questioning and cross-examining — a prospect so appalling to a sensitive and already overwrought woman, that she sat down on the top of the stairs faint and trembling. In this position she was found by Mr. de Courcy, who, frenzied by grief for the untimely death of his child, assailed her with the bitterest reproaches, and declared that if it could be proved that Violet had been poisoned through her unpardonable negligence, he would not rest until she had been punished with all the rigour of the law.

When Eda, stunned by her position, did creep back to the school-room, she was joined there by the strange woman, who was evidently ordered to exercise some degree of surveillance over her. All her devotion to the children, all her faithful services to their parents, were counted as naught, because Mr. de Courcy recollected to have once heard his wife say that she did not think Miss Granton liked Violet.

On this speech, uttered in a fit of peevishness, and forgotten by the speaker before the day was over, a theory was now founded that the bereaved father was only too ready to credit. Miss Granton disliked his child so much that, even if she could be acquitted of *malice prepense*, there could not be a doubt of her having been cruelly negligent; administering the medicine so carelessly that the child's death had ensued in consequence.

As soon as Eda recovered herself a little, she sent for Fritz Allonby. On his judgment she could rely better than on Mark's, although the latter was more energetic and worldly-wise. He came as soon as he received her note, and let her weep the tears with which she greeted his appearance, until they had relieved her overcharged heart. Then he sat down beside her, soothing her with his gentle, hopeful words, and listening with profound interest to the long strange tale she had to tell him. His face was very grave as he gleaned from the narrative the difficulties of her position. Mrs. de Courcy, on recovering her senses, could of course account for the phial of laudanum being in the nursery; but how it came to be substituted for the medicine and administered to little Violet must be ascertained before Eda could be exculpated.

"Do you not think it just possible that in your hurry and agitation you picked up the wrong bottle?" he asked. "Do not be offended with me for suggesting this."

"I am not offended," she answered; "though the barest supposition that I could have done such a thing makes me miserable. But I was neither hurried nor agitated when I returned to the nursery. You must remember that I was for some time in attendance on Mrs. de Courcy, and had also been to the kitchen for coffee. Besides, I discovered that Violet was dying within ten—or, at the most, fifteen—minutes after I came back to her. The dose that Dr. Edwardes asserts to have killed her must have been swallowed long before."

"Could she have got out of bed and taken it herself?"

Eda cogitated, and then replied that she did not think this suggestion at all feasible, for the child, though in a fair way of recovery, was so weak as to be scarcely capable of such an effort; besides which, she had never been taught to wait upon herself, and would fret if Eda refused to let Manon be summoned every time she required anything.

"Some one must have entered the nursery while you were engaged with Mrs. de Courcy," was Fritz Allonby's conclusion.

"But who would have done so? None of the servants ever came there but Manon, and she was in the spare room, lying down with headache."

"You are sure of this?"

"Quite sure. I carried her some hartshorn to relieve the pain, not long before Mrs. de Courcy came up-stairs, and she was then so drowsy that she could scarcely rouse herself sufficiently to use it."

"Nevertheless, I should like to see this Frenchwoman. In fact, I intend to question every person in the house—separately—about this mysterious transaction."

Fritz asked and obtained an interview with Mr. de Courcy, and being as determined as he was courteous, he obtained permission to carry out his resolve. From humble 'Ria in the scullery to Manon—who was inclined to be angry and insolent when summoned from her post at the request of a stranger—he saw every domestic in the household, but without eliciting aught but the most positive denials that they had entered the room appropriated to the sleeping children.

When Fritz went back to the school-room there was an anxious look in his eyes, though he endeavoured to conceal it. Nothing is more distressing than a mystery, and a fear that Eda would have much grief and annoyance to endure, if this one were not quickly solved, was upon him.

"My dear, there will be an inquest held on your poor little pupil this evening. I shall insist on its being adjourned, to enable Mrs. de Courcy to attend, and explain how the laudanum came to be in the nursery. When this ordeal—and it will be a painful one for you, I know—is over, you must go home with me to Gran. I cannot leave you here alone!"

It was indeed a trying ordeal that Eda underwent when summoned before the coroner; and though she told the little she had to tell with the simplicity of truth, she saw that she failed to obtain credence from those who listened to her with such profound attention. The laudanum had been found where

she confessed to have put it; and by her own showing no one else had been in the habit of administering the medicines prescribed for the sick child. She alone had been in attendance on Violet de Courcy that evening; and even this fact told against her. As Eda glanced from face to face of her questioners, she could divine that one thought possessed them all. They unanimously believed that she had carelessly substituted one phial for the other, and was too much alarmed at the sad consequences of her mistake to confess it.

She endeavoured to repeat her assertions of innocence, but her voice failed her, and in uncontrollable agitation she clung to the arm of her only friend, Fritz Allonby. How was she to prove that she was guiltless of the child's death—guiltless even of the neglect that had led to it?

(To be continued.)

TWO-EDGED PROVERBS.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A.

"GOLD MAY BE BOUGHT TOO DEAR."

THE poets say that, long long ago, Saturn, the chief of the gods, was dethroned by his son Jupiter, and that, being turned out of heaven, he made his way as best he could to earth. Instead of going into the sulks, as he might very well have been excused for doing under the circumstances, he determined to make the best of a bad business and put as good a face upon matters as he could.

Accordingly, instead of making every one around him miserable, he took kindly to the situation, and proceeded to make himself as agreeable as possible to the folk amongst whom he came to dwell.

As the story goes, he and one Jason, who was already in the king line, went into partnership together. It was before the days of public companies with limited liability, or they would have set up, no doubt, under the name of "Jason, Saturn, and Co., Limited," and who knows how grand a prospectus they would have put forth? But as it was they did much better—they did not put forth any prospectus at all, but they did all the good they could, and hence, under their sway, this period of the world was called "The Golden Age."

At this time, we are told, there were no laws and judges, for people did what was right without them; as to the police, they were nowhere.

Peace, plenty, and equality ruled amongst mankind; every one gave every one else the wall, they were so polite; but no one "went to the wall," as we say, for everybody was kind to every one else, and every one had enough and to spare.

As to the earth, it had every reason to be satisfied with the management of Messrs. Jason and Saturn, for under it it paid tremendous dividends, producing all kinds of fruits without cultivation, basking in perpetual spring, having brooks of milk, and so forth; the latter, no doubt, keeping steadily and honestly free of all chalk formations, and setting well to cream in all its little puddles, and, for all we know, when it stood long enough, coagulating into cream-cheese.

But, good reader, I must leave all this to the poets, and I must, to my sorrow, come down to prose, of which (with a touch of poetry now and again) I find life to be chiefly made up—prose, as the printers would say, "set solid," and some of it heavy reading enough.

I can't help the heavy reading, but I must keep as far as I can from heavy writing, and so I have given you a little spice of the poetical age before I come to our present age—the old golden age of the poets, which was very different indeed from the golden age of the present. For this, beyond all question, must in its own sense be called "a golden age," just as, in its own sense, that one was also.

I am sorry to say that I have not much good to write of my own day and generation in its light of being a "golden age." The proverb which stands at the heading of these lines leads up to this. Ours is the age of hard gold, and men need to hear the wise proverb that "Gold may be bought too dear."

Never was there any age when this proverb was more necessary to be recited and believed than the very one in which we live.

This is the golden age, in the love of gold itself, in the respect that is paid to it, in the evils which flow from it, but not in the good which might, if it were put to proper use.

What is gold? Shakespeare, in *Timon of Athens*, calls it "this yellow slave." He might more properly have called it "this yellow master;" especially as he immediately proceeds to catalogue some of the evils which it produces.

Gold is of very little value as compared with many other metals, except for purposes of ornament. Its rarity constitutes its chief value; so that, being recognised amongst all nations, kindreds, peoples, and tongues as scarce, and therefore precious, it is a convenient form of exchange. If only it were as plentiful as iron, the latter would be much more valuable, because of its use for the ordinary purposes of daily life.

But as a representative of value, as being able to procure much, and perhaps to avert much, gold has great power, and is eagerly and dangerously sought after, more or less, by almost all sorts and conditions of men.

Few people care to keep it by them, or to look at it; but they value it as the representative of power and possession—a power which, like the gold itself, is frequently *never* used.

Many a man spends his whole life with no more for his money than simply the consciousness that he may have and can have so-and-so if he likes. It is a kind of wishing-cap, such as the fairies are represented as letting people put on now and again; but our owners of gold frequently are people who never put on the wishing-cap at all, and who, moreover, would not put it on on any account, for they could only have their wish at the price of part of their gold.

Now gold, though the greatest buyer in the world, is bought itself. You can get more for gold than for anything else; and you must very often give more for it, also, than for anything else; and our proverb says, and that truly, that you may buy gold too dear.

How is gold bought, and with what? In many cases it is bought with sweat of brain.

The worst and most exhaustive of all sweat is that of the brain. And see how heavily in brain-sweat many are paying for gold!

It must not be supposed that we object to intellectual labour, or to brain-work of any kind that is right in itself. It is as legitimately the work of some men as bodily labour is the work of others; but it is infinitely more exhaustive, and man can afford to give much less of it in proportion for gold than he can of toil in the workshop or the field.

See the price at which many merchants with their legitimate speculations, and many people with speculations which are not legitimate, buy the gold they get. See the price the lawyer pays for it, racking his brain often to make the worse appear the better reason. And not only these, but all whose occupations require thought. And wherever you find the occupation by which gold is got carried to such an extent, for the purpose of getting more gold, that either the bodily health is injured or the man made the slave of his work, there you have gold bought too dear. We are only looking at this world's side of the matter as yet; but surely even here the proverb holds good.

(*To be concluded.*)

THE MESSENGER BIRD.

"WHY did I ever come here, and leave my own village, and my kind neighbours, and the fresh air, and sweet flowers?"

"Mother dear," answered Hetty, as she sat by the bed-side trying to finish a piece of work which had dropped from the sick woman's feeble hands. "Don't fret, you'll soon be well, and I'll work hard till then."

"Hetty, you don't know what you're talking about; how could a child like you do enough to support us all, and I'll never get better in this close place? I've worked on, and striven beyond my strength, and now I can do no more. If kind Mrs. Melton knew the state we're in, I'm sure she would help us."

"Why not write to her, mother; perhaps she would let you go out to the old cottage, and get a breath of fresh air to make you well."

"No use, dear; I heard she was not at home. Hetty, do you ever think of the time when your father was alive, and we used to watch you going to school, down the pretty green lane, where the flowers bloomed and the birds sang in the hedges? I little thought then ever to see us as we are now."

"Mother," said little Ellie, starting up from the foot of the bed, "if you were back at the cottage, and saw the flowers, and heard the birds, would you be well?"

"What's the use of asking?" replied Hetty, impatiently, "you know we can't go back. Stay quiet, and don't disturb mother."

"Well, give me a bit of bread, and I'll go to sleep again."

"There's not a morsel in the house till I take home this work."

"Make haste with it then, Hetty," said the child, as she nestled down close to her mother, and remained silent for a few minutes. Presently an idea struck her. "Hetty, do you remember a story you once told me, about birds bringing bread and meat? Was it the same birds mother talks of, that sang in the lane? and if we were there now, would they bring us food every day?"

"No, no, Ellie, those were ravens that brought bread and meat to the prophet Elijah, long ago; I learned about it at school."

"And who gave them the bread?"

"God did, I suppose."

"Well, I wish he would send them to us now, for I'm very hungry."

"You must have patience, dear," said her mother; Hetty will soon have done her work, and bring in

some bread, God does not send birds now to feed people."

"Why, does He not care for them?"

"Oh yes, though sometimes I almost fear He has forgotten us."

"Would father forget us if he was alive?"

"No, dear, never."

"Hetty says, God is our Father in heaven, and you know we ask him every morning for daily bread; mother, I'm sure He'll send us some."

There was silence for a while, during which the sick woman lay with closed eyes, and Ellie slept. At length Hetty quietly rose, and folding her work, threw her mother's old shawl round her, and left the room.

Half an hour elapsed, when, weary and dejected, she re-opened the door, dreading to witness the disappointment of those within, for on taking home the work over which her weary hands had so long laboured, she had been told to call again in a few days, as the lady was out of town. Slowly and sadly she bent her steps homeward without either money or food, but what was her astonishment on entering the room to see Ellie bound towards her in a state of excitement, hunger for the time forgotten.

"See, Hetty, what flew in at the window while you were away!" she said, holding up both hands, in which were clasped a pretty little green bird. "Mother says she never saw one like it in the lanes or fields, so I think God must have sent it from heaven, only it did not bring us any bread. Have you got some? I'm so hungry!"

Poor Hetty had to see her mother's look of pain and Ellie's disappointed face as she related what had occurred. The little one still held the bird tenderly in her hands, and now gazing reproachfully into its clear bright eyes, she exclaimed, "Oh, birdie, I prayed to God to send you, but you have forgotten to bring us anything!"

"Don't be so sure of that, Ellie, some one might give us money for this bird, to buy bread. It's a pretty tame little creature, shall we go out and try to sell it, mother?"

"You had better first ask Mr. Myers if he knows what kind of bird it is, and if it's of any value? There's an old cage, if you could find it, that you brother Jamie kept his blackbird in before he went to sea; poor thing, it didn't live long in this dingy place without air or sunshine!"

"Here's the cage, mother; I've put birdie in. Come, Ellie." And the two girls tapped at the door of the next room.

On their entrance, Mr. Myers raised his head from the newspaper he had been reading, and, examining the bird, declared he had never seen one like it before, except at the Zoological Gardens, and laying his finger on a paragraph in the paper, he added, "I have just been reading that some of the birds there escaped when the doors of the aviary were burst open by that terrible gunpowder explosion on the canal the other day. Where did you get this one, children?"

"It flew in at the window," replied Ellen, "and was so tame, I caught it easily."

"Well, any one finding one of these birds is requested to restore it without delay."

Hetty's countenance fell. "I was in hopes we might have sold this one. Is it of much value, sir?"

"I should think so, but that does not concern you, once you know to whom it belongs. You must take it back."

"But I don't know where to find the owners."

"You have only to go to the gate of the Zoological Gardens, and will be sure to see some one there to take charge of the bird and give it to the proper authorities."

Hetty repeated to her mother what they had heard, and as she had no work to do at home, proposed going at once to the Regent's Park. "The sooner we get rid of the poor little thing the better," she added, "for we have not even a crumb to give it to eat."

"Take Ellie with you," said the mother, "I can't bear to see her hungry here, poor child."

"Come along then, Ellie;" and, carrying the large old cage with the tiny green bird within, they set off for their walk.

In passing along the streets many eyes were directed towards them, and once they were surrounded and delayed by a group of boys and girls. At another time a door opened opposite, and the sisters were beckoned over by a little boy, who admired the bird, and inquired what they would take for it."

"We can't sell it, sir," replied Hetty.

"And pray why not? 'Tis a pretty love-bird, and I'll give you five shillings for it."

"Five shillings!" whispered Hetty to her sister, "that would keep us till my work is paid for, but then 'tis not ours to sell."

"Hetty, if it's a love-bird, God must have sent it to us for some good, so don't do what is wrong with it to make Him angry."

Hetty moved on, grasping the cage more firmly, and merely saying, "I'm sorry, sir, but it's not my own," hastened away from the tempting offer.

At length they neared the Regent's Park, and gazed in wonder at the masses of ruin, the great branches torn from the split and blackened trees which stood here and there along the way, tokens of the fearful devastation which had so lately taken place. By the time they reached the entrance to the Zoological Gardens, poor little Ellie was so tired and hungry that she could hardly keep from crying, but while Hetty hesitated what to do next, her attention was attracted to a group of ladies and merry-faced children, who were passing in to see the wonders of the place.

"Mamma," said a little girl of about Ellie's age, "look at the pretty bird in the great big cage!"

The lady turned, and seeing Hetty's sad face, asked where they had got the bird, and what they were going to do with it.

Hetty answered, simply adding that she did not know who to give it up to.

"Come in with us," said the lady, and we will find the proper person." The sisters obeyed.

"Mamma," said the child, who had first noticed them, "I have given my bun to those poor girls, and though they look so hungry they have not eaten it all. Why don't you finish it, little girl?"

"I'm keeping a bit for mother; she's very ill, and has eaten nothing all day."

"What is your name?" asked the lady, "and where do you live?"

"I am Hetty Ray, and this is my sister."

"Hetty Ray—I know that name well. Have you ever heard your mother speak of a Mrs. Melton?"

"Oh yes, ma'am, she spoke of her this very day. Are you Mrs. Melton? We thought you were away."

"I am on my way home from abroad. Tell your mother I am sorry she is ill, and hope to call and see her to-morrow. Meantime, take this money, and go home with some food quickly. Leave the bird with me, and I shall see that it is restored to its place."

The children lost no time in obeying these directions, and when they returned to their mother, bringing some nourishing food, little Ellie rushed in exclaiming, "Mother, it was a love-bird sent by God, and here is the bread and meat it brought."

Next day the promised visit was paid, and the result was that as soon as the sick woman's strength became sufficiently restored to undertake a journey, she and her two little girls returned to the pretty cottage in her native village which she so often regretted having left; her health was fully re-established, and Hetty and Ellie went together every day to Mrs. Melton's school, along the pretty green lane, where the flowers bloomed and the birds sang.

S. T. A. R.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

121. What biscuit of modern use is mentioned in the Bible?

122. Quote any passage in which the apostles of our Lord are called Galileans?

123. Mention any passage where "old clouts" are spoken of as used in helping a prophet out of a dungeon?

124. Why may Solomon be said to have been a great naturalist?

125. What epistle does St. Paul state he wrote with his own hand? Give passage.

126. Who was the founder of Samaria?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 288.

105. The Roman centurion (Matt. viii. 10), and the Syrophenician woman (Matt. xv. 28).

106. Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, son of Saul (2 Samuel iv. 4).

107. Publius (Acts xxviii. 7).

108. Isaiah xxxiii. 22.

109. To Daniel in his visions (Daniel viii. 15, and ix. 21), to Zacharias (Luke i. 19), and to Mary the Mother of Jesus (Luke i. 28).

110. "Two whole years" (Acts xxviii. 30).

111. Exodus iv. 6.

112. Colossians iv. 6.

HOME.

OVER dark fields, and rivers deep and cold,
And fen-land waste and drear,
Flies the glad message on a wire of gold,
"Home and true hearts are here!"

Fain would I hide me from the icy blast,
But yet it may not be;
So, with averted eyes, I hurry past
The firelight and the glee—

Home! gasps my home-sick spirit, and I bound
Onward and onward still;
Glad, when in distance dies the syren sound,
That might have warped my will.

And as at length I fling the wintry gloom
And perils far behind,
The twinkling point becomes a fire-lit room,
And rest, and peace of mind,

And happy faces, and a loyal wife,
Whose pulses ever beat
One tune amid the treacherous chords of life,
Unchanging, true, and sweet.

So, from the lattice in the sapphire keep,
(Where lie the treasures true)
A line of glory threads the mazy deep,
A voice comes out to woo.

Pure is the lamp that guides our feet on high,
And sweet the gentle call,
So soft around Love's silken fetters lie,
There is no sense of thrall,

As to one goal we move, a pilgrim band,
Chastened by tears and pain,
Thorns hedging up the way on either hand,
Lest we should run in vain.

G. S. OUTRAM.



(*Drawn by* ROBERT BARNES.)

"Happy faces and a loyal wife."

"*HOME.*"—*p.* 320.



(*Drawn by* MISS E. STEVENS.)

REPOSE.

THE day is done, and man no longer turns
The wheel of work in garden or in field;
But restful silence, while the sunset burns,
Above the earth outspreads her mystic shield.

The kine are musing by the glowing stream,
The song-birds chanting soft their lullaby,
In slumb'rous quietude the unfettered team
Enjoy their well-earned wage of liberty.

The milkmaid slowly leaves the neighbouring well,
With empty pail in hand, and happy smile,
And, touched by parting sunshine's latent spell,
Before the dairy threshold halts a while.

Pausing, she wakes the blackbird in his cage,
Who turns to chirrup forth his last good-night;
Unusual thoughts her wondering soul engage,
Of Heaven and all the glories of the light.

The glow of eve enwraps the peaceful farm,
Where labourers' tools stand idle by the shed;
And rosy children nestle, safe from harm,
To gentle sleep by kindly Nature led.

So night treads on the footsteps of the day,
As fades the sunlight slowly in the west;
While grateful mortals humbly kneel to pray,
And, labour over, thank the Lord for rest.

ANNE BEALE.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER V.—"BUT OH! HER BEAUTY WAS FAR BEYOND."

UP they went to the sitting-room; but when they got to the door they stood still, staring in at her. The gas was lighted, and under it was Netta, dressed, not as she had been in the morning, but in a long flowing white dress—delicate lace, it seemed to Dolly, with shining silk beneath—and there were flowers on her skirts and in her hair, and jewels on her neck and arms.

"Oh Netta!" Dolly gasped; and then they entered, and clustered round her, Adrian Fuller with the rest, forgetting the man in the artist. "Oh Netta!" she said again. "Why, whatever have you come for? and like that, too!"

"Didn't I tell you I was going to a party to-night? it is only a little way further on, and mamma asked me if I could call in as I passed, just to let her see me."

"I never saw her dressed for the evening before!" Mrs. Woodward's words seemed half pathetic to Adrian Fuller, as he stood leaning against the fireplace, for she was speaking of her own child. "Netta, dear, this is Mr. Fuller: Adrian, you never met my daughter before."

"I have so often heard of you, Mr. Fuller," and the Beauty held out her hand, and bent her soft blue eyes down upon him.

"Look at her hair," said little Sally; "it's as bright as gold. I think she looks just like an angel."

"An angel has a crown on its head though!" said Will, reflectively.

"And an angel doesn't give herself airs, and she does," said Tom, with whom Netta had never been a favourite. Then they all turned upon Tom, all but Netta, who laughed merrily.

"I am sure I don't give myself airs, Tom!" she pouted. She was a born flirt, and coquetted even with her brothers. She was a born woman of the world too, for she added, "You must think me dreadfully vain, Mr. Fuller, to come and show myself in my finery, but I did not know that you would be here."

"Yes you did," said Tom, again breaking out. "Dolly told you he was coming when you went on so about her rose."

"What rose?" asked Adrian.

"Shall I tell him, Dolly?" Netta asked, teasingly.

"No!" said the girl, raising her eyes from Netta's glistening raiment to her beautiful face; "please don't, Netta!" The tone was so humble and entreating it touched the Beauty's heart, and she unsnapped a bracelet from her arm, and turned away her head quickly, and, gathering her snowy wraps around her, said good-bye to them, and went back to the carriage, which, with her patient chaperon within it, was waiting for her.

"Good-bye," she said, looking back at the untidy sitting-room and the group of badly-dressed brothers and sisters. "Dolly, I want you," and Dolly obeying, followed her. "I want to give you this, dear," she said, putting the trinket she had unsnapped into her hand. It was not valuable—a little gold bracelet some one had given her years ago, but it seemed priceless to unsophisticated Dolly.

"Oh no, oh no, Netta!" then she looked up again at her sister's face—that little Dolly was such a beauty-lover—and timidly put her arms about the Beauty's neck. "Oh, Netta! if you would only care for me, and not laugh at me, I should like it far better than having a bracelet!"

"I don't laugh at you, you little goose," and she kissed her warmly back again. "And I am very fond of you, of course. There, now I shall put this round your wrist," and she fastened it on, and rustled out, and into the carriage. "Dolly," she said, looking back, "your friend, Mr. Fuller, is *very* handsome. I wish I'd seen him before;" and then she drove away.

"Let us come back to the garden," Adrian Fuller said, when Dolly returned to the sitting-room. "I have not said good-bye to it yet. We will not stay long, Mrs. Woodward," he said; "I only want to stroll round it once more." So the children followed him.

"Do you know," said Dolly, "I think trees know all sorts of strange things. I always feel as if they

are my friends too." And she looked up at the sheltering branches of her favourite sycamore, through which the stars were glittering. "This is where we buried Venus," she added. "Netta came and caught us."

"Yes; and said Dolly was too big for that sort of thing," said Tom.

"What was that about the rose?"

"Nothing," said Dolly, hastily.

"I'll tell you," said Tom. "Dolly had a rose to give you, and Netta wanted it, and Dolly wouldn't let her have it."

"Be quiet, Tom!" exclaimed Dolly, angrily; "it's very mean of you to tell tales."

"And then," continued Tom, remorselessly, "Netta said Dolly was in love with you."

"Tom!" gasped Dolly, and burst into tears. Adrian Fuller laughed, he could not help it, till he saw poor Dolly's face, frightened, proud, and pale, ashamed of her position and her tears. Then he smoothed the dark hair off her brow.

"Never mind, Dolly, little woman," he said, soothingly. "Perhaps, when I come back in two years' time *I* shall be in love with *you*."

"Isn't sister Netta pretty?" asked Sally, when they were all in the house again. Mrs. Woodward looked up eagerly. She was so proud of her eldest daughter.

"Pretty!" he answered; "she has the loveliest face I ever saw in my life! I would give anything to get a chance of sketching it." Dolly looked up wonderingly at him, thinking vaguely that it was a great blessing to be beautiful, and he, seeing the grave childlike face, with the troubled look it had worn beneath the sycamore tree still upon it, forgot the Beauty, and talked to his old playmate, who would never be his playmate more.

"What did you do with the rose, after all?"

"It is there," she said, pointing to a side table, where it had lain since the morning. He went and took it up, limp and broken as it was, and put it between the leaves of a pocket sketch-book.

"I shall keep it in remembrance," he said.

"He never wanted to paint you, Dolly," said Tom, a little later, when by the star-shine the children watched their friend out of sight. "And he did Netta? He thinks you a guy."

"Yes," answered Dolly, absently.

"Netta will cut you out when he comes back," he added, obligingly. Dolly looked at him almost bewildered for a moment, she was thinking of Adrian Fuller's words, "Perhaps when I come back in two years *I* shall be in love with *you*," and he had taken her rose too! It seemed to Dolly afterwards that she had learnt so much in that day. She had strayed out of her Eden, and the penalty of knowledge is this—that ignorance cannot be regained.

"No she won't," she answered, sorrowfully, for she was thinking of his absence, not of his return, or of what would happen then.

(To be continued).

"NO NIGHT THERE."

BY THE REV. JAMES SPENCE, D.D., AUTHOR OF "HOURS WITH DANIEL," ETC., ETC.

"And there shall be no night there."—REV. xxii. 5.

ONE of the most attractive descriptions of the heavenly life is, that there is no night, no darkness there. This is generally quoted or referred to as a peculiar height of glory and blessedness; and so it is. Yet night is here in many respects beneficent. In our present earthly condition we could not bear continuous unshaded light; therefore the Creator has interchanged it with darkness. As the day dies into night, every morning comes as a sort of resurrection; and as darkness maintains its turn, light becomes to us the more welcome. Night, then, is a boon to the earth. During the darkness the dew is formed and deposited for its refreshment, and other influences are exerted, so that vegetable and animal life are both benefited by the regular recurrence of night. Thus, it answers wise and beneficial purposes in the economy of Nature and the arrangements of Providence. But in heaven there is no night—

> No night,
> But light—
> Ineffable, eternal light.
> No night, oh where?
> Where God the Saviour fills the place,
> And with the brightness of His face
> Makes sorrow, sin, and darkness flee.
> In heaven, throughout eternity—
> No night is there!"

1. Night, as the season of darkness, is the emblem of ignorance. In the darkness of night men cannot see their position or surroundings, for there is no vision then. The traveller or tourist who arrives in a moonless night at some Alpine village can see nothing of the glaciers around him, or of the snow-peaks which transcend the clouds and pierce the skies above him, or of the abysses near him, down which avalanches have occasionally rolled for many centuries past; he can only see the furniture and the faces in the room where he sits, lighted up by the fire in the stove or the lamp on the table. What a revelation does morning make, when it comes! But not so marvellous as will be the

transition, at death, from the gloom and obscurity of this world to the radiant clearness of the heavenly state, where there is no night. In the hours of night there is no clearness of perception, and danger of stumbling is in proportion to the thickness of the darkness. "Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine" (Micah iii. 6). Such, according to the prophet, was the condition natural and judicial of man in this life. But in heaven there will be no night, no darkness, no stumbling; it is the region of accurate and perfect knowledge. "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Cor. xiii. 12). This world is a region of mingled light and obscurity—shadow and sunshine are mixed and interchanged; the cloudy and dark days are many. In the heavenly life it will be light always, and light entirely. How little we know on earth, how limited our scope of vision, how feeble our powers, how liable are we to doubt, mistake, and error! The difference between our knowledge here and what it will be hereafter in the world where there is no night is inconceivable. Our vision will always be finite, and our knowledge the knowledge of creatures, but its expansion will be wonderful; and there will be no eclipse to darken the prospect, no clouds or shadows to hinder our progress. There will be no mistake, no error, no stumbling, no misapprehension then, but clearness of perception, fulness of vision, and glory of widening prospect impossible to us now. Truth is the natural food of the mind, but our nourishment on it here is only partial and feeble. The sum of all our knowledge in this life is so fragmentary that, in comparison with the knowledge of the life to come, St. Paul likens it to the imperfect notions of childhood in comparison with the ideas of manhood. When the Christian dies and goes to his heavenly home he will look back upon the sum-total of his knowledge of truth on earth, as in old age he looks back upon his infantile or childish plays. There we shall have clear views of truth—the truth about God, ourselves, redemption, and the universe; and shall see, in the reconciliation of all things in Christ, verities too high for us now fairly or fully to understand, and even to the dim thought of which we can only soar by the force of a faith which is "the evidence of things not seen." What revelations will burst upon us in our future life, and what disclosures will be made to us there, when our eyes will be unsealed, we cannot tell; but as light here is suited to the nature and capability of the eye, so there the effulgence of the discoveries and the grandeur of the knowledge will be in keeping with the grasp and energy of our emancipated powers. As there will be no night there, we shall have clear views of duty as well as truth. "If a man walk in the night, he stumbleth." In this world, with its entanglements and obscurities, we are often perplexed as to what we should do or which way we should take in some particular crisis of life, and the perplexity brings trouble and anxiety; but in heaven all will be transparent, and the path of duty ever clear, so that stumbling or mistake will be as impossible as sin. What we ought to do will be intuitively seen, without a hindrance or a cloud. The light and resplendence of the land where there is no night, eye hath not seen nor heart conceived.

2. Night, as the time of darkness, is the season of inactivity. Work is for the day-time. "Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour, until the evening." When the sun sets and the shades of darkness fall, labour is left for repose, and men retire to rest. This is a most merciful arrangement, adapted to our condition and constitution here, for work in the hours which should be devoted to sleep, if continuous or frequent, is injurious. "The night cometh," said the Saviour, "when no man can work." But in heaven there is no inactivity, and no room or need for cessation. There energy never tires, there work never wearies, there activity never declines. Here on earth Nature itself seems to need repose, and the land has to lie fallow, and the vitality of vegetation seems in abeyance during the months of winter. But the sun is ever marching in his beneficent strength, the moon is ever waxing or waning, the stars are ever shining. So in heaven there is no exhaustion of energy, no diminution of strength, no ebbing of activity, for there is "no night there." And the activity of the saints will be varied—as varied, doubtless, as are their pursuits and enjoyments on earth. Some, with the grasp of their intellectual nature predominant, may have new truths to discover, new worlds and new works of God to explore, and new sciences to evolve. Some, with their emotional nature in the ascendant, will find—as, indeed, all will find—raptures of gladness in the contemplation of the Saviour's goodness and truth, and ever sing with fresh delight—

> "Millions of years our wondering eyes
> Shall o'er Thy beauties rove,
> And endless ages we'll adore
> The glories of Thy love."

And some, with energy for service gained in their preparatory course on earth, may be employed on missions of blessing inconceivable to us now; and some there will be of whom it is truly said—

> "They also serve who only stand and wait."

All will be exercised according to their ability and peculiarity, but nowhere will there be any sense of weariness. Here the flesh is weak while the spirit is willing. The body is often felt to be burdensome, and the most agreeable occupation at length palls upon us. But in heaven there is

no night, for no night is required in which to recruit expended strength or to restore exhausted energy. There the redeemed will never tire of the triumphs of song, or of the joys of fellowship, or of the delights of service. Fit exercise and enjoyment for the ransomed sons of God, in holy energy, guided by perfect wisdom and inspired by perfect love, will fill and occupy the saints in light.

3. Night, as the time of darkness, is hailed on earth as the opportunity of sin. Iniquity and shame, which hide their heads in the day-time, come forth to do their temptations and revel in their abominations at night. Gross sins are mostly committed under the shades of darkness. The assassin, the burglar, the thief, the sensualist, find night the fittest season for the accomplishment of their wicked purposes. The moral and social "pestilence walketh in darkness." "They that be drunken are drunken in the night." It was at night that Belshazzar and his nobles, in his impious feast at Babylon, brought forth "the golden vessels" taken from the temple, to drink in them defiance to the God of Israel. And at night, for the most part, the fooleries, debaucheries, and great crimes of the world are done. In the day wicked men concoct their evil projects, plan their orgies, and in the night perform them. But into heaven "there shall in no wise enter anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie." There is "no night there"—no deed, no thought, no wish or purpose needing to be under the cover of darkness. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." He dwells "in the light which no man can approach unto." How pure is light! The sunbeam, falling on a feculent pool and revealing its impurity, is reflected back from its surface pure and uncontaminated. It comes from heaven, and is reflected as pure as when it comes. "Darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people" in this unregenerate world: but heaven is the inheritance of the saints in light. They are there without "spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing;" their robes have been washed, and made "white in the blood of the Lamb." There is nothing in their heavenly condition which can be represented as darkness or defilement—no sin, no shadow—but light, all light for ever. "The city has no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." Here in this world "men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." The idea of the connection between darkness and evil is thus often suggested to us by the phraseology of Scripture; and we can conceive no greater change in the character and condition of men, than is represented by their translation from this region of obscurity and darkness to that world where there is no night, where there is no evil to hide, but where thought, feeling, and action are in the full blaze of unclouded and perfect light, because in the effulgent presence of God and the Lamb.

4. In night there is a sense of insecurity—sometimes imaginary, indeed, but often real. In the darkness many of our dangers we do not see; nor can we discern our foes. When the shades of night fall, and evening closes in upon us, we shut our gates, lock or bolt our doors, fasten down our windows, and take all needful precautions to protect ourselves and our property against the invasion of the robber and the cunning of the thief, who take advantage of the darkness to ply their craft. But in heaven, as there is no night, and no sense of insecurity, beautiful is the thought suggested by the words, "The gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there." They present a bright and attractive picture of security and peace—in Eastern lands perhaps more expressively than to us, with all our appliances and organisations for safety by night as well as by day. The gates of Jerusalem are still shut every evening, at the close of the day, that no foe may come into the sacred city unawares, during the hours when its inhabitants are asleep. To the writer and some travelling companions it happened, a few years ago, that on arriving at the convent of St. Catharine's, in the wilderness of Sinai, after sunset, they found the gates shut, and no entreaty could induce the authorities to open them for our admission, so that we had to find what sleep we could in the open air, at the foot of Jebel Musa. This was simply, on the part of the monks, the carrying out of a law which, for the safety of the convent, had been maintained for many centuries. There is no night in the celestial city, no insecurity, and no shutting of the gates. There is no enemy to encounter there—no darkness which by any possibility can conceal a foe—no evil which can unexpectedly assail us, or dangers into which we can suddenly fall.

What a wonderful change this will be from the moral and social state of things in this world and this life! Here we are exposed to temptations of many kinds; our spiritual enemies take advantage of our weakness, and invade our peace; they hide themselves in the clouds of gloom and uncertainty which often envelope the soul, or hang over the horizon of our hopes. The pestilence which harasses the mind or pollutes the soul walks in darkness. The weakness of our faith invites its approach, and makes us often an easy prey to its evil influences. The changes and uncertainties which belong to this life tend to produce careless indifference; and indifference is perilous. The apprehension, even, of vicissitudes, such as is felt by many, endangers safety; and the obscurities of time and the mists of this world produce in-

security. But in heaven there is nothing to fear; there the citizens never tremble from a sense of danger; there peace is never disturbed, hope is never blighted, and the harvest of joy never fails; there the life can never be soiled, nor can character ever degenerate, for there is "no night there." "Purity dreads no assault, holiness fears no decay," blessedness anticipates no cessation or diminution, for ever.

5. Night, as the season of darkness, is the occasion and emblem of depression. What an influence has a dull, foggy day upon the spirits! To be sunless is to be cheerless. The trial or disappointment which comes upon us unexpectedly at night looks very dark: it puts on the gloomiest aspect, and appears of the most hopeless or forbidding character. But with the light of the morning it has apparently undergone a striking change: we can look at it calmly, and speak of it hopefully, if not cheerfully. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." How blessed and cheering, then, is the influence of light! "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart." When the sun sets, and the shades of night come on, the animal creation seems to feel a consequent depression: the song of the lark is hushed, and the gambolling of the lambs and other creatures ceases, to be renewed with the return of light in the rising sun. Then Nature smiles again, and all life seems to revive. Of symbols of sadness and depression, can anything be more dismal, dreary, or dreadful, than that which represents the final abode of the impenitent and wicked as the region of "outer darkness"? But in heaven there is no darkness, no night: "they need no candle, neither light of the sun: for the Lord God giveth them light." Yea, more: "the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." We are assured that sorrow and sighing are for ever fled away out of the heavenly world; all tears are wiped from every eye, and all occasions of grief are for ever gone. There is nothing there to afflict, or depress, or disturb, any more. It is the land of everlasting day, of unclouded noon, of radiant light, where lies the unfading inheritance of the saints. It is at God's right hand, where "everlasting joy is upon their heads"—the very fulness of joy—and where "there are pleasures for evermore."

In this home of liberty and life, of perfection and love, there will be nothing to fear for ever, but something to hope for always; abounding happiness, world without end. Our highest business here, then, is to receive the light and dwell under the radiance of the Sun of Righteousness; to walk as children of the light and of the day, having no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. Thus shall we find growing meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light. The voice of Christ is to every one of us, "Walk in the light."

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SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 19. St. Paul at Corinth and Ephesus.

Chapters to be read—Acts xviii., xix. (parts of.)



INTRODUCTION. Last lesson spoke of St. Paul at Athens — capital city of Greece. Was there any other large town? must visit it also; so goes to Corinth.

I. St. Paul at Corinth. (Read xviii. 1—17.) (1) *The tentmakers.* What Jews did he find at Corinth? From what city had they been banished, and by whom? Of what trade were they? Explain that all Jews, even well-to-do men, learned a trade, so as never to be left destitute. Picture St. Paul being welcomed into the workshop, the friends working together, the long talks over their work, the pleasant evenings for searching the Scriptures when work over. Refer to ver. 26 to show that Priscilla joined in these readings, and was consequently able, with her husband, to be useful to Apollos. Let the children see from this the advantage of studying the Scriptures in some Bible class, or two or three together. Benefit to themselves and others. How different these good people to the other Jews! (2) *The Jews.* How did St. Paul always spend his Sabbaths? Who joined him at Corinth? Now for the last time he preaches first and especially to the Jews; evidently felt much their opposition; and with special earnestness bore witness to Christ (ver. 5). Remind how his words would come with greater effect because of his being himself at first an unbeliever in Christ. Was there any effect? What did St. Paul say to those who opposed? When had similar words been said before? As the Jews rejected St. Paul, so had they rejected Christ before, with same result (Matt. xxvii. 25). Tell how fearfully this was fulfilled by the destruction and dispersion of Jewish nation. But some did believe—who were they? (ver. 8.) (3) *The Vision.* St. Paul, having much to try him in Corinth, how would he feel? Very trying to meet with constant opposition and unbelief. How was he encouraged? What a comfort this dream would be! Would wake in the morning, like Jacob, feeling that God had been very near him (Gen. xxviii. 12). Remind also of Elijah's feeling despondent in the wilderness—he alone left of all the prophets. The Jews

having rejected God, he was told of 5,000 faithful people (1 Kings xix. 18). So now St. Paul told of much people in Corinth (ver. 10); therefore, with new vigour, he taught for eighteen months.

PRACTICAL LESSON. *God's presence with his faithful servant.* A boy in school or at work, trying to do something for Christ, jeered at, ridiculed, finds efforts all in vain, as he thinks. Let him patiently trust and wait on God; will find some special sense of God's presence given. Perhaps find the "bread cast on waters" produce results where least expected.

II. A JOURNEY FINISHED. (Read 12—22.) (1) *Gallio.* On what charge was Paul brought before Gallio? Show that Gallio, being the Roman governor, had nothing to do in his court with questions as to the Jewish ecclesiastical law. So, what did he say? What charges could he decide? But St. Paul had done no offence in that way, so the charge was dismissed. What do the Jews do in their anger? Attack Sosthenes, and beat him. This an offence which Gallio ought to have punished, but he cared for none of these things. (2) *Ephesus.* Now St. Paul leaves Corinth. Who go with him? and when do they come? Does he keep to his intention of turning to the Gentiles? No. Must still reason with Jews. Has such longing for their salvation (Rom. x. 1). What do the Christians at Ephesus beg him to do? Why will he not? Being a Jew will still observe the Jewish feasts, but promises to return. So he ends his second journey by returning, as before, to Antioch.

III. THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS. (1) *Apollos.* (Read xviii. 24—28.) Now hear of a new and most promising convert, educated at Alexandria, capital of learning. A Jew, learned in Jewish Scriptures. By them had learned much, but still anxious to learn more. What did he do? He taught boldly in the synagogue—did all he could. Who heard him, and taught him still more? Let children notice these points about Apollos: (*a*) *He was anxious to learn.* Though well read, and himself a public teacher, he continued to learn all he could; never considered his education finished. (*b*) *He was humble*—willing to receive instruction from Aquila and his wife. (*c*) *He was useful.* See what the church at Ephesus wrote; letters of commendation. What report was received of him? Not only helped believers, but was mighty in convincing unbelieving Jews in Achaia. Who had sown the seed there? Now the harvest reaped. So successful was he that many at Corinth made a party for him in rivalry with St. Paul, for which were reproved by St. Paul in a letter (1 Cor. i. 12). (2) *A Baptism.* (Read xix. 1—7.) While Apollos is thus useful at Corinth, St. Paul pays a second visit to Ephesus. What question does he ask the converts? They not only not received, but not even heard of outpouring of Holy Ghost. Been baptised with John's baptism, what did he require? *Repentance.* Yes, but more than that. *Faith* in Him who was coming, who should baptise with fire (Matt. iii. 11).

PRACTICAL LESSON. *Duty of following on to know the Lord.* Those anxious to learn will be taught more. Must use all means of grace in our power; will then be guided into all knowledge. Only use well what have got.

Questions to be answered.

1. What was St. Paul's trade, and with whom did he work?
2. What do you know of Aquila and Priscilla?
3. What encouragement did St. Paul receive at Corinth?
4. Describe the character of Apollos.
5. What was wanting in John's baptism?
6. Suggest a practical lesson.

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER XLI.

MR. DE COURCY vehemently opposed the adjournment of the inquest, which Mr. Allonby, acting on Eda's behalf, now demanded. His wife, already prostrated with grief for her child's untimely death, had suffered enough, without being tortured with questions concerning a matter that could throw but little, if any, light upon the case. That Mrs. de Courcy could not have made the fatal error Miss Granton had herself testified; what, then, would she have to tell that would assist the jury in their verdict?

A discussion ensued, to which the sad weary Eda was vainly striving to turn a deaf ear, when she caught the sound of 'Ria Ingle's voice raised in urgent supplication.

"Oh please, sir! oh please, gentlemen! do let me come in! do let me speak!" she was pleading, in tones that quavered with terror at her own boldness. "Oh, if I may, please! I did not know—I did not understand, before, what the gentlemen meant when they came and asked me questions. But it isn't true that Manon did not go into the nursery after Miss Granton left it. I don't know why she said she did not, but it isn't true."

"What is she saying?" asked Fritz, who had indistinctly heard a word here and there; and, telling her not to be frightened, he led her forward, and bade her say all she knew.

Gaining courage as she went on, the girl told how, on the evening of Violet's death, she had been sent up-stairs by Mrs. de Courcy's maid to fetch something from her bed-room, which was in an upper story. She had slipped off her heavy shoes, to avoid disturbing any one, and was descending with the article for which she had been sent, when she saw Eda leading the sobbing Mrs. de Courcy across the landing, in the direction of that lady's own apartments. Startled by their appearance she let the reel of silk she held drop from her hands. It rolled into a corner, and while she was groping for it Manon emerged from her chamber, stole on tiptoe to Mrs. de Courcy's door, where she was kneeling with her ear to the keyhole, when one of the children cried out from the nursery. Their nurse ceased her espial, and went to answer the call, and 'Ria proceeded down-stairs, to be well scolded for having been so long away.

When the girl had finished her story Manon was recalled, and confronted with her.

"You have deceived us!" her master sternly exclaimed. "You declared that you had not been in the nursery!"

Manon tried to repeat the falsehood, but she was a coward at heart, and the sight of the grave faces around awed her so much that she broke down in the middle of a vehement protest, and by slow degrees the truth was extorted.

Curiosity had drawn her from her bed when she heard Mrs. de Courcy's sobs, and the same hateful passion had led her into the nursery, where Violet, aroused by the same sounds, was tossing on her pillow, and crying out for Miss Granton. Finding the child had nothing to tell, but was inclined to be irritable and restless, Manon snatched up the spoon and glass to give her a dose of her medicine. Without glancing at the label, she made the poor child swallow the nauseous dose, and then left her—without, it must be added, the slightest suspicion of the truth until aroused from sleep with the tidings that Violet was dying.

At first it was only a natural dread of her master's anger that made Manon desirous of concealing her share in the disastrous event; but when she found that Eda was suspected, her silence was prompted by less pardonable motives. Her selfish fears lest a confession of her mistake should militate against her procuring another situation had mingled with a revengeful feeling towards the governess whose consistent conduct and gentle firmness had been continual rebukes of her own violent temper. It was partly in remorse for what she had done, and partly to avoid the questions she found so difficult to parry, that Manon had betaken herself to the sick-room of Mrs. de Courcy; assuring herself that she was making amends for the past by her care of her unhappy mistress.

"Now you must let me take you away, for Gran and Doris to nurse you. Indeed, you look quite worn out!" Fritz urged, when the painful scene was over, and Eda, still breathless at her narrow escape, was leaning upon his breast, and murmuring her thankfulness that her innocence was fully proven. But ere she could assent to his proposal they were joined by Mr. de Courcy, who had already expressed his regret for his own doubts in a very gratifying manner.

"You are not going to leave us, I hope!" he said, anxiously.

"Miss Granton is so thoroughly unfit to bear more fatigue or worry, that you must excuse me if I hurry her away," Mr. Allonby replied.

"Certainly. No one can find fault with you for taking care of her—better care than we have ever testified; but I hoped she would prove that she forgives us by staying, at least until we have lain our child in her grave."

This appeal was irresistible. Eda forgot how careless, how haughty, Mr. de Courcy had been in former days, scarcely condescending to recognise the existence of the humble governess, or how lately he had railed at her with cruel harshness. Sickness, poverty, death, were now hovering about him; his fashionable friends were rapidly falling away; and she pitied him greatly.

"Let me stay, Fritz!" she whispered, thus acknowledging his right to guide her. "Now Manon is gone, there is no one else to attend to Mrs. de Courcy."

He shrugged his shoulders, but consented, and loved her all the better for such ready forgetfulness of herself. Others, too, during the sorrowful days that followed, learned to appreciate her as she deserved, and never spoke of her afterwards without a little thrill of gratitude for such true and disinterested friendship.

Not till Mrs. de Courcy was sufficiently recovered to be moved to the house of her parents, where she would be affectionately tended, did Eda leave her. As soon as that time arrived, the beautiful house in Tyburnia was dismantled, and its contents scattered. Creditors seized upon the valuable paintings and statuary and *bric-a-brac* that had adorned it, and in a little while the gay couple, whose sumptuous entertainments had never wanted for guests, would be forgotten. Mr. de Courcy was glad to accept a post as vice-consul at some remote foreign port, where his salary would be somewhat less than he had once paid to the *chef* of his kitchen; but his wife and child would go into exile with him, and the lessons of adversity, though bitter at the time, so often bear good fruit, that, Eda ventured to hope there was happiness yet in store for him.

With a curl of Violet's hair in her pocket-book, and a few forget-me-nots plucked from the child's grave when she went with the weeping mother to bid it farewell, Eda took her departure from the



(*Drawn by* F. BARNARD.)

"There has been enough said."—*p.* 331.

mansion, where bills of the coming sale were posted in every window; and, after a brief visit to the Allonbys, started for Sydenham, where a note from Sophie—received that morning—assured her she would be affectionately welcomed.

CHAPTER XLII.

Mark Granton had thought proper to consider himself aggrieved by his sister's obstinacy in remaining with the de Courcys after what he designated as their infamous suspicions; he had therefore held aloof even more than usual, and she knew nothing concerning him but what she gathered from Sophie's notes. These, too, became briefer every week, and rarely contained any tidings of Mark beyond a curt "My husband is well." Whether she agreed with him any better Mrs. Granton did not say, nor did Eda like to inquire; but she hoped, from the wife's silence on this point, that her sense of his coldness and neglect—if they still continued—was less keen than it had been.

Sophie's pleasure when her guest arrived manifested itself in so many acts of kindness that Eda was almost overpowered. When she had admired the pretty room, newly furnished for her use; the flower-stand fixed in her window, and filled with the flowers she loved best; and tried the piano Sophie had chosen for her, and which was to be her own when Mr. Allonby took her away—she was glad to be left alone.

Mark, when he returned home in the evening, was less gracious, for he added to his greeting kiss the remark that Eda came too late to deserve any thanks for her compliance, and that while she was devoting herself to Mrs. de Courcy she had quite overlooked the fact that Sophie had greater claims upon her than any stranger.

"I stayed with Mrs. de Courcy because she was ill and in trouble," she explained.

"And has not Sophie been ill, too?"

"I was not aware of it. You did not tell me that anything was amiss," and Eda turned to her sister-in-law, who pressed her hand, and smiled rather sadly.

"There was no necessity for making you uneasy, my dear; you could not have done me any good had you been here."

"That does not lessen Eda's unkindness in staying away," Mark retorted. And his sister forgave his ill-humour to herself, in consideration of the kindlier feeling he was evincing for his wife.

While sitting with Sophie on the following morning she said something of the kind, and was rather disconcerted when a heavy sigh was the only response her observation received. Surely Mark and his wife were more united than they used to be! He came home earlier, showed more consideration for her wishes, and actually set aside a plan of his own, to carry out another that she suggested. Yet Sophie's eyes never lighted up as they used to do, nor did her pale face flush with pleasure, as in the old times, whenever he spoke affectionately. Had his unkindness quite killed the love she had once lavished upon him? No; Eda could not believe this, for she was more careful for his comforts, more yielding, more quietly desirous of pleasing him, than she had ever been before; although she permitted rather than accepted his attentions with a curious air of depression as though they pained as much as they gratified her.

About a week after Eda's arrival at Sydenham the trio were sitting at breakfast together and looking over the contents of the post-bag. Mrs. Granton had but one letter, from the agent who managed her West Indian property. Mark, however, had several, and Eda was not without her share. Fritz Allonby's note was slipped into her pocket, to be read when she was alone, but her other letters were opened at once. There was a long affectionate epistle from Lady Eudora Chesney, now the happy wife of her cousin; and a sadder but equally kind one from Mrs. de Courcy, who confessed to be hourly missing the gentle but active girl who had helped her to bear up against such a weight of troubles.

While Eda was wading through the closely-written pages, she became aware that Mark was urging something upon his wife which distressed and agitated her.

"Do not go away!" Mrs. Granton said, as she rose, not knowing whether to remain or leave them together. "If Mark is as satisfied that he is doing right as he professes to be, he cannot object to your knowing what it is he wishes me to do."

"Eda can stay, if you like. My request is not such an absurd one that I need mind who hears it," he answered, defiantly. "As to acting rightly, I think I ought to be allowed to judge for myself sometimes."

"Tell her, then, that you wish me to sell out one thousand pounds, that you may invest it in shares in the new company you have assisted in founding."

"It will be to our mutual advantage if I do," he declared, though his eyes avoided his sister's inquiring ones. "I should not wish it unless I was very certain that you will never have cause to regret your compliance."

"And you assure me that this company is a flourishing one?" Mrs. Granton observed, rather incredulously.

"Certainly it is. It has in it all the elements of success. You shall have better interest for your money, my Sophie, than you have dreamed of!"

"And yet Mr. Edwards, whom I went to see last week, and commissioned to make searching inquiries into the affair, writes me word that it cannot stand unless a large number of the shares are taken up; and that even then its ultimate success is doubtful."

On hearing this Mark forgot himself, and flew into a passion. His wife disgraced herself and him by setting a mean-spirited lawyer to pry into his concerns, and make garbled reports of his doings! Was he a rogue, that he was treated in this manner? Did Sophie think that he would risk so large a sum unless he had convinced himself that it would be safe?

"I do not doubt your good intentions," she interposed; "but I fear you are over-sanguine."

"*Fear!*" he repeated, scoffingly. "Say at once that you are determined to make my life a burden to me by your love of domineering. You want me to be a child, a puppet in your hands, going where you please and doing as you please; and threatened with hysterics and reproaches if I exercise a will of my own. You take a mean advantage of your power, madam! It is you who hold the purse, and you make me feel this every hour of my existence."

"No, Mark, no!" she faltered.

"But I tell you, Yes! yes! You know that I am deeply interested in this company, and that I ask nothing more than as your husband I am justified in demanding, but your mean, miserly disposition, your eagerness to keep me under your thumb, thwarts every plan I form! This is not the first time by many that you have made me feel my helplessness, and exulted in your own petty triumphs."

"You are too cruel, Mark!" she answered, clinging to Eda for support, for she was trembling in every limb with suppressed agitation. "No such degrading motives have influenced me. How can you upbraid me in this manner?—you who for the last few days have been kind—*not because you love me*, but to regain your ascendency, and coax and flatter me into compliance with your wishes. Why have you taught me to despise you?"

"There has been enough said!" cried Mark, pushing back his chair with such force that it fell over. "I might have known by experience that if I asked a favour you would hedge out with some such excuses as these. If your money is dearer to you than I am, keep it! keep it!"

"Stay, Mark!" she exclaimed, sitting up and composing herself, though she was white to the lips, and kept her hand tightly pressed to her side. "I do not refuse you the thousand pounds you say you require. I will give it you, if you insist upon it; but, for both our sakes, *don't do so*. We may not be together long: do not cloud the remaining hours of our union with dissension, nor compel me to feel that I have been thoroughly deceived in you. It is not from any covetous love of money that I have demurred at your request—indeed it is not!"

"But you expect me to knuckle under to your chief adviser, clever sapient Mr. Edwards, whose opinions you always adopt in preference to mine."

"I have great faith in Mr. Edwards, and with good reason; but I have no desire to force his opinions upon you," she answered. "It is the whole system of speculative investments that I object to; and I feel that I ought not to be forced to embark our capital in them."

"Are you going over all the old ground again?" Mark irritably queried, as he snatched up his hat.

"No, I am not equal to it;" and she pointed to writing materials. "I will give you what you require if you still wish it; but, Mark, I warn you that it will be the last sum you will ever obtain from me."

"There is no necessity to tell me this. I dare say I shall be in a position to repay you the whole amount very shortly."

Sophie sighed, and began to write, then paused to regard her impatient husband steadfastly; but he would not perceive her pleading looks, and taking out his watch, held it towards her, that she might see how she was detaining him.

Still she lingered over her task. "Mark, if you had asked me to refrain from doing anything as urgently as I have asked you to spare me this trial, I could not have refused."

He heard her with ill-concealed annoyance. "No, my dear, I dare say not; you are a good creature. But I shall lose the train if you keep me any longer."

She signed the paper, and pushed it towards him; but when he put out his hand to take it she laid her own on his, and spoke more earnestly than before. "Oh, my husband! it is not worth the price you are giving for it. You may have all the success you hope for, you may double this amount, but it will never compensate for the love and trust you destroy in gaining it. Believe me, that in winning what we crave we often lose what is of far more importance to us!"

"You are quite enigmatical this morning," he replied. "If it goes to your heart to part with this money, for goodness sake keep it, and I will get it elsewhere!"

The wife's arms dropped by her side, and she leaned back in her chair, looking so ghastly that Eda bent over her in alarm. "Do not leave us!" she cried to her brother; "Sophie is ill!"

But he made light of the attack, though he assisted his wife to the sofa, and stood by till she opened her eyes and pronounced herself better.

"She *will* excite herself so foolishly!" he muttered in Eda's ear. "I wish you could imbue her with a little of your own composure. I hate to see women always flying into extremes!"

Perhaps Mrs. Granton caught the purport of his speech, for she turned from his proffered kiss, and when he asked if he could bring her anything from town, her only reply was a dissenting shake of the head.

However, Mark went away in high spirits, with the precious slip of paper in his pocket-book; and

Sophie, after an ineffectual attempt to regain her composure, confessed that she felt very ill, and went to bed. Eda sat beside her till she seemed drowsy, and then went to answer her letters, hoping to find her sister-in-law refreshed by a sleep when she rejoined her.

Mark was peevish when he came home and found his wife too unwell to take her place at the dinner-table. "He could not understand a woman fretting," he crossly said—"actually fretting over her money, when she was induced to part with any of it!"

"Is it possible," Eda retorted, indignantly—"is it possible you do not comprehend that it is not the loss of her money for which Sophie grieves, but something of far more consequence to an affectionate wife?"

"No lecturing, Eda," he interposed. "I will not submit to it from *you*. No wife has had her comforts studied more thoroughly than Sophie. If she will make herself miserable because it is not in my nature to play the ardent lover, I cannot help it. Leave her alone, and she will be more rational to-morrow."

However, the morrow found Sophie still the invalid. She had suffered another attack in the night, and it had left her in such a state of exhaustion that Eda, now thoroughly alarmed, insisted on having advice. But she was scarcely prepared for the verdict of the medical gentleman whom her note brought to the villa. He had seen Mrs. Granton twice before, and had warned her of the danger of giving way to any agitation. He did not think she would rally again, although he would try every remedy he could devise. Were not her friends aware that for some time past her heart had been extensively diseased? Mrs. Granton herself had known it, and had spoken to him with great resignation of her impending death.

When Eda recovered the shock these tidings inflicted she telegraphed for Mark, who had left for London by an early train; but he had been summoned to Manchester on business connected with his new undertaking, and her summons did not reach him until the following day. Nor even then did he hurry home! Eda was easily frightened, he told himself, and Sophie was fond of punishing him for his offences by professing to be very ill. He could not or would not believe that there was anything serious in this attack, and was horror-stricken when, on his appearance at Sydenham, his sister met him with the sorrowful cry, "You are too late! She will not know you!"

Nor did her eyes unclose, or her lips move, in recognition of his entreating, "Speak to me once more! Oh, my wife, say that you forgive me!"

The marriage—which, after all, was no true marriage, entered into as it was by the one in the hurry of a love that bordered on idolatry, and by the other from mercenary motives—was dissolved by death. Mark had not been in the house ten minutes when the last struggle took place, and he was a widower!

(To be continued.)

"ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."

BY THOMAS ARCHER.

TAKING IN STRANGERS.

YES; listen to that startling clangour of military music coming from an upper room. We are standing, you know, in the cheerful kitchen of that Refuge for the Homeless in the renovated old slaughter-house in Newport Market, and I want you to come with me to see the boys' school, which occupies a very considerable portion of that weatherproof but ramshackle building.

Only those who are acquainted with the poverty and the crime of this great metropolis can estimate the deep and urgent need that still exists for refuges in which homeless, destitute, and neglected children can be received for shelter, food, and clothing. Only the practical student of the effects of our present administration of the Education Act can calculate how vast a necessity is likely to exist for the reception and instruction of the children of the poorest, even when all the machinery of the present School Board is put in motion for vindicating the compulsory clause.

Let that clause be interpreted in the most liberal manner—which would be in effect to provide State education without cost to the parents—and the Act will still leave untouched a vast number of children for whom nothing can be done until their physical necessities are provided for—children who are perishing with cold, starving for want of food. A visit to some of the big buildings recently erected by the London School Board will reveal the fact that there are many such children now in attendance: neglected, barefoot, half-clothed, hungry, and with that wistful eager look, sometimes followed by a kind of stupefaction, which may be observed in the poor little outcasts of the streets. There is no reasonable hope of doing much with these little creatures till the "soup-kitchen" and the "free breakfast" are among the appliances of education, where the necessity is most pressing, and the children perish for lack of bread as well as for lack of knowledge.

As it is—I need not refer again to the escape

which is always open from the streets to the prison. The few Government industrial-schools to which magistrates occasionally consign young culprits brought before them are intended only for those who come within the cognisance of the law.

The operations of these reformatory-schools are successful so far as they go. They represent seventy-five per cent of successful reformatory training as applied to juvenile transgressors committed by magistrates to their training.

Perhaps, when we are fully impressed with the meaning of the statistics which are published each year in the Report of the Inspectors of Certified Schools in Great Britain, we shall begin to consider how it will be possible to regard destitute children in relation to the guardianship of the state *before* they qualify themselves for Government interposition by the expedient of committing what the law calls a crime.

The last Report states distinctly that the sooner criminal children are taken in hand, the more complete is their reformation. There are fewer "criminals" of less than ten years of age than there are hardened offenders of from twelve to sixteen. This is, so far, satisfactory; but when we consider that (including Roman Catholic establishments) there are but fifty-three reformatories in England, and twelve in Scotland (thirty-seven of those in England and eight in Scotland being for boys, and sixteen in England and four in Scotland for girls), and that in 1873, when the last Report was issued, the sum-total of children in all these institutions was but 5,622, of whom one-fourth were in the Roman Catholic schools—we cease to wonder at the vast number of homeless, neglected, and destitute children in London alone—a number which, notwithstanding the efforts of philanthropy and the activity of School Board beadles, exceeds the total of all the inmates of the State reformatories throughout the kingdom.

This refuge at Newport Market had included destitute and starving boys among those who were brought to its shelter from the cruel streets, the dark arches of railways and of bridges, and the miserable corners where the houseless huddle together at night, long before its supporters could make provision for maintaining any of the poor little fellows in an industrial-school. But the work grew, and the means were found, first for retaining some of the juvenile lodgers who came only for a night's food and warmth and shelter, and afterwards for receiving them as inmates.

Some of these are sent to the Refuge by persons who are furnished with printed forms of application, or by mothers who can afford evident testimony that they can scarcely live on the few shillings they are able to earn by casual work as charwomen, or by the no less casual employments where the wages are totally inadequate to support a family; while a few lads have themselves applied for admission because they were orphans, or utterly destitute and abandoned by those on whom they might be supposed to have a claim.

A portion of the old building, which has been adapted to the purpose, and has been added as the need for increased space became pressing, is now devoted to the dormitories, play-room, and school-room of some fifty to sixty of this contingent of the great army of friendless children; and at the time of the last Report fourteen had but just left to be enlisted in military bands; two had become military tailors; situations had been found for others; while one had been regularly apprenticed to a tailor in London.

There are frequently several boys ready for such apprenticeship, for tailoring is the only regular trade taught, the time of the lads being occupied in learning to read, write, and cipher, to acquire the outlines of history and geography, and to take a place in the military band which is at this moment making the cranky old building resound with its performance on clarinets, hautboys, cornets, "deep bassoons," and all kinds of wind instruments, under the direction of an able bandmaster, who keeps the music up to the mark with a spirit which bespeaks confidence in the intelligence of his pupils.

This confidence is not misplaced, for during the past year eleven youthful recruits have been drafted from among these boys into the bands of various regiments, while there are above ninety applications still on the books for more musicians who have chosen this branch of the military service. It is a matter of choice, of course; and there are some who prefer to become sailors, or to go into situations and learn the trade of tailoring, that their instructors may be able to recommend them to respectable masters, as apprentices.

But let us walk through the kitchen, and ascend the short zig-zag stairs which lead us by a passage to the school-room, where most of the boys are at work with their slates. Very few of the little fellows are more than thirteen years old, and some of them have been but a short time at school; but even those who came here totally uninstructed have made admirable progress, and some of the writing-books containing lessons from dictation are well worth looking at for their clean and excellent penmanship and fair spelling; while in arithmetic the boys who have been longest under tuition have advanced as far as "practice." There is nothing superfluous in school-room, work-room, or play-room—indeed, one might almost say that they are unfurnished, except for desks and forms and plain deal tables. The play-room is a lower portion of the old slaughter-house, with a high ceiling, to a beam in which is fixed a pair of ropes, terminating in two large wooden rings, by which

the youthful gymnasts swing and perform all kinds of evolutions, while a set of parallel bars are among the few accessories.

It is evident that nothing is spent in mere ornament, and that the expenditure is carefully considered, though recreation, and healthy recreation too, is a part of the daily duty, which is regulated in a fashion befitting the rather military associations of the place. Even now, as the cheery superintendent, Sergeant Ramsden, late quartermaster-sergeant of the 16th Regiment, calls "Attention!" every boy is quickly on his feet and ready to greet us; and what is more, the boys seem to like this kind of discipline, for it is kind in its prompt demand for obedience, and the regularity and order includes a kind of self-reliance, which is a very essential part of education for lads who must necessarily be taught what they have to learn in a comparatively short time, and are then sent out where order and promptitude are of the utmost service to them. Economy is studied, but the recollection of the cheery kitchen suggests that there is no griping hard endeavour to curtail the rations necessary to support health and strength. In fact, the boys are sufficiently fed, warmly clothed, and are encouraged both to work and play heartily. Breakfast consists of bread and coffee; dinner, of meat and vegetables three days in the week, fish on one day (Wednesday), pudding on Monday, soup on Friday, meat and cheese on Saturday; tea or coffee, with bread and dripping, while on Sundays butter is an additional luxury both at breakfast and tea; and on Thursdays and Sundays tea is substituted for coffee at the evening meal. All the boys are decently and warmly clothed, and though only some of their number "take to music" as a profession, and choose to go into the military bands, they all receive instruction. They are taught to keep their own bunks and dormitories neat, and, in fact, do their own household work; while, morning and afternoon, personal trimness is promoted by the military "inspection" which is part of the discipline. There is half an hour's play after breakfast, another quarter of an hour before dinner, three-quarters of an hour for "washing and play" after dinner, a quarter of an hour before tea, and from an hour and a half to two hours for boot-cleaning and play before bed-time, besides outdoor exercise daily, except in wet weather, when drill and gymnastics take its place. They also go to Primrose Hill on Tuesday and Saturday afternoons, there to run in the fresh air and disport themselves in cricket, or such games as they can find the toys for by the kindness of the committee or generous visitors. Even with these recreations, however, they find time to go through a very respectable amount of work in the fourteen hours between rising and bed-time: and the letters received from lads who have left the school are an evidence that they remember with pleasure and with gratitude the Refuge that became a home, and to which they attribute their ability to take a place which would have been denied to them without the aid which grew out of pity for their neglected childhood.

Here is a short epistle from one of the juvenile band at Shorncliffe Camp, written a year or more ago:—

"I now take the pleasure of writing these few lines and I hope all the boys are all well, and all in the school and please Mr Ramsden will you send me the parcel up that I took into the school it was laying in the bookcase in the schoolroom and I hope that all the boys are all getting on with their instruments and the snips with their work and I should like you to read it to the boys and I wish that you would let ——— answer it and I am getting on with my instrument very well, and I will be able to come and see you on Cristamas season."

This is a characteristic schoolboy letter, which shows how much boys are alike in all grades. The following is another letter from Shorncliffe:—

"Dear Sir,

"I received your kind and welcome letter along with mothers, and I wrote back to tell you we have all been enlisted and sworn in, and we expect to get our clothes next week and we all feel it our duty to express our deeply felt gratitude to you Mr. Dust and the Committee, and we are all very happy at present please give our respects to Mrs. Ramsden Sister Zillah Mr. McDerby Mr. Mason Mr. Goodwin Miss Cheesman and please remember us to all the boys. Leary is on sick furlough since the 15th of Decr. and has not returned yet and Brenan, Lloyd Graham McCarthy Henderson and all the others are very jolly at present & we have been out all the afternoon amongst the snow So I conclude with kind thanks to one and all and believe me to be Dear Sir

"Your late pupil ———

"Band —— Regt."

The following will show how the memory of the old slaughter-house and the school in Newport Market remains after the boys have left and have entered on a career. It is addressed from Warley Barracks:—

"Dear Sir

"I now take the opportunity of writing to you hoping you and all the rest of the school and the sister also. It is a long time since I left the school now and I dont suppose you would know me if I was to come and see you I was apprentised out off the school along of J—— R—— to Mr W—— in 1869 I think it was as a Tailor. I should like you to write and tell me if you know what Rigment J—— H—— belong to his school number was 34 and mine was 35 me and him was great friends when we were in the school and I should like to know very much were he is. When I left the School Mr. L—— was Supperintendant and I dont suppose I should know you sir if I was to see you I shall try to come down and see the School if I can on Christmas for I shall be on pass to London for seven days and I should like to know where J—— H—— is so as I should be able to see him. I have a few more words to say that is the School was the making of me and I am very thankful to the School for it so with kind love to you all

"I remain your humble servant

"Band ——— Regiment,

"Warley Barracks Essex.

"J—— H—— number was 34 and mine 35.

"Excuse me addressing this Letter to you as I dont know any thing about you sir."

There is something pleasant indeed in letters like these; and I for one am not surprised that the boys should go to their musical practice with a will.

They are just preparing to play something for our especial delight now, and so burst out, in a grand triumphant blast, with "Let the Hills Resound," after which we will take our leave, and, we hope, not without melody in our hearts. Just one word as we go through this kitchen again. Two West End clubs supply the Newport Market Refuge with the remnants of their well-stocked larders. Did it ever occur to you how many hungry children and poor men and women could be fed on the actual waste that goes on daily in hotels, clubs, inns, dining-rooms, and large and ordinary households every day? M. Alexis Soyer used to say that he could feed ten thousand people with the food that was wasted in London every day; and I am inclined to think he was not far wrong. At all events, an enormous salvage of humanity might be effected if only the one meal daily which might be made of "refuse" pieces of meat and bread, bones, cuttings of vegetables, cold potatoes, and general pieces, was secured to the thousands to whom "enough" would often indeed be "as good as a feast." To people who know how much that is really good for food—not the plate-scrapings and leavings, but sound and useful reversions of meat and bread and vegetables, bones, and unsightly corners of joints—is either suffered to spoil or is thrown at once into the waste-tub, both in hotels and private houses, the additional knowledge that there are hungry children in every district in London to whom a bowl of nourishing soup or a plate of minced meat and vegetables would be a boon, may easily be a pain in the inability to suggest how to organise the means of utilising what one is tempted to call undeserved plenty.

AUNT JESSIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

IN a small back room in a narrow street of one of our large overcrowded manufacturing cities, a woman sat alone at work one wet February afternoon. In consequence of the already waning light, she had drawn her seat as near as possible to the window, whilst she held her work close to her eyes, which she was straining, to enable her to continue yet a little longer at her task.

But darkness seemed to be coming on apace, the heavy clouds—which had stretched themselves like a curtain over the city that afternoon, and had been persistently discharging themselves in torrents of rain for hours without even now showing any sign or cessation—having helped to shut out daylight almost an hour before the usual time.

After further vain endeavours to thread her needle and set a few more stitches in the shirt she was making, the lonely worker gave up the attempt as hopeless; and suffering the garment to fall from her hands, she pressed them over her eyes, as if the latter ached and smarted. Then she sat a while dreamily gazing out through the little window; though the prospect from it was neither cheerful nor extensive.

It was a sweet face that was thus turned away from the darkening room, where the corners were already in shadow, towards the few remaining rays of light which yet came struggling through the thickly-falling rain-drops. It was a face which, if not strictly beautiful—as the features were worn and thin, whilst the eyes were hollow, and the hair fast becoming grey and scanty—was strangely attractive and expressive. It seemed almost like an open page, on which the history of a life had been written, and the workings of the mind within had stamped themselves. Care and suffering—either past or present, or both—were printed there; but so were also patience, and quiet strength, and the courage of endurance. She might have pain to bear, but she was evidently content to bear it.

She sat on for some time, seemingly lost in deep thought; for though the clock struck once or twice she heeded it not.

At length however she roused herself from her reverie, and rising, groped her way to the chimney-piece. Striking a match, she lighted a small candle, and then, still groping, brought out her little tea-pot, and made some tea. But she only allowed herself one cup, and reserving the rest, put the pot on the hob to keep warm.

The rain came against the window, driven by the wind, which howled and moaned, and swept up the street as though it would carry everything before it.

"Poor child! what a walk she'll have! But I hope she's in sheltering somewhere; for it isn't fit for her to be out to-night."

But even as she said this to herself a light tread might have been heard on the stairs. Then the door opened, and a young girl of about seventeen or eighteen years of age entered the room.

The worn face which had been watching for her broke into a bright smile of welcome. "Come at last, Esther!" she exclaimed, as if the time had seemed long. "But I was half hoping you wouldn't turn out such a night as this. How have you managed to walk through all this rain and wind, my child?"

"Oh, I got on very well, Aunt Jessie. It isn't as bad out of doors, perhaps, as it sounds to you here."

When she came nearer the light, she displayed a pleasant, smiling face—something like her aunt's might have been in youth—with a blooming colour which battling with the wind had called into her usually pale cheeks. Her dark brown hair had been blown out of its customary smoothness into some disorder; and as she stood stroking back into their proper places a few stray locks which had straggled into her eyes, she stole, unperceived, a quick observant glance at her aunt's countenance.

"Come near, and let me feel if you are very wet. You must take off your damp things, Esther."

"Yes, aunt, I'll do it at once, and then I can come and sit down by you," replied the girl, retreating, meantime, rather than advancing, as though she did not wish too close an inspection of her state to be made.

Still keeping at a distance, she stooped, and drew from her feet a pair of boots, limp from the rain which had soaked through them, and with signs of holes in them which appeared more unmistakable than ever to-night.

"Let me have your boots, Esther, to put by the fire to dry."

"I can put them down, thank you, aunt dear. There! they'll be all right there," said Esther, placing them as far from the other as possible, as though she wished them to escape observation. Then, kneeling on the floor at her aunt's feet, she laid her arms on her lap, and looking up with her own bright eyes into the faded tired ones of the older woman, she said, coaxingly, "Do put by your work for to-night, auntie. I'm sure you've done enough for to-day: for it has been so wet I don't expect you've been out at all, but have just sat stitching stitching all the time."

"But what should we do, dear, if I didn't?"

"Ah what, indeed!" and a shadow seemed to dim the young eyes for a moment. "But I'll go on with your work now," and she tried to take the shirt from her aunt.

The latter resisted. "No, dear; you must dry yourself first. And, see, I've kept a cup of tea for you; so drink it off, and I hope it will help to keep out the cold."

Whilst the girl was obeying, the neighbouring church clock struck ten.

"How late it is, Esther, before you get home now."

"Yes: we are always so busy I can't be spared any sooner. But now, aunt, let me have the work."

"No; it's time for you to go to bed, dear; after your long day at the shop, standing all the time, you must be tired enough, my child."

"Not so tired that I want to go to bed yet, auntie, for I'm getting used to the standing now; it's only at first people feel it, they say."

Esther gained her point; and whilst her busy fingers stitched she chatted cheerfully, relating all the little events of the day, until the careworn expression gradually passed away from the elder woman's face as she gazed lovingly upon the features of the other—gazed with a wistful, fixed look, as if she foresaw a time coming when she would no longer be able to study them, and so was trying beforehand to impress them upon her mind's eye. But the other appeared unconscious of the gaze, as she worked on without lifting her head. At length, however, Mrs. Lang insisted that it was time to put up.

Esther made but a short night of it. Long before daylight, in the cold chilliness of the winter's morning, she was up, though moving cautiously and quietly so as not to disturb her aunt; of whose waking, however, she had not much fear, as she knew she was apt to lie sleepless for a good while in the earlier part of the night, and then, towards dawn, worn out, she would drop off into a sounder slumber.

She lighted the candle, and then—as though it were a thing she was accustomed to do—she took out the shirt at which her aunt had been working on the previous day, and began hastily unpicking the greater part of what had been done before she came in—at the least every stitch that the other had set after dusk or by candle-light. The young face wore a grave sad look the while, but the busy fingers never paused; and just as she had accomplished the task of doing again what she had undone, and had put it by, her aunt awaking and the clock striking simultaneously, told her that it was time to light the fire and prepare the breakfast, and then get ready to set forth to her daily employment.

(To be continued.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

127. What accident occurred while St. Paul was preaching at Troas?

128. Mention passages showing that Nehemiah was noted for his spirit of prayer.

129. Whom did the Jews seek to put to death after he had already died? Quote passage.

130. What was engraven on the front of the high priest's mitre?

131. What relation was Mordecai to Esther?

132. Where is our Saviour spoken of as the son of Abraham? Quote passage.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 304.

113. Zipporah (Exodus ii. 21). Six sisters (Exodus ii. 16).

114. 2 Kings xiii. 14.

115. Acts xx. 35.

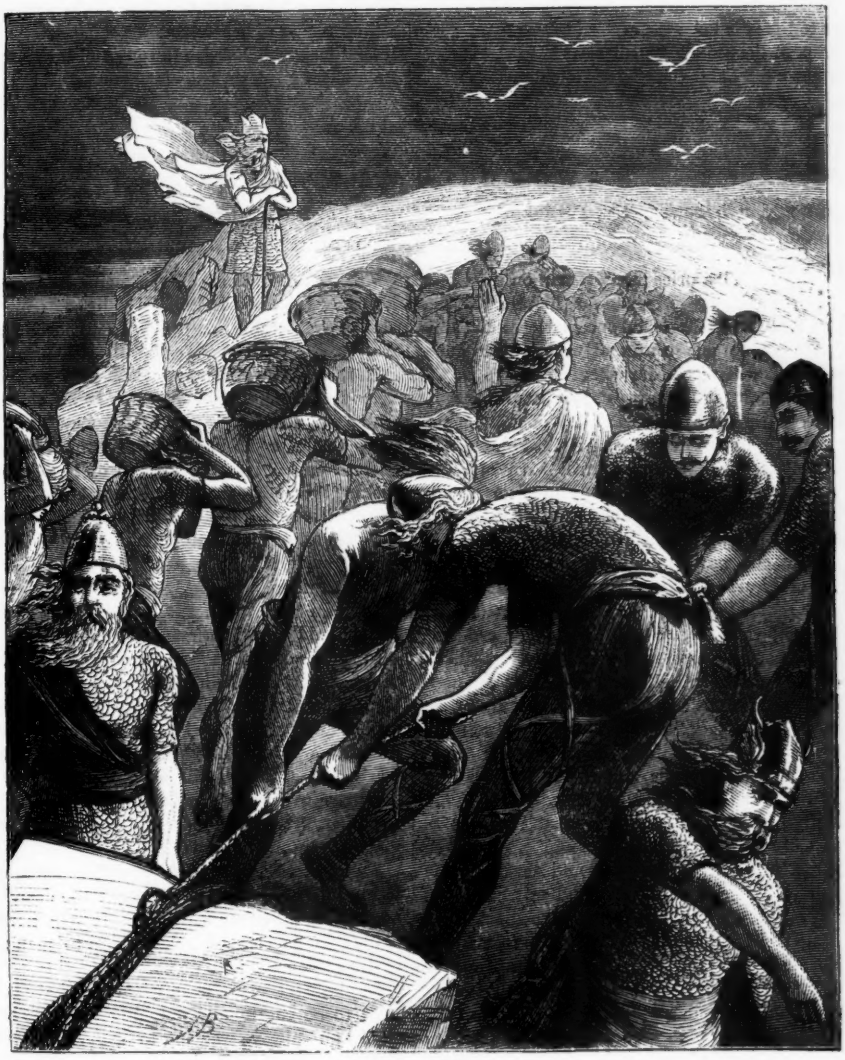
116. Maher-shalal-hash-baz (Isaiah viii. 3).

117. When St. Peter wished to know what would happen to St. John (John xxi. 21, 22).

118. 2 Kings xiii. 20, 21.

119. The body of Saul (1 Samuel xxxi. 10).

120. Prov. xxvi. 17.



(*Drawn by* E. BUCKMAN.)

THE SEA-WALL.

THE old sand wall, with grasses waving o'er,
Where the broom blossoms for the earnest bee,
Has been for ages on this level shore
A rampart of defiance to the sea,
Guarding the flats where once its waters rolled
Up to the purple of yon distant wold.

Their names have mouldered from the roll of fame
Who raised this wall in ages long ago;
With toil and peril to the strife they came,
And reared a trophy o'er the baffled foe—
Far better omen to the country-side,
Than fields of blood to nurse a barren pride.

Hark to the roar upon the eastern breeze!
Think of the souls his giant arms have slain!
Sure never did Saint George, or Hercules,
Cope with a monster of more subtle brain,
A grasp more deadly, or a wrath more dread,
And yet they drove him from his ancient bed.

And oft I muse, when night begins to fall,
And, like some cruel monster of unrest,
The hungry tide comes frowning at the wall,
How names of benefactors die unblest,
Whilst men of Belial live in song and tale.
Hail, silent shadows, stalwart heroes, hail!

G. S. OUTRAM, M.A.

TWO-EDGED PROVERBS.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A., AUTHOR OF "THE 'I WILLS' OF THE PSALMS," "THE FEET OF JESUS," ETC.

"GOLD MAY BE BOUGHT TOO DEAR" (*concluded*).

WHAT a price many a man on the Stock Exchange pays for his gold! The feverishness of speculation makes his life one continual worry. He never knows what will meet him when he wakes in the morning; many and many a day he knows that he may be a beggar by the next day of settlement: and thus life passes in one long irritation.

Anxiety as to how things will turn out, disappointments, frettings when things go wrong, make life miserable, and the gold that they purchase to be bought too dear.

Look at the way in which men deprive themselves of any recreation, and those under them too, for gold. Now, without recreation (as the word itself signifies, re-creation or new creation, that is, of strength) men are but poor creatures. The body and the mind both need it. They need it singly; they need it in their relation to each other, as joined together by God, for the work of life. Rest, family comfort, home, are oftentimes paid as the price of gold; and at the price of any one of them gold is bought too dear.

Sleep cannot be lost without the setting up of a whole train of evils in the body, and often in the mind too. The digestion goes, and that alone is enough to account for a thousand miseries; but man never stops to think. He goes to the doctor; and if he *will* continue in the same course, all that the doctor can do is to patch him up for a time, for no doctor is bold enough or fool enough to say that he can fight successfully against the laws of Nature. And the man goes on, paying his liver, or his brain, or his lungs, or his digestive organs, or his heart, for gold.

There is another account-book kept, besides the one in which Mr. Bull keeps a record of his investments and what he paid for them; and its entries run somewhat thus:—

£10,000 Erics. Ah, how they went up and down! Twelve nights' sleeplessness, with palpitation of the heart, &c.

£5,000 Atlantics. One fortnight's nervous headache, great irritability, light and noise almost intolerable, tendency to hypochondriasis, &c.

£3,000 Odessa Waterworks. Ups and downs very frequent. Price: A feeling as if there were water on the brain swashing to and fro for a fortnight. Cloths in cold water on the forehead, and so on, and so on, and so on! Bit by bit picking away at the nerves, breaking down the constitution, making life miserable, laying up for a broken-down old age, if indeed there is to be an old age at all.

As to family comfort, many a time has gold broken in upon that. It cannot be helped that men should be away a good deal from their homes during the day; but home has certainly a legitimate claim upon them in the evening. But Gold steps in, and says, "No, you are mine at home as well as everywhere else!" and so wife and children get little of the gold-buyer. Gold has said, "If you buy me, it must be at my own price; you must throw in family and all."

Thus it is with the man who makes gold his one great aim in life.

And, indeed, it does not require much thought to see how easily it can be bought too dear. For, after all, gold never satisfies. It was never intended to do so. Its relationship to man is not such as to enable it to do so.

In the first place, even when men have it, they have to be continually watching it. It is always on the go—always wanting to be off. If there was trouble in getting it, there is often quite as much in keeping it.

And in the next place, men sometimes get tired of it. They have not the heart to do good with it, to see what happiness they can get in this way out of it; they keep it, and yet they feel they are getting no pleasure from it—it is doing no good either to themselves or any one else. I have heard of a man who said he was tired of making money;

but I never yet heard of a man who said he was tired of doing good with his money.

Well, I say, a thing which cannot satisfy, which does no real good to many a man, may be easily bought too dear. That certainly should be worth a good deal for which a man will part with his head, and his heart, and his lungs, and his liver, or some of them; for which he will spend sleepless and fevered nights and anxious days; for which, alas! too often, he will sacrifice his heart in its highest sense. Gold has bound up more hearts in chains and frost than anything else; shut men up, and made them inaccessible to all the tenderest and best feelings of humanity. Unless God send some great corrective to its large acquisition, or a man supply himself with what I firmly believe is its greatest neutraliser as a poison, and man's greatest preserver—viz., the large and liberal bestowal of it for charitable purposes—it will eat, in most cases, into a man's moral being, like a cancer; and "hard," indeed, as our Lord says, "is it for a man that has riches to enter into the kingdom of heaven."

And surely, if one had the power of looking at gold after one has gone, in many a case we should have a witness that gold has been bought too dear. All the toil has been spent for those who enjoy themselves upon the fruit of it, and care little for the one by whose life-long efforts they are enriched.

The whole of some men's lives is spent in just adding one 0 to four or five others, in an estimate of what they are worth; and it is a positive fact that they are really no better off than if they had spared themselves many of their aches and pains, and sat quietly by the fire and put down as many cyphers as they pleased.

But, setting them aside, any gains in business which are bought at the expense of health, or peace of mind, or neglect of duty to home or to one's fellow creatures, are one and all, "Gold bought too dear."

And, now, this is a two-edged proverb. It has reference to the other world and its affairs as well as to this.

Gold hides out the other life, and in many a case makes man lose it. A sovereign put close up to the eye, small as is its circle, will hide out the mighty orb of the sun, so that a man will be in pitch darkness, and, in fact, practically blind. The other life is lost to many a man simply by its being hidden out. This life has come between him and it. He cannot see it; and if he does not see it, he does not care about it.

And the desire of acquisition here makes man procrastinate as regards the great acquisitions of the other life. Those things are more remote, these are near; he will take what lies to hand first. Men do not care about securing the other world until they have first secured a bit of this. Thus they go on, entirely pre-occupied, their characters deteriorating, their unfitness for the other life becoming more and more every day.

And even by real Christians gold is often bought too dear.

The world, in this form, sometimes makes an inroad upon their souls, and for a while they become like it, and, generally by losses or some kind of afflictions, God makes their gold too dear. They may have gotten gold, and much gold, but it need not have been at this price. They might have sat loose to it, even while legitimately acquiring it; but with it came the love of it, and eagerness about it, and it wrought its own mischief, to their great hurt.

Greatly, too, has God's cause suffered from the dealings of His people with it. Not from their dealing with it, at all—for that may be not only lawful, but actually good—but from their too great eagerness for it, or their too tight hold upon it. That gold is bought too dear which throws any scandal on the religion we profess; that gold is kept at entirely too high a price which is held back from the cause of God—that gold which is His proportion.

This will tell much in the matter of future reward. He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth liberally shall reap also liberally. As a man soweth, so also shall he reap.

Little do Christians know of what they are depriving themselves by keeping back His portion from their Lord. The way to become really poor is to hoard—to have found what should be the "hallowed things," in our house—the Lord's money amid our gold.

Let us open heart and hand to Him, the hand because the heart. And then we shall be preserved from the thousand snares which gather themselves about gold, and the many sad experiences which it brings to mankind, not one of the least of which is that

"Gold may be bought too dear!"

"WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?"

BY THE REV. D. MOORE, M.A., VICAR OF HOLY TRINITY, PADDINGTON; AND CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO THE QUEEN.

"The burden of Dumah. He calleth out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come."—ISA. xxi. 11, 12

MUCH of the obscurity which attaches to this prophecy against Idumea, arises, no doubt, from its standing so completely alone. It has no connection either with what goes before or with what follows; but, like some detached fragment of inspiration—some startling and hasty message delivered by one who, having done his bidding, adds no more words—it refuses to have more light thrown upon it than can be gathered out of the prophecy itself, and the circumstances of the people to whom it refers.

These last are the Edomites, or the inhabitants of Idumea, for which Dumah is another name, and of which the chief city and stronghold was in Mount Seir. That country, as well as the land of Israel, was destined to fall under the yoke of the king of Babylon. And the prophet here introduces a dialogue between one of the people and himself, in which, either honestly, or doubtingly, or derisively—for there is nothing in the context to determine which—the Edomite inquires what are the signs that these threatened calamities are approaching? "Watchman, what of the night?" "You stand upon your watch-tower to note signs, to mark the changing aspects and phases of our national destiny, to see when the light is departing, and the clouds are closing in upon our sky of hope; at what stage have we arrived in the development of God's providential purposes now? What is the last token of a near and overtaking woe?" "WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?"

To this repeated cry, in whatever spirit it may have been uttered, the watchman makes answer:—"The morning cometh and also the night." As if he would say, "This night you inquire about, and whose advent you perhaps disbelieve, though certain to come upon you, shall not be YET. God, in his long-suffering mercy, has ordained that there should be a morning first—a morning of hope, and light, and opportunity of repentance. But this abused, this neglected, this wasted in deferred and halting purposes, 'the night cometh'—that endless night in which no man can work, which has no morning after it, an eternal sky of thick cloud."

Still the watchman will not conclude his message without a word of encouragement. Do ye indeed inquire touching the Lord's purposes concerning you? Is it in fearful and trembling apprehension of this overspreading blackness, and of your own righteous exposure to the storm, that ye ask, "Watchman, what of the night?" Then inquire, and inquire on. At the priest's lips seek knowledge. "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read." With resolved purpose of heart, "return" unto the Lord your God; and come see what He will do for those who will be warned, and be wise in time:—"If ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come."

There is reason to fear that Edom did not seriously inquire: did not return: did not come. The prophecies against it, repeated yet more strongly in the 34th chapter, were fulfilled with a terrible significancy. The morning came, and also the night—a night of desolation and waste, which has continued to this day. Nettles and brambles have come upon the fortresses of Mount Seir, and there the wild beast makes his lair. Swept away are the habitations of men; and, save when the screech-owl moans, and the vulture calls to her mate, no sound disturbs the profound and awful solitude. Oh, well might the Psalmist exclaim, "Come hither and behold the works of the Lord! what desolations he hath made in the earth!"

But no Scripture is of private interpretation. The language of the Spirit, whether of warning or of encouragement, has a reach and purpose far beyond those perishable dynasties whose destiny formed the subject of these prophetic announcement. It deals with universal truths, with universal interests, with the universal tendencies of our common nature. Under the Old Testament or the New, under an economy of quickly ensuing retributions or under a dispensation of grace and truth, God is one. And human nature is one also—prone to doubt and speculate concerning the Divine declarations, however much, by line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, we are assured that all things shall be fulfilled. "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, "The morning cometh, and also the night. If ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come."

I. Let us deal first with THE QUESTION, and who puts it. "He calleth to me out of Seir, 'Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?"

From what we are elsewhere taught of the general character of the Edomites, their stout-hearted indifference under the most solemn and repeated warnings—the more frequent supposition of commentators has been that the person who puts the question of the text, is one of the profane scoffers—one who, with impious defiance, makes a

mock at sin—one who, like the children in the time of Elisha, "came forth out of the city to mock the prophet of the Lord." The world has never been without these despisers of a Divine message. When Noah went forth on his mission of righteousness to an ungodly and licentious generation—proclaiming, year by year, and with deepened intensity the coming night of heaven's avenging—the world that then was did but laugh him to scorn. People went on building and planting, buying and selling, marrying and giving in marriage, to the last. They saw the ark a-preparing—the type of a redeemed and rescued Church, to be self-launched by the upheaving flood. But still there was the same sun to shine, the same dew to fertilise, the same impress of calm goodness stamped on the face of all created things. How like the narrow and short-sighted philosophy of unbelief, to argue, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." What, therefore, should make us fear any departure from Nature's order now? What dark portents can you point to as presaging the near wrath of God? "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?"

And like as it was in the days of Noah, so it was in the days of Lot, so it was in the days of Elijah, so it was in the days of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. It is always easier to despise than to argue—to laugh at the contents of a revelation of God's truth, than to prove them to be unfounded or untrue. Religious wit is, of all others, the easiest wit. All kinds of wit being dependent upon strong contrasts—the near apposition of the trifling and the grave—it follows that the satire will be most pungent which deals with the sanctities of religion, and the jest most easily pointed which makes mock at the truth of God. In this has been found the stronghold of infidelity, from the time of Celsus and Porphyry to this day. The sceptic rarely trusts himself to the manliness of fair discussion. He finds it easier and safer to take up at second-hand the playful smartnesses of Volney, or the insidious sarcasms of Bayle, the coarse buffoonery of Paine, or the scarcely veiled but revolting blasphemies of Rénan. And if the scepticism of our educated classes appears now to take a more rational and scientific form, accounting for the miracles of Scripture by the operation of fixed laws; reducing its mysteries to a bold figure of speech; resolving its inspirations into the flights and fancies of religious genius; yet will the ultimate method of reasoning employed in these instances be found to be for the most part an attempted reduction to the absurd, the arguing from the consequences of a truth rather than from its own intrinsic and antecedent evidence. "What!" we sometimes hear it derisively asked, "the whole human race ruined because one man ate some fruit from a tree! a crawling reptile made to hold discourse with a woman! the entire planetary system thrown into confusion in order that a Jewish leader might be heartened to his work by seeing the sun stand still! what find we in the whole compass of physical analogies at all answering to such things? Who can receive as the dictate of infallible truth and wisdom the book in which such statements are contained?" "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?"

II. But another opinion which has obtained among commentators is, that this Edomite is proposing his question in a spirit of *unbelief* merely, rather than that of contemptuous levity. There was a disposition, not among the people of Idumea only, but, as we learn from Ezekiel, among the Jewish nation generally, to make light of the messages of their prophets, on the ground of their being overstated, pressed with exaggerated and needless minuteness, pushed to an excess which He who sent them never intended. The Divine authority of the message is not doubted, but the teacher is overdoing his part. "Then said I, Ah! Lord God, they say of me, Doth he not speak parables?"

The question may fairly be raised—Is this Edomite spirit of unbelief cast out from among us? Are God's spiritual watchmen taken at their word when they warn their people of the danger of neglecting the great salvation? Are they thought to be in earnest when they set forth certain marks and fruits as being essential to the Christian character? When they tell those they address that they have not the Spirit of Christ, and can be none of His unless there be in them the graces of meekness, and humility, and brotherly love, and tenderness of conscience, and daily thankfulness, and much prayer? When they proclaim unreservedly that a man has no part or lot in Christ who knows not how to forgive an injury, or who shuts up his compassions from a suffering brother, or who earns his living by means which hurt his neighbour, or who is intent only upon earthly prosperity and success, or who is strange to the repose and relief of communion with God, or who has no anxiety to be instrumental in saving others' souls, and no care to be assured even of the safety of his own? Is any credit given to them for meaning what they say, when, taking up the words of the Master, "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish," and proving, from other Scriptures, what this repentance is and what it must include, they proceed to set forth the conditions of the Christless soul in the retributions of another world? In what subtle form unbelief, especially on this latter topic, creeps in, it may not be easy to determine. For certainly no one can accuse the watchman of investing the night of a lost eternity

with a more appalling blackness than it is hung with in Scripture. No uninspired imagination could ever attain to such heights. The worm, and the fire, and the outer darkness, and the eternal thirst, the curse abiding, and the separation ever widening from repentance, and God, and hope—these, if figures of speech at all, at least are not "the watchman's" figures, but the figures of One who must have chosen such a medium of illustration, because the intense and overwhelming awfulness of the subject could not be described in any other way. And yet, it is very certain that the uneasy thoughts that should be stirred up by these statements are got rid of somehow. There must be a possibility, it is thought, in the Divine arrangements, that this dark night should never arrive. Whether annihilation is to supersede it, or another chance is to be given in a kind of post-obit purgatory, or whether eventually God will dispense with the equities of moral government altogether—on these points the mind may not be made up. It is made up to one thing only, namely, that the penalties of the eternal world must be stripped of their terribleness; that the "watchman," in his description of the night, has outstripped the bounds of religious sobriety; that either sin is not the abominable thing, or else law is not the inflexible thing, or else a lost immortality is not the dreadful thing, which preachers are constantly making out. Somewhere, someway, somehow, there must be a flaw in the statement. "We shall not *surely* die." God will not *surely* unparadise so large a portion of the human race. The day of grace and visitation will not surely come to an end. "Watchman, what of the night? WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?"

(*To be concluded.*)

"ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."

BY THOMAS ARCHER.

FEEDING THE MULTITUDE.

I SUPPOSE there are people still to be found who have but a vague notion of what it is to be really hungry. They may be conscious of possessing a good appetite now and then, and having the means of obtaining food, and to a certain extent of choosing what they will eat, regard being rather "sharp set" as a luxury which gives additional zest to a dinner, enabling them to take off the edge of their craving with a plate of warm soup, and to consider what they would like "to follow."

Of course we most of us read in the papers of the distress of the poor during the winter, of the number of children for whom appeals are made that they may have a meal of meat and vegetables once or twice a week, of the aggregate of casual paupers during a given period, and of cases where "death accelerated by want and exposure" is the verdict of a coroner's jury; but we do not very easily realise what it is to be famished; have perhaps never experienced that stage beyond hunger—beyond even the faintness and giddiness that makes us doubt whether we could swallow anything solid, and would cause us to turn hopelessly from dry bread. There is no need here to detail the sufferings that come of starvation. They are dreadful enough; but if our charity needs the stimulus of such descriptions we are in a bad way, and are ourselves in danger of perishing for want of moral sustenance.

Those who need assurance of the hunger of hundreds of their poor neighbours need not go very far to obtain it. A quarter of an hour at the window of any common cook-shop in a "low neighbourhood," at about seven o'clock in the evening, when the steam of unctuous puddings is blurring the glass, and the odour of leg-of-beef soup and pease-pudding comes in gusts to the chilly street, should suffice. There is pretty sure to be a group of poor little eager-eyed pinched-nosed boys and girls peering wistfully in to watch the fortunate possessor of twopence who comes out with something smoking hot on a cabbage-leaf, and begins to bite at it furtively before he crosses the threshold.

Of course, according to modern social political economy, it would be encouraging mendicity, and sapping the foundations of an independent character, to distribute sixpenny pieces amongst the juvenile committee of taste who are muttering what they would buy if only somebody could be found to advance "a copper." But it is to be hoped or feared (which?) that a good many people yet live who would instinctively feel in their pockets for a stray coin to expend on a warm greasy slab of baked or boiled, or on half a dozen squares of that peculiarly dense pie-crust which is sold in ha'porths. This is a vulgar detail; but somehow poverty and hunger *are* vulgar, and we should find it difficult to get away from them if we tried ever so hard. Even School Boards, peeping out upon the children perishing for lack of knowledge, find themselves in a difficulty, because there is no provision under the compulsory or any other clause for the children who are also perishing for

lack of food. The Board beadle does not at present go about with soup-tickets in his pockets; and for the poor shivering shoeless urchins who are mustered in the big brick-built room where they assemble according to law there is no free breakfast-class.

It must one day become a question how they are to learn till they are filled. Grown people find it hard enough to fix their attention on the best advice or the most saving doctrine while they suffer involuntary hunger. The multitude must mostly be fed before they are taught. Even disciples have had a revelation of the Bread of Life in the breaking of bread that perishes. Do we still need a miracle to teach us that?

Happily, efforts are made to give meat to the hungry. During the winter weather food is distributed in various ways amidst some of those poverty-stricken neighbourhoods to which I am obliged to take you during our excursions; but the demand far exceeds the supply, and people suffer hunger at all seasons, though most of all in the time of bleak winds and searching cold.

I want you to come to-day to a kitchen which is open all the year round—the only kitchen of the kind in London which does not close its doors even when the springtide brings buds of promise on the shrubs in Leicester Square, and the London sparrow comes out from roofs and eaves, and preens his dingy plumage in the summer sun, as though Great Windmill Street had something in common with its name, and sweet country odours came from the region of the Haymarket.

For, you know, we are still in the district of Soho. I have but just now brought you out of Newport Market, and now we are in a very curious part of this vast strange city. The streets are dim and dingy, but not so squalid as you might have imagined. They are still and silent, too, as of a neighbourhood that has seen better days, and even in its poverty has a sense of gentility which is neither boisterous nor obtrusive.

You will remember that I referred to this neighbourhood of Soho when I spoke of those old French refugees who came and made industrial colonies in London after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. This is the only really foreign quarter of London which has lasted until to-day; but that is to be accounted for by the fact that it became representative of no particular industry, and that, probably from the fact of many of the patrons of literature and art having then town houses about Leicester and Soho Squares, the more artistic refugees took up their abode in the adjacent streets.

From the time when William Hogarth painted his picture of the Calais Gate till only a short time ago, when refugees fled from besieged Paris to find some poor and wretched lodging in the purlieus of Cranbourne Street, where they might live in peace and hear their native tongue, this has been the resort of poor foreigners in London. It almost reminds one of some of the smaller streets of a Continental city; and as we look at the queer shabby restaurants, and the shops with strange names painted above them in long yellow letters, we almost expect to find the pavement change to cobble-stones, and to see some queer wooden sign dangle overhead, so like is the place to the small *bourgeois* quarter that in our earlier days lay behind the Madeleine and the Porte St. Denis.

For here is an actual *crêmerie*—a queer compound of cook-shop and milkseller's—with a couple of bright dairy cans outside the door, and a long loaf or two amidst the cups and plates and sausages in the dingy window. Over the way you see "*Blanchisseuse*" in large letters; and next door is a *laiterie*, which differs from a *crêmerie* as a *café* alone differs from a *café restaurant* with its "*commerce de vins*" painted in big capitals in front of a long row of sour-looking bottles and a green calico curtain. It is a quaint jumble, all the way to Dean Street, and till we reach the edge of the Haymarket—a jumble of Brown and Lebrun, of Jones and Jean, of Robin (*fils*) and Robinson; but for all the little musty-smelling *cafés*, the blank bare-windowed *restaurants*, the *crêmeries*, and the *laiteries*, there is nothing of a well-fed look about the district, especially just at this corner, leading as it seems to a stable-yard or the entrance to a range of packers' warehouses. There is one open front here—is it a farrier's or a blacksmith's shop?—where they appear to be doing a stroke of business, however, for there is a clinking, and a fire, and a steam; but the steam has a fragrant odour of vegetables—of celery and turnips, of haricots and gravy—the clink is that of basins and spoons getting ready, and the fire is that of the boiler which simmers two mighty cauldrons.

Step to the front, and you will see in big white letters right across the house, "Mont St. Bernard Hospice." You may well rub your eyes, for you are in the heart of London, and stand in Ham Yard, Leicester Square, before the soup-kitchen that is open all the year.

There is something very appetising in the steam that arises from both these huge cauldrons, one of which is the stock-pot, containing bones, remnants of joints (*not* plate-clearings), and reversions of cold meat, &c., from two West End clubs. To this are added vegetables—celery, haricot beans, or barley—making it a fresh palatable stock, not remarkable for meatiness, but still excellent in flavour, as you may find for yourself if you join me in a luncheon here. But the real strengthening gravy has yet to be added, and the cauldron on the left hand is full of it—real, genuine gravy soup, made from raw meat and bones purchased for this

purpose. As soon as this has simmered till it is thoroughly ready, the contents of the two cauldrons are mixed, and the result is a delicious stew, which is ready to be turned out into these yellow pint basins, for the hungry applicants, who sit down there and then at one of two deal tables, each of which has its rough clean form, or to be dispensed to those who bring jugs, bowls, cans, saucepans, kettles, pipkins—any and almost every receptacle in which they can carry it steaming away to their families.

Let us stand here and see them come in. Here is a poor famishing fellow, who looks with eager eyes at the savoury mess. He has evidently seen better days. There is an unmistakable air of education about him, and as he sits down with his basin and spoon, and the handful of broken bread, which is added to the soup from one of a series of clean sacks emptied for the purpose, the superintendent, Mr. Stevens, kens him with a quick eye, and will probably speak to him before he leaves. There is a foreigner—an Italian, by the look of his oval olive face—who takes his place very quietly, and as quietly begins to eat; and yonder a famished-looking, rough fellow, who has already devoured the basinful with his eyes, and is evidently in sore need. Men, women, and children, or, at all events, boys and girls, come and present their tickets, and receive this immediate relief, against which surely not the most rigorous opponent to mendicancy can protest. The cadger and the professional beggar do not go to the soup-kitchen where nothing is charged, for they do not need food, and will only seek a ticket where it is likely to be accompanied by the penny which will buy a quart. Be sure that there are few cases here which are not so necessitous that they are not far from starvation; and many of them represent actually desperate want.

The tickets for obtaining this prompt relief—often only just in time to save some poor creature from utter destitution and crime, and as often administered when a family is without food, and yet clings to the hope of finding work to prevent that separation which they must submit to by becoming paupers—are placed in the hands of clergymen, doctors, district visitors, Bible-women, and those who know the poor, and can feel for them when in hard times they pawn furniture, tools, and clothes, and suffer the extremity of want, before they will apply for parochial relief, and have offered to them the alternative of "going into the house." The annals of the poor, from which extracts occasionally appear in the newspapers in the accounts of coroners' inquests, prove to what dreadful sufferings many decent but destitute people will submit rather than become recognised paupers; and no system of charitable relief outside the workhouse walls will be effectual or useful which does not recognise and respect this feeling. Who would let the possible accident of some unworthy person getting a gratuitous pint of soup stand in the way of a work such as we see going on here, where one year's beneficent action includes above ten thousand persons relieved?—the larger number of whom are temporarily taken into the Hospice, as we shall see presently, while a large contingent is represented by the family tickets, which enable poor working men and women from various districts in London to carry away a gallon of strong nourishing soup and an apronful of bread to their hungry little ones. You see that great heap of pieces of fine bread—slices, hunches, remnants of big loaves, dry toast, French bread, brown bread, and rolls—all placed in a clean wooden bin, they also come from the two great West End clubs before mentioned, and are so appreciated by the applicants for relief (they being usually good judges of quality) that you may note a look of disappointment if the stock of club bread has been exhausted, and a portion of one of the common loaves bought for the purpose is substituted. The small broken bread in those clean sacks is club bread also—the crumbs from rich men's tables, but clean, and thoroughly good, fit for immediate addition to the soup, which a hungry company of diners consume in a painfully short space of time.

They are not inhabitants of this district, either; comparatively few come from the immediate neighbourhood, though, of course, some poor families of the adjacent streets and alleys, and occasionally foreign workmen—many of them adepts in artistic employments, who are in the land of the stranger and in want—come here and have not only the help of a meal, but the kind inquiry, the further aid that will sustain hope, and enable them to look for work, and find the means of living. Londoners from Kentish Town, Lambeth, Shoreditch, and Chelsea—poor hungry men and women from all parts of the great city—find their way here to obtain a dinner; and it is extremely unlikely that they would leave even the least profitable employment and walk so far for the sake of a basin of soup. Food alone is offered, not money, and there is little probability of imposition when there is so little to be gained by the attempt. But while the great cauldrons are being emptied, let us hear what they do at this "Mont St. Bernard Hospice" at the Christmas season.

Here is a list of good things that were sent last Christmas-tide for a special purpose:—A noble earl sent a sheep, if not more than one, and other generous givers in kind—many of them manufacturers of or dealers in the articles they contributed—forwarded loaves, biscuits, hams, rice, flour, currants, raisins, ale, porter, cocoa, peas, and other comfortable meats and drinks, so that there



(*Drawn by* F. BARNARD.)

"She stayed till her alarm, and a little natural resentment of his injustice, had passed away."—*p.* 349.

was a glorious distribution to the poor on Christmas Eve, when 936 families were provided with a Christmas dinner, consisting of 4 lbs. of beef, 3 lbs. of pudding, bread, tea, and sugar, together with such other seasonable and most acceptable gifts as were apportioned to them in accordance with the number of their children and the quantity of miscellaneous eatables and drinkables available for the purpose.

But we have not quite done with it yet, for it is a hospice in fact, as well as in name. Just as in the Newport Market Refuge, the houseless and destitute are received with little question—the homeless and friendless are here taken in after little inquiry, even the subscriber's ticket for admission being occasionally dispensed with, when Mr. Stevens, the superintendent, sees an obviously worthy case among the applicants who come to ask for a meal. It must be remembered, however, that an experienced eye can detect the casual very readily, and that Mr. Stevens, who served with his friend Sergeant Ramsden, of Newport Market, when they were both in the army, is as smart a detective as that shrewd and compassionate officer. It is so much the better for those who are really deserving—so much the better even for those who, being ashamed to dig, are not ashamed to beg—the ne'er-do-weels who, even in the degradation of poverty brought about by idleness and dissipation, come down to solicit food and shelter, and find both, together with ready help, if they will mend their ways. There are some such, but not many: more often a man of education, broken by misfortune, and perhaps by the loss of a situation through failure or accident beyond his control, finds himself starving and desolate. Such men have come here, and found, first, food, then a lavatory, then a bed in a good-sized room, where only seven or eight persons are received to sleep, then a confidential talk, advice, the introduction to people willing and able to help them among the committee and subscribers of the Institution.

It may be a French tutor destitute in London, but with his character and ability beyond doubt; it may be, it has been, a young foreign artist; a skilled labourer from the country, who has come to London to find work and finds want instead; a poor school-teacher who, having lost an appointment, and being unable to work at any other calling, is in despair, and knows not where to turn; an honest fellow, ready and willing to turn his hand to anything, but finding nothing to which he can turn his hand without an introduction. Such are the cases which are received at this hospice in Ham Yard, where they are permitted to remain for a day or two, or even for a week or two, till they find work, or till somebody can make inquiries about them and help them to what they seek.

About seven men and eight women can be received within the walls, but there are seldom the full number there, because it is necessary to discriminate carefully. The object is to relieve immediate and painful distress, and to give that timely aid which averts starvation by the gift of food, and prevents the degradation of pauperism by means of advice, assistance, and just so much support as will give the stricken and friendless men or women time to recover from the first stupor of hopelessness or the dread of perishing, and at the same time afford the opportunity of proving that they are ready and willing to begin anew, with the consciousness that they have not been left desolate.

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE week that intervened between Sophie's death and interment was always reckoned by Eda as one of the saddest and most unsatisfactory periods of her life. It is true that a long-cherished wish was realised—that she was dwelling once again beneath the same roof with her brother, and there was nought to come between them, save the memory of the dead; yet she could take no pleasure in Mark's society. He seemed to be very unhappy, wandering from room to room, or sitting in a dejected attitude before the fire; he was always complaining that the house was chilly and comfortless, and rarely saying anything else unless addressed; but he evinced none of that tender sorrow with which we mourn some loved one suddenly snatched away. It is true that he would sometimes burst into self-reproaches, and blame himself for not having obeyed the summons home more promptly; but he always wound up with an assertion that he could have done nothing, positively nothing, for his dying wife, had he been on the spot hours earlier.

"Did Sophie appear to be distressed at my absence?" he asked Eda, on one of these occasions.

Eda was obliged to acknowledge that Mrs. Granton had only mentioned her husband's name once, and then it was to say, mournfully, "He never loved me! He will not miss me!" She could not bring herself to add that Sophie had asked her to repeat the words of Wolsey when he fell into disgrace, "Had I but served my God," &c., and was evidently applying them

to her own case, as she sorrowfully murmured them to herself again and again.

But after a day or two, Mark, by some mental process Eda could not fathom, contrived to convince himself that he had indulged in his remorse long enough, and might allow other emotions to come to the surface.

"Did Sophie make another will?" he inquired of his sister. "I suppose you know—what, however, I never discovered till after we were married—that her property was entirely under her own control? Soon after our marriage she devised it to me, for my sole use. Poor Sophie, I think she was fond of me! She did not make any alterations in her bequests?"

"I do not know; we never had any conversation on the subject."

"You are *quite sure* that she did not send for her lawyer, or for that meddling Edwards?"

"Nay, Mark; on the first day of her illness she expressed a wish to see both those gentlemen."

"Well?" queried Mark, anxiously, and with a startled look coming into his eyes, "Did you send for them?"

"Yes; but when they arrived Sophie felt too weak to see either of her visitors, and I had to tell them so, and express to them her regret for having given so much trouble."

Mark's brow began to clear, and he settled himself in a more comfortable attitude. "It is just as well that she did not see Edwards, he is a meddling fool, and would have persuaded her to hem me round with provoking restrictions. I have had enough to contend with already. Poor Sophie was very narrow-minded, in spite of her warm heart and generous disposition. We might have been very happy if she had not been so opinionated."

Eda opposed to such remarks as these a silence that was sufficiently eloquent, if Mark had not been too self-engrossed to perceive how much he shocked and distressed her by every fresh instance of his utter indifference to his wife. And when, feeling no compunction at unfolding his designs to so safe a listener, he began to sketch out his future, she generally brought his communications to an abrupt close by making an excuse for leaving him.

"I do not think I shall keep this house," he said, when he came down-stairs on the morning appointed for the funeral. "The air of the place does not suit me. I have such frightful dreams! As soon as we can do so decently, we will advertise it to be let or sold furnished, and you and I will go into apartments nearer town, till I can settle myself somewhere else. You'll not think of leaving me just yet, Eda?" he went on, when he found that she did not answer; "my nerves are so terribly shaken, I do not feel fit to be left alone. You're not thinking of quitting Sydenham, are you?"

"Not at present, for Mr. Allonby is not ready," she answered, blushing slightly.

"Nor ever will be," said Mark, abruptly. "If he had cared anything about you, he would not have made such paltry excuses for delaying your marriage."

Eda's colour rose. "Fritz has not made any excuses; none are needed; we quite understand each other."

"Yes, you are one of those simple trusting girls that such men like to trifle with; but, never mind, I'll put an end to his shilly-shallying, and my sister shall marry some one fitter for her than a third-rate artist, who shelters himself behind his brothers and sisters, and his responsibilities, when it does not suit him to fulfil his engagements!"

This attack upon Fritz Allonby fairly took away Eda's breath. She was very much inclined to angrily forbid Mark's interference, but it was not a proper moment for risking a dispute, and so she constrained herself to make no reply. If her brother broached the subject at some future time, she would then tell him that she had deliberately pledged herself to become the wife of Fritz when he felt himself justified in asking her to fulfil her promise. Till then she resolved to wait, and trust him, let Mark say what he would.

The funeral ceremony was attended with what Eda considered a great deal of unnecessary pomp and show. Knowing how sad and secluded a life Sophie had been living, it pained her to see so many indifferent persons assembled at her interment. But Mark willed it so; he had invited every one who could claim any acquaintance with his late wife, and he had desired the undertaker not to spare any adjuncts to the ceremony that could heighten its effect, or prove the profundity of his own grief.

That he was deeply impressed while he stood by the grave his sighs and almost convulsive shudders attested; yet, when the funeral cortége had returned to the house, he was sufficiently recovered to listen to the reading of Sophie's will.

He thought himself well acquainted with its purport. But did no misgivings assail him? Had he never reminded himself of her warning words—not spoken in the heat of passion, but with the most sorrowful earnestness—that if he insisted on having the one thousand pounds she was so unwilling to sink in a doubtful scheme, it would be the last, actually the last sum he would ever wring from her love or her duty?

Eda, who would gladly have excused herself from being present had he not peremptorily desired her to remain, saw, from the quiet corner to which she retired, Mark's face flush and change when the lawyer unfolded a parchment he had brought with him; and, rising from his seat, he exclaimed, in tones sharpened by uneasiness, "What is that?"

"The will Mrs. Granton signed at our office, and left in our care," the lawyer civilly explained.

Mark stepped forward, glanced over the speaker's shoulder, and began to evince much agitation.

"That is not the will my deceased wife dictated shortly after our marriage."

"No, Mr. Granton, it is not. About a week or ten days before Mrs. Granton's illness, she came to our office, asked for the will to which you are alluding, and destroyed it in our presence. By her directions I then drew up the one I am now going to read, and she signed it in the presence of sufficient witnesses."

"Did she go to your office alone?" and Mark's eyes rested suspiciously on Mr. Edwards, who met his gaze, however, with unruffled composure.

"Yes; Mrs. Granton was alone, and, at her request, we procured her a cab when she left us, as she disliked making her way to the railway station on foot without a companion. Shall I proceed?"

Mark nodded assent, and then sank back in his chair, and shaded his eyes with a hand that trembled violently. Hitherto he had been inclined to congratulate himself that the brief illness of his wife had effectually prevented any alteration in the conditions of her bequests; but his confidence had received a rude shock when he discovered that she had not only destroyed the document drawn up at the time she believed him to be devotedly attached to her, but executed another without consulting him, or even making him aware of the step she had taken. He began to feel sick with fear of the consequences. He had dwelt so much on the pleasant thought of having the uncontrolled use of this money, that the shock of learning that it might not be his after all was indeed a startling one. Now that it was too late, he recalled the early days of his married life—the unlimited trust his wife had then reposed in him, and *how he had requited it.* To grasp at gold he had trampled down every kinder, better feeling. There had even been a guilty joy fluttering in his heart ever since Sophie died, and he had been able to secretly tell himself that there was no one now to thwart his schemes, be they ever so ambitious or visionary!

But the lawyer was droning through the customary preamble, and he roused himself to listen, impatiently flinging off the hand which Eda, who had stolen to his side, laid affectionately on his shoulder.

"To her beloved husband—thank heaven there was no allusions to his unkindness—to her beloved husband, Mrs. Granton devised an annuity of one hundred pounds per annum, to be paid to him in quarterly instalments."

Just enough to keep him from positive want! and Mark's face grew ghastly as he heard it.

Was this all she had bequeathed to him? Yes; *all.* After setting aside certain sums to be paid to charitable institutions, she left the remainder of her property to her faithful friend, Joseph Edwards, of —— Lane, City, in trust for her sister-in-law, Eda, or Editha, Granton, to whom she also bequeathed her wardrobe, jewellery, and such articles of plate as Eda might choose to select. In the event of the legatee refusing to accept these bequests they were to devolve upon the charities already named.

Mark Granton's pride enabled him to conceal his mortification from the eyes of his guests, but Eda sat like one stunned, her only thought, how could Sophie be so cruel as to enrich her at her brother's expense?—how imagine that she would ever accept a bequest that would impoverish him?

A burst of tears relieved her a little, and by the time the so-called mourners, seeing that they were *de trop,* had said their adieus and departed, she had regained her composure. She was even sanguine enough to tell herself that after all it was of little consequence. This will had doubtless been dictated in one of those fits of jealous fury that attacked the unhappy wife but too often; but Sophie had felt no remorse, no uneasiness concerning her rash act, knowing full well that Eda loved her brother too dearly to take advantage of it.

"I shall make the property over to Mark," Eda concluded, as she wiped her tears away, "reserving to myself a few little articles that poor Sophie valued, and this unfortunate document will be as if it never existed."

But when she would have thrown her arms around her brother's neck, and assured him that she should only consider herself his purse-bearer, she was roughly repulsed. They were alone now, and the mask of smiling indifference Mark had been forcing himself to wear could be thrown off.

"Hypocrite!" he exclaimed. "Do you think to silence my reproaches by such deceptive caresses? It was you who dictated this will!"

"No, Mark, no, on my honour. I had not seen nor even heard of it till now!"

"But you cunningly suggested it. You sided and condoled with the weak woman, who could be so easily led by any pretence of affection, till you persuaded her to think you an angel and me a fiend! If I had not trusted you so blindly I might have foreseen that you would take advantage of her infatuation."

"You cannot mean what you are saying," Eda faltered, in dismay. "You cannot really think that I have wronged you. Oh, Mark, do me more justice! I am incapable of such conduct. It would be unnatural."

"Pshaw! you are the gainer by it, and so no one will blame you," he responded, bitterly.

"But, Mark, my dear brother, pray do not speak in this strain! After all what will it signify? I mean——"

But ere she could finish the sentence he broke into passionate exclamations.

Did she pretend not to know what it signified to him? Was it to mock him she took this tone? "I am ruined," he added, "ruined, beggared! every hope blighted—every aspiration crushed—and through you! through you!"

In his fury he strode towards her with his hand upraised and clenched, as if tempted to strike her; but Eda, perceiving that he was no longer master of himself, turned and fled; nor did she pause till she had reached the room so lately tenanted by the unhappy Sophie, and locked herself within it.

There, kneeling by the window, with her arms folded on the cushioned seat, she stayed till her alarm, and a little natural resentment of his injustice, had passed away; till she could say softly and pityingly, "Poor Mark, poor mistaken Mark! is this to be the end of his attempts to win riches? Will he never never see how much he loses while he grasps at baser metal!"

CHAPTER XLIV.

EDA went to rest sanguine of finding her brother more reasonable in the morning; but she was doomed to be disappointed. Mark regretted the loss of the money too deeply not to feel very bitter towards the more fortunate legatee. He came to the breakfast-table still pale and sullen—returning the briefest answers to her conciliatory speeches, and when she would have entered on the subject of the will, silencing her with such cruel taunts that at last she could not hear them patiently.

"For shame, Mark, for shame!" she cried, indignantly. "Do you judge me by yourself? Do you think that gold is more precious in my eyes than my own self-respect? Peace! I will not hear you say such things again!"

And she ran out of the room, determined to take refuge with Gran till Mark had come to his senses, and could be induced to believe her protestations of innocence. But ere her trunks were packed, she hesitated to take this step. How could she leave him in his present mood? Did he not need her forbearance now more than he had ever done? If she—his nearest relative—his truest, and, perhaps, in the day of adversity, his only friend, estranged herself, and left him to his own devices, what would be the end of it?

With these thoughts kindlier emotions returned. She would be patient with him, be he ever so froward, and take counsel with Fritz how to act with regard to the acceptance or rejection of Sophie's bequest. No pleasurable feelings could attach to it if Mark must be the sufferer by her prosperity, and but for the hope that he would permit her to share it with him, she would have been tempted to write to Mrs. Granton's lawyer at once, and positively decline to become the recipient of the legacy.

However, Eda was not accustomed to act too hastily. Fritz, whose well-doing was as dear to her as her brother's, must be considered and consulted, and she was just folding and directing a note to the artist, entreating him to come to her at the earliest opportunity, when Mr. Edwards was announced.

"I am glad to find you alone, Miss Granton," he said, "because I want you to thoroughly understand my deceased client's motives in making so strange a will. I had enjoyed her confidence for some years, and I believe that since she learned from her physician that her days were numbered, she was unselfishly anxious to do her best for the young man she married—excuse my candour—more hastily than wisely."

"And yet——" Eda began, but paused, unwilling to cast a shadow of blame on the memory of the dead.

"And yet you think she has treated him ill in leaving him merely a small annuity? She did not do this till she had assured herself that Mr. Granton had fallen into the hands of a set of scheming, unscrupulous men, who will ruin him. Had she left him all she possessed it would only have gone to swell their purses. Can you wonder, then, that she preferred to bequeath it to a person who would put it to better uses?"

"But why should Mark always be the dupe of the designing?" asked Eda, doubtfully, for she was disposed to resent the disparaging tone in which the elderly and successful man spoke of his younger rival in the field.

"I think I can tell you, Miss Granton. It is because he is over-confident in his own abilities as a man of business."

"Mark is clever, energetic, and persevering, no one can deny that!" the affectionate sister interposed.

"And yet he is always being victimised, because he is not content with reasonable gains. He has heard of speculators who by some lucky chance have bagged their thousands, and he aspires to be equally fortunate; this it is that induces him to consort with a set of crafty fellows who encourage his eagerness to grow rich, not from any desire to see him succeed, but that they may make use of him, and so he is flattered and blinded with promises that some day or other he finds his clever friends unable to perform. How people, who are sensible enough on other points, can be so easily led away, so duped by the tall talk and speciousness of a few knavish rascals, I never have been able to understand, and perhaps I never shall."

"But how shall I make my brother see that it was in love, and not from any revengeful feeling for fancied slights, that his wife dictated her will?"

Mr. Edwards, who had grown very warm with talking, fanned himself with his hat, and pondered a while before replying.

"You must not think that I approve of what Mrs. Granton has done, for I see that it has placed you in a false position; but I had no hand in it, beyond verifying her own suspicions of the state of Mr. Granton's affairs."

"Are you then quite sure that they are as desperate as he—as you have just now represented them?"

"Quite," was the emphatic reply.

"But a timely advance, might it not enable him to recover himself?" asked Eda, doubtfully.

"No, for the scheme in which he has embarked so much of his cash, and would have *risked* more, has no foundation. It is one of those paper kites flown to attract the unwary, as Mr. Granton himself will soon be forced to acknowledge. A very little while, and there will be an exposure, and the projectors of the affair will make themselves scarce till the first hue and cry has gone over. Depend upon it, my dear young lady, your brother will be better off with the annuity he now despises than if he were burdened with the liabilities of a defunct company. When he begins to see this, then tell him that steady work is the surest and only legitimate road to prosperity. and that making money for money's sake is about the saddest lot to which a clever young fellow can doom himself."

When Fritz Allonby arrived, bringing in his looks and softened voice the pity and comfort Eda now so sorely needed, he would fain have taken his betrothed at once to Gran and Doris, for her face wore a sadder and more harassed look than he had ever before seen upon it. But he had too great a reverence for the bond of brotherly and sisterly unity to counsel her to take any step that might increase the ill-feeling Mark was already evincing, and so he contented himself with doing his best to cheer her, and counselling patience.

"Your brother cannot long remain insensible to the truth, dear Eda. In the first bitterness of his mortification he has forgotten your much-tried affection and your consistent life. Presently he will be ashamed of his violence, and you may be able to make some arrangement for his future without galling his pride or interfering with his own independence of action."

The advice was felt to be good; and, sustained and inspirited by her lover's daily letters, Eda persevered in her endeavours to conciliate the angry sullen man whom she only saw at meals, and who still refused to see her pleading looks or accept her smallest attentions.

One morning, as they sat *vis-à-vis* at their silent, unsocial breakfast, she saw Mark suddenly lay down the morning paper, looking, as he leaned back in his chair, so ghastly, that she started up, thinking he was ill; but without replying to her inquiries he put her aside, and left the room. However, on running her eye down the column he had been reading, the cause of his agitation was palpable enough, for there, in large letters, she saw announced, "Another Fraud on the Public. Collapse of the —— Company." The bubble had burst, and the secretary had absconded, carrying with him the last thousand Mark had wrung from his reluctant wife.

That same evening one of the servants whispered to Eda that Mr. Granton was packing a portmanteau, and making preparations for a journey.

(To be concluded.)

AUNT JESSIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER II.

A FEW evenings afterwards, when Esther came home as usual, her quick eyes perceived in a moment that something was amiss with her aunt. It was not only that the patient face looked even paler than its wont, but there was a deeper shade of sadness on it—so deep that even the smile of welcome with which she always greeted the returning one could not entirely chase it away.

"What is it, Aunt Jessie?" said the young girl, coming across and taking up her favourite position on her knees in front of the little fire, and close beside her aunt's chair. "Has anything been vexing you?"

"I'm afraid I've been vexing myself, dear, and fretting a great deal more than I ought, when I've so many blessings left me."

"But what have you to fret about, aunt?—I mean, what new thing?" and Esther looked up with that searching inquiring gaze with which she so often lately had scanned her aunt's face.

"I took the shirts back to-day, Esther, to Mr. Jones."

"Did you?" exclaimed the girl, with a start, as she thought upon the heavy sleep which had prevented her awaking the last two or three mornings, until so late that there was not a minute for work. "I thought they weren't finished," she added.

"Yes; I finished them this afternoon, and went with them directly, because, you know, Mr. Jones was in such a hurry for them. But, Esther——"

"What, Aunt Jessie?"

"He says he can't give me any more to do."

The last words were spoken in a sad tone, and brought tears into the eyes of the young girl. She tried to blink them away unperceived, looking earnestly into the fire meantime; and then, in as quiet and calm a voice as she could assume, asked, "Why won't he give you any more, auntie?"

"Because"—and the speaker paused, as though reluctant to bring out the words—"because, he says, they are so badly done—some of them, at least—that he could never sell them with such work in them. He said he couldn't afford to pay me for simply spoiling the goods."

"Oh, Aunt Jessie!"

"So I had to come away without any more. Only he picked out two or three, and said I must do them over again, and put better work in them."

"Oh, auntie, how could he!"

"It was quite natural, dear, if they were badly done."

"But you've worked for him so many years; and I'm sure you used to put beautiful work—nobody could have done better."

"'Used to,' perhaps; but I don't now, I'm afraid. Mr. Jones has found fault several times lately; and at last he says he can't employ me any more."

There was a moment's pause, during which time Esther remained motionless, with her head resting on her aunt's lap, and her face hidden from view.

"Can you guess *why* the work is so badly done, Esther, dear?" and the elder woman's hand was laid gently upon the bowed head before her.

Another pause; and then all Esther said was the one word—"Why?"

"Because, my child—and it's no use to try to hide it from you any longer—your aunt is getting old, and her sight isn't what it used to be. In fact, Esther, I—*I am getting blind!*"

The girl started up, and threw her arms impulsively round the other's neck.

"Oh, auntie, surely, surely it cannot be true!"

"It is, my darling, I'm afraid, too true!"

"But perhaps it may get better again. Perhaps, if you were to go to some doctor, he might be able to do you some good. You haven't tried that yet."

"Yes I have, dear: I've been to Dr. Middleton, who is considered so clever with the eyes. I went at the time he sees people free; and he looked at me, and said he feared there was no hope."

"You never told me," said Esther, in tones of gentle reproach.

"No, dear, I didn't tell you, because I couldn't bear to bring any fresh cares upon your shoulders, and so I thought I would wait until I was quite sure. I tried to hide it from you, for I thought that as long as ever I could you should go on in ignorance of the trouble coming upon us. But now, Esther, I can't keep it from you any longer."

The young girl kept her own counsel, and said not a word of how she had guessed the secret for herself, and how her heart had often bled, to watch the precious sight growing dimmer day by day. She had seen through the loving devices of the other to endeavour to spare her as long as possible, and had breathed not a word of her suspicions; but it had been hard at times not to break through the barriers of silence, and pour out the sympathy with which her heart had overflowed whenever she had seen the deepening look of care and sadness resting on the beloved face of her who had been almost more than a mother to her.

For they both knew what blindness meant in this case: not simply deprivation of sight—one of God's choicest blessings—but the means of earning a livelihood, scanty though that might have been, taken away, and nothing save deepest poverty, almost starvation, staring the elder one in the face, or, that greatest dread and fear of the poor, the workhouse. For Esther—willing as she was, and ready, in the depths of her grateful loving heart to work and toil as far as human strength and ability could carry her—knew to her sorrow, that she could do little more than she did already.

She had only lately obtained this, her first situation, in Mr. Webbe's shop; and for the next two or three years she was to receive nothing, but to give her services in return for learning the business. She had her dinner and tea there, and, indeed, could have lived altogether in the house; but it was her own wish and choice to come home every night, even though doing so involved a long walk through some of the worst parts of the city. But her aunt would have been lonely without her; and that aunt had toiled and striven for her ever since she had been left, a helpless infant, to her care. Esther longed so ardently to be able to repay some of that love and devotion; but circumstances had always seemed against her.

When Esther had been old enough to leave school, Mrs. Lang, thinking it would be a good thing for her niece, and might enable them hereafter to keep a little home together, had embraced an opportunity which offered itself of apprenticing her to a dressmaker who at that time was living in the same house, and, according to appearances, had a tolerably good business. To do this she had been forced to "live hard," as the expression goes—had stinted herself in every way, and had sat up a great part of the night, week after week, and month after month, working as fast as her fingers could go, at the shirt-making, which was her only means of earning money.

The shop for which she worked had employed her for years, and she had received a constant supply, sufficient to keep her always occupied. But it was miserable pay—only enough, with all her industry, to provide them with the bare necessaries of life, without which they must have perished, and making no compensation for the perpetual weary aching of back, and head, and eyes, which such close unremitting application entailed.

At length, when Esther's term of apprenticeship was beginning to draw to a close, and she was indulging hopes of being able in time to earn something, and thus be no longer a burden to her aunt, Miss Cooper's affairs suddenly appeared to be in inextricable confusion, she hastily threw up her business, quitted the place, and Esther was cast upon her own resources.

Nothing had offered, save this situation at Mr. Webbe's—a linendraper's shop, in one of the busiest and most crowded of the narrow streets of the old city. Esther had engaged herself, as they were

honest respectable people; and, in time, there was the promise of a salary, though for the present her hopes of helping her aunt were disappointed.

She had hard work at her new post—had to be there early in the morning and late at night, with scarcely a minute's breathing-space through the day, and the additional fatigue of her long walk to and fro. And she was naturally delicate, and ill fitted to stand such a life. But she had a brave spirit, and tried to make light of all disagreeables, and be, as she had ever been, the joy and comfort of her aunt's declining years. But Mrs. Lang knew, and her niece knew, that with the former's sight would go her power of maintaining herself; and Esther not having yet attained to the summit of her wishes—namely, to be able to support them both—what could be done?

No wonder that the utterance of that short sentence—"I am getting blind!"—had struck with a chill sense of sorrow upon the young heart, confirming the fears which she had been struggling to put from her; whilst even to the other the sound of her own words seemed to place the fact beyond all doubt and question.

Esther took the rejected shirts—for there was no longer cause for concealment; she need no longer pretend not to see that the sight of the other was failing—and, trying to force back the tears which filled her eyes, she bent over her work for some time without speaking.

"It's all quite right, Esther," said the quiet voice of her aunt, at length—"we are sure of that, aren't we?"

No reply, save a sort of stifled sob.

"And if we should have to part for a time, and I seek a shelter somewhere else, it would still all be right and kind—we should be certain of that, shouldn't we?"

"Oh, Aunt Jessie! it seems so hard!"

"That's because we can't see aright, Esther. But whatever we do, don't let us doubt the loving-kindness of our Father. I have been faithless, I know; I've sat wondering and thinking what would become of us, and prayed the Lord to spare me my sight until you were able to be earning something; because I know your loving heart, Esther, and that you'd be glad to give me a share of anything you had."

"Oh, how glad!" ejaculated Esther.

"But He hasn't granted me that," pursued the other, "and so I know He has something better for me instead. If that had been the best thing, He would have given it."

Esther glanced up with a sort of veneration at the sweet face before her, marvelling at its patience and calmness; and as she looked, she inwardly acknowledged that she had still much to learn before she could yield up her will in such submission.

(To be continued.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

133. What king was smitten with leprosy for burning incense?

134. What miracle did God work to enable a widow to pay her debts?

135. Quote a passage in which several tools of the carpenter are mentioned.

136. Mention some women who helped to build the wall of Jerusalem.

137. Who are mentioned by St. Paul as his kinsmen?

138. Where is it stated that to win an "offended brother" is harder than to take a strong city? Quote passage.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 320.

121. Cracknels (1 Kings xiv. 3).

122. "Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans?" (Acts ii. 7).

123. When Ebed-melech, the Ethiopian, drew up Jeremiah out of the dungeon (Jer. xxxviii. 11, 12).

124. Because "he spake of trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes" (1 Kings iv. 33).

125. The Epistle to the Galatians—"Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand" (Gal. vi. 11).

126. Omri (1 Kings xvi. 23, 24).

MINE.

IF mine 's the tree, the leaves were mine,
But they from all their boughs are fled;
If mine 's the field, the tree was mine,
But that is weather-wrecked and dead.

If mine 's the stream, the water 's mine,
But yet for me it will not stay;
I cannot keep me all that's mine,
As God may will it goes away.

But if I lose the leaves of mine,
The spring gives new ones to the twig;
And if I lose a tree of mine,
My sapling groweth on tree-big.

If I lose water that is mine,
More follows to me from above;
And if the Lord may take of mine
He well can make it good in love.



(*Drawn by* F. BARNARD.)

THE SONG OF THE BELLS.

REMINISCENCES.

ONE sunny morn in early Spring,
When the grass was bright with dew,
And from his nest with flutt'ring wing
The lark to heaven flew,

Passing beneath the grey church tower,
We heard the old bells ring—
My love and I—and mystic power
Seemed born in their joyous swing;

And as the notes came stealing
Along on the breezy wind,
Glad hopes in their tones revealing,
We stood with arms entwined;
For they told of a joyous morrow,
When we two should be one,
Of a life scarce knowing sorrow
Beneath Love's cheering sun.

At noon-tide on a summer's day,
When all around was bright,
And soft white clouds of fleecy spray
Were sparkling in the light,
Slow-stepping from the church's shade
We heard the glad bells peal—
My wife and I—the day that made
Us one for wee or weal;
And the tones o' the bells loud ringing
Our joyous marriage lay,
Seemed those of old friends bringing
Good wishes for the day;
For they sang of a happy present,
Of joy in the bright to-be,
Of a future whose sky was pleasant,
From threat'ning storm-clouds free.

When blew the breath of autumn days
Through trees fast growing bare,
And the setting sun's bright golden rays
Were flushing the mellow air,
Walking along the dead leaves o'er,
We heard the bells again,
And memory with their music bore
One little note of pain;
For the voice of the bells seemed telling
Of a child at her mother's knee;
And then like dirge-notes swelling
In mournful melody;
Hands clasped in prayer at even,
Cold with the morning sun!
O Lord, who hast all good given,
Thy will, Thy will be done!

On frosty night 'mid Winter drear,
When snow lies thick without,
We wait the death o' the glad old year,
And hear the bells ring out—
Those bells we heard in days long-past,
We hear again to-night,
And this world's veil seems fading fast,
And rolling out of sight;
For the tones o' the bells loud ringing
The happy young year's lay,
To us seem also singing
To welcome us away;
For they tell of a home in heaven,
A haven of peace and love,
Where we who on earth have striven
May dwell together above.

G. W.

LOST IN THE WINNING.

CHAPTER XLV.

THE thought that Mark might be leaving her to return no more gave Eda courage to enter his room, and beseech him to tell her whither he was going.

"To America," he answered, without looking up from the valise he was strapping; "there may be better openings for a penniless man in that country than there are in this."

"But you will never be penniless, dearest Mark, while I have anything for you to share. Why will you persist in misjudging me? How can you help seeing that I deplore Sophie's bequest as much—nay, more than you do?"

"We will not discuss this subject," he answered, more affected by her streaming eyes and clinging arms than he would have acknowledged. "No, I am not angry with you now, Eda. If you did forestall me with my wife, you only acted on my own maxim—every one for himself. No, I am not angry; but we are best apart, and I am sick of England."

"But these are not sufficient reasons why you should leave in such haste," she urged, resolutely putting her own soreness of heart in the background. "If you are determined to begin the world afresh in another land, it would be useless opposing you; but let me go with you, if only for a year or two. Oh, my brother, don't thrust me from you again! Let me share your fortunes till you are a happier man."

"This is nonsense," he exclaimed, roughly. "You know very well that if I were to accept your offer you would draw back."

"Try me!" she said, looking into his face—"try me, Mark!"

"And Mr. Allonby? I thought your attachment in that quarter would come to nothing as soon as you heard of this legacy!"

The sneer was passed over as if she did not hear it; though Eda's voice took a tenderer tone as she replied, "Fritz will wait for me. We do not love each other so lightly as to fear a parting, even though it may be a long one; and he is too fond of his own brothers—too ready to make far greater sacrifices for their sakes—to come between me and mine."

"I shall not demand any sacrifice from either of you. I will go alone, and you can forget me as soon as you please; though I suppose I need not have troubled you with this injunction; men who have failed soon pass out of mind."

Eda's tears dried on her cheeks as she listened to this cruel speech, and she felt greatly tempted to leave him; but the impulse was conquered, and only by a quiver in her voice did she betray how deeply it had stung her.

"Mark, we are the children of the same loving mother, whose last words were a prayer for those she left behind. Had I no affection for you I should still endeavour to obey her injunction, that we should cling together; and I am ready to share your fortune either in England or America until brighter days smile upon you."

He did not answer, till, wearying of his silence, she said, "Will you not take me with you?" when he uttered a curt and decided, "No."

Still Eda kept back the angry words thronging to her lips. It was hard to have her affection slighted, and her motives misconstrued, but she would not increase the bitterness of such a parting by retaliating; and, bending over him as he knelt on the floor busy with the lock of a travelling-bag, she left a kiss and a tear on his forehead, and then sorrowfully turned away.

"Eda!"

The barrier was broken down at last! With his features working convulsively, and a suspicious moisture in his eyes, Mark had started up and extended his arms. The next moment his sister was wrapped in them, and weeping on his breast. For some time not a word was spoken, nor was any avowal made of remorse for past unkindness. But it was not needed; that long lingering embrace atoned to Eda for all she had suffered.

"You must let me go, little sis," Mark said, presently, touching the valise with his foot; "I shall never do any good here, and I have always had a great fancy for seeing New York."

"But not alone, Mark?"

"Yes, Eda, *alone!* No, not another word; I neither can nor will take you with me. I have been a selfish fellow all my life, but I'm not bad enough to stand in the way of your marriage. Every one speaks so well of Allonby, that I suppose he is worthy of you. When I have made a fortune I'll come back to see you in your new character as a wife."

"But you will take time for consideration; you will promise not to do anything hastily?"

He hesitated; but he could no longer steel himself against her entreaties. "To please you, I will start from London in the *Bremen*, which does not sail for a week, instead of taking my passage from Liverpool to-morrow; but pray don't ask any further concessions, there's a good girl! for nothing but change and action will rid me of the feverish misery that is now oppressing me. I cannot reconcile myself yet to what has happened."

Eda clung closely to his side during the next few days, or when he was absent busied herself in gathering together everything that could add to his comfort on the voyage. She removed to an hotel in the City, so as to be near him when the winding up of some business connected with the defunct company rendered his presence there necessary; and Doris joined her, proving invaluable in selecting and packing the voyager's wardrobe. Fritz, too, came once or twice every day, to give his betrothed the support of his firmer mind; and though Mark had in a great measure relapsed into his sullen reserve, he was no longer unkind nor ungrateful.

Eda prayed so earnestly that he would go with her to look at their mother's grave, that, although it was against his will, he consented. But she was almost sorry she had urged it, when Mark, with one hasty glance at the lowly mound, moved away, and waited for her at a distance. How changed he was from the bright bold boy who had been the object of so many prayers! If his mother could see him now, would she recognise in this haggard moody man, whose eyes were rarely lifted from the ground, the hopeful Mark who had thought it would be so easy to climb to fortune?

Then Eda began to grieve for herself. She had started in life intent on carrying out that dear mother's most cherished wish—she had resolved to be Mark's friend and adviser, cheering him when he looked sad, and rejoicing with him when all went well—but every attempt to do this had been thwarted, and by Mark himself.

Ought she, however, to turn back from her self-imposed task now he might be induced to take a truer view of life, and glean from his failures wisdom to guide him through the future?

She carried her troubled thoughts to Gran, who chided her for them. "Child, can't you see that there may be a lesson for yourself in your want of influence over your brother? Haven't you depended too much on what *you* could do towards making him a good man? You forget that he is in God's hands, and under His guidance, though he rebels against it, and won't see it just yet. Pray for him as much as you like, my dear, but leave the issue to Him who doeth all things well."

Eda was rebuked, but at the same time consoled, and she went bravely through the parting scene with Mark, whose spirits rose as he stepped on board the *Bremen*, with the notes his sister had procured from Mr. Edwards in his pocket-book. He was pleased with the arrangements that had been made for his comfort, and the neat little cabin secured for his use; and as his sister and Fritz lingered till the last moment, he began to talk hopefully of what he should achieve in the West.

But his brow clouded when the signal for strangers to leave the ship was given, and he kissed Eda's lips repeatedly ere he put her into Mr. Allonby's arms. "Take care of her!" he said, huskily. "She has been the best of sisters; she will be the best of wives. If I do prove good for anything, it will be to Eda that

I shall owe it; and now wish me success and good-bye!"

But still Eda grasped his sleeve. "I cannot let you go, Mark, till you give me one promise—that if your heart yearns for home, you will come back to us."

"I do promise, Eda."

"And dear, dear brother! will you try to think that there are some things well lost in the winning, and a prize to be won better worth striving for than gold or worldly renown?"

He nodded, and gently withdrew himself from her clasp; but seeing that Eda still regarded him wistfully, he came back to embrace her again, and to whisper, "I do think so now. I do feel that my life has been hitherto one tissue of errors and mistakes: but if I live, little sister—if I live, with God's help," and he bowed his head reverently, "I will retrieve them!"

The ship sailed away, and Eda went to be the light of a good man's home, a true helpmeet to Fritz Allonby, and a wise as well as loving mother to his children.

The ship sailed away, to be heard of never more. Whether, in the tedious hours of the voyage, Mark communed with his own heart, and sought at last the true riches which alone bring peace with them, none here can know; but the hopes engendered by his parting words mingled with Eda's grief for his loss; and by her at least his memory was, and always will be, tenderly cherished.

THE END.

"WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?"—II.

BY THE REV. D. MOORE, M.A., VICAR OF HOLY TRINITY, PADDINGTON; AND CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO THE QUEEN.

"The burden of Dumah. He calleth out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come —Isa. xxi. 11, 12.

THERE is yet one other view sometimes taken of this text and the spirit in which it is proposed, namely, that it is the cry of one under feelings of *real awakening and alarm*, penetrated with a sense of impending danger, and inquiring anxiously as to any appearing signs of its approach. "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?"

And this is a stage of religious experience which it may be believed there are very few who do not pass through, whether it issue in hardened impiety and confirmed estrangement from God, as in the case of Pharaoh, or Felix, or those who were "cut to the heart" at the preaching of Stephen, or whether it be followed up by "a repentance unto salvation," as in the case of the gaoler at Philippi, or of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost. "And when He is come," it is said, with regard to the Divine comforter, "He will reprove the world of sin." This is His first work in the heart of all of us—to revive impressions of guilt upon the conscience, to break up the reign of a false and delusive peace, to suffer us no longer to be settled upon our lees, and to bring before the mental eye, in all its vast proportions, the sin which made a Saviour die. And the greatness of the ransom shows the greatness of the deserved condemnation, and therefore the awful peril of continuing any longer under the frown of God. There is nothing like a right view of the great facts of redemption for helping us to a right understanding of what sin is, what moral government is, what an intensely holy thing the holiness of God is. Who—in contemplation of the quenchless love, the endured scorn, the unknown sufferings, the unwearied compassion of the Son of God, when angels were looking on with powerless amazement, and the arm of the Lord would not suffer itself to be revealed, as if the cross of Christ were a pillar to uphold the sanctities of the eternal throne—could consider sin a light thing? Who—in view of the strong crying and tears, the night-long supplications and prayers, the pleadings, deep, ceaseless, and unutterable ever going up for us before the altar of the Holy One—could consider salvation an easy thing? Who, in anticipation of the fact, that "this same Jesus which is taken up from us into heaven shall so come in like manner as we have seen him go into heaven," to seal his servants on their foreheads, to gather his redeemed under his shadow, to distribute, among the children of the resurrection, mansions, dignities, spoils, thrones, but on the other hand to bind in chains them that loved Him not, to banish from His presence them that sought Him not, to hide in the abysmal deep of eternal night all that refused His grace, resisted His Spirit, put from them the overtures of His mercy, and counted the blood wherewith they should have been sanctified an unholy or an unneeded thing—Who, we ask, in the thought of these things, can rise up, lie down, walk forth, day after day, in the midst of a thousand deaths, without the frequent and anxious self-inquiry, "Am I Christ's? In what state or stage is my soul's work? Lord, make me to know mine end and the measure of my days what it is." "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?"

IV. But let us say a few words on the answer which the watchman returns to this cry. Whether the question be put by the scoffer who rejects the Divine message, by the practical unbeliever who makes too light of it, or by the awakened sinner who would fain be admonished by its threatened penalties, the answer of the prophet is the same—solemn, dignified, startling, full of emphasis, and yet as full of love. "I will tell you what of the night. The morning cometh and also the night. If ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come."

"The morning cometh." The question, we are to suppose, was prompted by something of darkness, already brooding gloomily over the fortunes of the nation. Was this the skirting edge of the coming cloud, the forecast shadow of this predicted night of wrath? "Not yet," answers the watchman, to those who might be really in alarm about the matter. "This darkness will pass away, and your fears with it, it may be. For the light will dawn as usual. And you will think no more of God or of His judgments; will wonder what there could have been in that cloud to alarm you; and will begin to doubt whether all this night of burden, and woe, and wrath, and ruin, be not some gloomy creation of the prophet's brain. But the sun of grace as well as the sun of Nature knows the time of his going down. There is a fixed limit to all your working time, to all your seeking time, to all your praying time. And then the darkness sets its seal to the work, in whatsoever state it be." "The morning cometh and also the night."

The words should suggest a thoughtful scanning of God's ways and dealings with us, more especially His afflictive providences—what they are sent for, how they are received, what impressions they leave behind. It is a merciful necessity of our moral nature that sorrow should endure only "for a night." It may be a very long night, and "the morning" not a very bright one, by which it is succeeded. But if the chastenings of the Lord have been "despised," or if we have "fainted" under his rebukings, if the pruning hook has only made the branch to stretch out in more wild and barren luxuriance, and if, in our ease, we "recant the vows made in pain as frivolous and void," what is the morning to us but a morning between two nights—between the night of unblessed affliction and the night of God's avenging wrath? When trouble was upon us, when there was a cloud upon the spirit, when we saw not the way of peace, when Christ seemed afar off, when, for the greatness of our sins and for the distress of our fears, we "walked in darkness and had no light," we could humbly repair to Christ, the true watchman of Israel, to ask, "What of the night?" "Tell us what of the night?" And in all kindness He answered us, and yet in very faithfulness, "The night you fear is not yet. The morning cometh. The light of God's reconciled countenance shall yet shine upon you; only see to it that ye walk in that light. Go not a step out of that belt of sunshine. It is all darkness beyond—thick darkness. For relapses after vows, backslidings after convictions, new insults after deliverances, lookings back upon Sodom after being dragged therefrom by an angel's hand, these must shorten the hours of our day of visitation, may put an end to them suddenly." "The morning cometh but also the night."

And then let us note the prophet's closing sentence—a full gospel in *three words;* the soul's salvation suspended upon *three acts*—"enquire:" "return," "come. "If ye will enquire, enquire ye"—teachably, as one sincere; diligently, as one in earnest; solemnly, as one resolved to act upon the light you gain. Inquire "what of the night?" when it shall arrive? on whom it shall fall? how its gloom may become changed into brightness, and its shadows as the noon-day? Inquire not the way to Zion only, but the signs that you yourselves are *in* that way. An interest in Christ is too momentous a thing to be taken for granted. The soul's welfare for eternity should rest upon a surer basis than a peradventure. It is too large a concession to the wisdom of the multitude to suppose that the many must be right; and it is poor honour to that "inspiration of the Almighty which gave us understanding" to suppose that we shall any of us get to heaven blindfolded. No; we must "inquire." The marks of vital goodness, the notes of the spiritual mind, the proofs of a subjugated will, the indications that Christ is formed in us, that the spirit dwells in us, that our soul's life is being drawn up into high and mysterious fellowship with the Father and the Son, are matters which we can learn of the great Teacher, and of Him only. "If ye will enquire, enquire ye."

And "return:" for, as supposed in the case of all awakened penitents, you have gone very far wrong; you have ground to retrace, fellowships to break off, false guides to part from and quit for ever. There must be a turning back—to a quitted home, to a forsaken pasture, to arms that would fold you in their kind embrace, to a Father who will weep for you at your return. Only begin while the morning lasteth. Take some practical step at once. Whilst inquiring the way to Zion, set your face thitherward. Resolve: arise: "return."

And then "come." So begins, and so ends all Scripture. Whether the watchman tell of the night, or the prophet assure us of the morning; whether the law tell us of a world where the very "light shall be as darkness," or the gospel of the heavenly Jerusalem saying, "There shall be no night there"—precept or promise, woe or warning, reproof or doctrine, they all speak one voice,

"come." To the cross "come," that you may die to sin; to the grave "come," that you may rise again unto righteousness; to the throne of grace "come," that you may find rest for the burdened spirit; to the heaven of heavens "come," that you may see Jesus in His ascended majesty, loving you as on earth He loved, and loving you to the end. AMEN.

ENGLISH SACRED POETRY.—III.

THE POETRY OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

WE have now carried our history of English sacred poetry from the early times of our Saxon forefathers to the times of Robert Henrysoun, from whose works our last extract was taken, that is to say, to the year 1508. We are rapidly approaching an entirely new epoch in the history of literature, full of interest, and full of great names and mighty works; but before we come to the reign of Queen Elizabeth we must review the sacred poetry of the intervening reigns, particularly that of the reign of Henry VIII. One of the most curious phenomena in the history of English literature is, that between 1461 and 1509, there is scarcely a name of any eminence in the literature. We find none but mediocre versifiers, many of them possessed of respectable talents, capable, too, of writing rhythmically, but all absolutely devoid of genius in the ordinary sense of the word, of that quality which makes Chaucer or Shakespeare or Milton so great. This is more than ordinarily strange, because, usually, when a great poet like Chaucer appears, he is followed, not only by a long train of imitators and disciples, but by men of real and independent genius, who have been stimulated but not inspired by the master mind. But there is another circumstance which makes this period still more anomalous. The genius which ought by the rules of historical analogy to have made its appearance in England appeared in Scotland instead. Three great Scotch poets flourished now, men of whom any country may be justly proud—William Dunbar, Gavin Douglas, and Sir David Lindsay—by the way, the last was a little later, but we class them together because they all three have so much in common, were under the same influences, shared the same sympathies, and present the same characteristics. As, however, none of them can be entitled sacred poets, we shall pass them by, culling a few passages which fall under the class of sacred poems. William Dunbar is a voluminous author: most of his works are allegorical, some of them satirical, all of them thoughtful in conception and brilliant in execution, particularly his "Thistle and Rose," and his "Golden Terge"—the first composed in celebration of the nuptials of James IV. and Margaret Tudor, the second written to demonstrate the general ascendency of love over reason. The following verses are worth reading and reflecting on. The thoughtful reader doubtless will recognise many sentiments and expressions which have won their way into the pages of our modern poets:—

"Be merrie man and take not sair in mind
The wavering of this wretched world of sorrow;
To God be humble, to thy friend be kind,
And with thy neighbours gladly lend and borrow—
His chance to-night, it may be thine to-morrow.
Be blythe in hearte for my aventure,
For oft with wise men it has been said aforow
Without gladness avails no treasure.
Follow on pitie, flee trouble and debate,
With famous folkis hold thy company.
Be charitable and humble in thine estate,
For worldly honour lastes but a cry.
For trouble on earth tak no melancholy;
Be rich in patience, if thou in gudes be porr.
Who lives merrily he lives mightily;
Without gladness avails no treasure."

There is a lovely poem of Dunbar's, in which he fancifully describes the song of a merle and a nightingale: the one praises love, the other contends that all love is lost, save that which has God for its object. The poem is too long to cite at length, but one stanza we cannot forbear quoting. It occurs just after the passage in which the nightingale is represented as having won the merle from the false to the true love:—

"Then sang they both with voices loud and cleare—
The merle saug, 'Man love God that has thee wrought.'
The nightingale sang, 'Man love the Lord most dear,
That thee and all this world made of nought.'
The merle said, 'Love him that thy love has sought
Fro' heaven to earth, and here took flesh and bone.'
The nightingale sang, 'And with his dead thee bought—
All love is lost but upon him alone."

Gavin Douglas, celebrated for his elegant translation of Virgil, only concerns us as being the author of a poem entitled "The Palace of Honour," which is so similar in scope and execution to "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress," that it is difficult to imagine that the author of our great allegory was ignorant of it. Passing over several minor poets, who, not having written sacred poetry, do not concern us, we come to the Earl of Surrey and Sir Thomas Wyat. Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, was born probably in the City of Westminster, about 1516. As he belonged to a noble family, and soon showed signs of that brilliant and accomplished genius which was destined to form an epoch in the literature of his country, the greatest care was taken of his education. He

travelled in Italy and Germany, and on his return became one of the greatest ornaments in the court of Henry VIII. Who has not heard of his romantic attachment to the fair Geraldine, and of his equally romantic friendship with Sir Thomas Wyat? His brilliant military successes at last raised the jealousy of Henry VIII., and this, aggravated by certain family intrigues, particularly with the Seymours, led to his being put on his trial for high treason, January 13th, 1547. The young earl defended himself with great ability, and was staunchly supported by the few friends who stood by him. But all did not avail, and on the 19th of the same month he was beheaded on Tower Hill. His remains were shortly after interred in the Church of All Hallows, Barking, thence they were removed to the place where they now lie, Framingham, Surrey. The Earl of Surrey has left a large collection of poems, mostly dedicated to love, consisting of songs and short pieces. He was the author of the first sonnet in our language, and was the first to introduce blank verse into England. Most of his sacred poems were written towards the close of his life; and he is said to have composed them to atone for the gaiety of his life and the levities of his earlier muse. They consist of paraphrases of certain chapters in Ecclesiastes and in the Psalms. The Psalms he has selected are the fifty-fifth, the seventy-third, and the eighty-eighth. To the first and the second of these he has prefixed a poem, which is a sort of comment on the contents of the Psalm paraphrased. We give a specimen, which is a fair example of these not very interesting works:—

"Give care to my suit, Lord, fromward hide not thy face,
Behold sinking in grief lamenting how I praye,
My fooes they bray so loud and eke threpe on so fast,
Buckled to do me scathe so is their malice bent.
* * * * * *
It was the Lord that breake the bloody compackts of those
That preloked on with yre to slaughter me and mine—
The everlasting God whose kingdom hath no end."

These lumbering lines it will be seen are blank verse of twelve syllables, or Alexandrines. It is curious and somewhat touching to see how the world-worn young poet has selected the passages in sacred writ which are the saddest and the most applicable to his own state. If he could not touch the sacred lyre with the grace and brilliance with which he swept the chords of the secular, he had at least the wisdom to seek for comfort where alone it can be found, and he pointed the path which many of his countrymen more successfully trod. His friend Sir Thomas Wyat has also left some scriptural paraphrases, under the following quaint title: "Certayne Psalms chosen out of the Psalter of David, commonlye called thee VII. Penytentiall Psalms, drawen into Englyshe meter by Sir Thomas Wyat, Knyght, whereunto is added a prologue of the authore before every psalme, very pleasant and profettable to the godly reader." In these poems there is one stanza almost sublime. He represents David after his great sin retiring in shame to a "darcke cave," where he bitterly repents of his wickedness and implores God's mercy:—

"Thys whyle a beam that bryght sonne forth sendeth,
That sonne the whyche was never cloude could hyde,
Pereeth the cave and on the harpe descendethe,
Whose glauncing lyght the cords dyd over glyde,
And such lustre upon the harpe extendethe
As lyght of lampe upon the golde cleane tryed."

The story of Wyat's life is soon told. He was born in 1503, was educated at both Universities, was a brilliant and worthy man at the court of Henry VIII., and formed a memorable friendship with the Earl of Surrey, with whom he had so much in common, and whom he appears to have resembled in genius and accomplishments. Like his friend, he found an early grave, though a tyrant was guiltless of his blood. He died at Sherburne, in Dorsetshire, in 1541, aged 37 years. He has left behind him a large collection of poems much of the same order as Surrey's; as a secular poet he is decidedly inferior to his friend; as a sacred poet as decidedly superior. After Surrey and Wyat followed a collection of poems written after their model, commonly entitled "Poems of uncertain Authors." In this collection there is a rather interesting piece called "The Repentant Sinner in Durance and Adversitie." Of this, the last four lines are quaint and pleasing:—

"With repentant heart I laud thee Lord on high,
That hast so gently set me straight that erst walked so awry,
Now graunt me grace my God to stande thine strong in sprete,
And let the world then work such wayes as to the world seems mete."

George Gascoigne, author of the "Steele Glass" and of two among the first of our early dramas, is the next name on our list, though, chronologically, he belongs to the epoch which will be the subject of our next paper—the Elizabethan age. Gascoigne's poetry is, for the most part, secular, but he has written three sacred poems, which are by no means contemptible, entitled "Gascoigne's Good Morrow," "Gascoigne's Good Night," and "Gascoigne's De Profundis." The most striking characteristic of these pieces is their intense earnestness, every word seems to come from the heart: the verse is flowing, but not of uniform smoothness. We quote a few lines from his last poem, addressed suppliantly to the Almighty:—

"Oh, bend thine eyes attentively to heare!
Oh, turn thine eyes, behold me how I wail!
Oh, hearken Lord, give eare for mine avail!
Oh, mark in mind the burdens that I beare!
See how I sinke in sorrowes everywhere,
Behold and see what aoloure I endure;
Bende willing ear, and pittie therewithall
My wailing voice,
Which hath no choice,
But evermore upon thy name to call."

Gascoigne tells us that the idea of these verses struck him as he was riding in a storm of rain along the high road to London.

We now come to good honest old Tusser, author of "The Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry." He was born at Rivenhall, in Essex, about 1523, of an ancient family. He was educated at Eton, and Trinity College, Cambridge. Thence, under the auspices of his patron William Lord Paget, he proceeded to court, and there for ten years he remained. Tired, however, of that toilsome and fettered life, he exchanged the pursuit of a courtier for the humbler calling of a farmer. He now seems to have roved about from one place to another—too restless to settle, too poor to be altogether idle. The first edition of his "Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry" was printed in 1557, when the poet was living at Ralwood, in Sussex. This poem aims at being to the English farmer what Hesiod's "Works and Days" was to the Greek farmer. He gives advice on almost everything connected with farming; and has produced a work which, in the language of Warton, is valuable as a genuine picture of the agriculture, the rural arts, and the domestic economy and customs of our industrious ancestors. This poem is interspersed with some charming bits of sacred poetry, such as his "Christmas Caroll," a description of Christmas, besides many other stanzas interspersed among his poems, for Tusser was evidently a devout and pious man. These, however, we pass by, and select for quotation a little poem among what he calls his "Miscellaneous." It is entitled "A Poesie for thine own bedchamber":—

"What wisdom more, what better life than pleaseth God to send?
What worldly goods, what longer use than pleaseth God to lend?
What better fare than well content, agreeing with thy wealth?
What better guest than trusty friend in sickness and in health?
What better bed than conscience good, to pass the night with sleep?
What better work than daily care from sin thyself to keep?
What better thought than think on God, and daily Him to serve?
What better gift than to the poor, that ready be to serve?
What greater praise of God and man than mercy for to show?
Who merciless shall mercy find that mercy shows to few?
What worse despair than loth to die for fear to go to hell?
What greater faith than trust in God through Christ in heaven to dwell?"

There is more in these pithy verses than will appear on the first perusal. Tusser, like many others who have given the world wise advice, does not seem to have followed it himself, and this shrewdest and most practical of bards, who was successively musician, courtier, schoolmaster, farmer, grazier, and author, closed a thriftless life in poverty in London, where he lies buried at St. Mildred's Church, in the Poultry, or we should say at the place where St. Mildred's Church used to be, for it has lately been pulled down.

We have now traced the history of sacred poetry to the age of Elizabeth; we have seen the muse gradually passing from the hands of ecclesiastics into those of the laity; we have seen it asserting its position and employing the talents of courtiers and men of fashion like Surrey and Wyat even in the worldly and frivolous court of Henry VIII., and in the future we shall find that it steadily grows with the growth of secular poetry till it culminates in the 17th century with a Milton, in the 18th with a Cowper, in the 19th with a Keble.

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

"MARY."

The voice was very low and feeble which spoke that single word, but it was instantly heard by her to whom it was addressed.

"I am here, dear; I was only gathering this lovely white rose for you—is it not beautiful? So pure and delicate!"

"Yes, it resembles you, my child, with your white dress and fair sweet face," said the old man who had first spoken, with the courtly gallantry of a generation that is rapidly passing away. "But come, now, and sit down beside me; there is much that I have wished to say to you for a long time past, and this hour seems well suited to the task—all is so still and tranquil."

It was in truth a peaceful scene on which the eyes of the speaker rested. His chair had been placed in front of the picturesque little villa, which he had inhabited for more than twenty years, and as the house had been built on the brow of a hill, it commanded an extensive view on either side, over one of the fairest counties in England—rich pasture-lands, sweeping away in graceful undulating lines towards the far horizon, alternated with orchards and gardens and wooded knolls, where pretty country houses peeped out, half hidden by the clustering trees, and immediately below the sloping lawn where the old man sat, a little murmuring brook ran



(*Drawn by* W. SMALL.)

"Fair and sweet, like the white rose she had fastened in his breast."—*p.* 363.

merrily along, its clear waters dividing the grounds of the villa from a soft green meadow which lay beyond; and over all the sylvan beauty of that smiling landscape had fallen the calm and glory of the sunset hour, bathing it in the lovely light of the after-glow, which filled the western sky as with a sea of gold, and hushing it into that indescribable peace, which steals so gently on the living world after the death of day. Scarce was there a sound or movement in all the tranquil scene; only faint sighs from the rising night wind rippled the long grass in the field, and swept the fragrance of the roses in the villa garden through the scented air, while, occasionally, soft musical murmurs told that the little sleepy birds were nestling down to rest, among the ivy leaves that clothed the sheltering walls around the fair domain. Overhead there was not a cloud or a stain in all the heavenly vault, but just where the limpid blue of the upper arch merged into the clear opal of the sun's forsaken shrine, one pure pale star had started into life, and hung, quivering in its silver radiance, over the darkening earth.

There is no period of the twenty-four hours when the subtle sympathy of Nature with the human spirit makes itself so deeply felt as in these moments of the unearthly twilight calm, and its influence had fallen, with manifest power, on the two persons who now sat together side by side on the upper part of the lawn, where no trees impeded their view of the far-spreading landscape all around. The elder of the two could, in truth, have nowhere found a more apt type of his own expiring life than the fading light of that summer evening, for not only was he in the evening of his days, but already the shadow of the great night, whose mystery no living eye has ever pierced, was stealing over his wan face and attenuated frame. He was a man between sixty and seventy years of age, whose whole appearance and manner had the unmistakable stamp of high birth and breeding, while his refined and clear-cut features still retained traces of the striking beauty for which he had been remarkable in the days of his youth and strength. For many months past he had been aware that a fatal malady was sapping his life, and he knew that now the end was very near. Yet, though his extreme emaciation and pallor were due to his physical sufferings, it was not any bodily ailment which had set on his forehead the seal of an unspeakable pain—borne by him in impenetrable silence for all the years which made up the sum of her young life who now sat in her fair stillness by his side. There was not the slightest trace of a likeness between them, as indeed there could not be, for they were in no way related by the ties of blood; but Mary Trevelyan had never known any other father, and the house of Louis, Comte de L'Isle had been her home from the days of her earliest infancy.

We have given this man his true name and title by right of birth, but for more than thirty years he had renounced his nationality, and become naturalised in England, while never in all that time had he set foot on the shores of his native France, well as he loved her still. In his adopted country he was known as Mr. Lisle, and none but himself knew that an old French château, where his ancestors had dwelt for many generations, and a noble estate in his own fair land, had passed away from him because he would not compromise the principles which were to him more precious than wealth or position. All his life long he had been an ardent Legitimist, following therein the traditions of his family; but in his devout and earnest mind the belief in the divine right of kings amounted to a religion, so that he did not hesitate to sacrifice to it even name and country. In his youth he had held a confidential post in the service of Charles X.; and when that unhappy king was forced to fly from France, Louis de L'Isle not only insisted on sharing his fallen fortunes, but he took a solemn vow that he would never return to his native country till the day when the Bourbons should be recalled from exile, and the true heir of their princely race should be placed upon the throne of his fathers. That day had never come, as we know, but the loyal true-hearted man had adhered to his resolution, and he had, indeed, been greatly strengthened in it by that which he termed the apostacy of the only relative he had left in France. This was Armand de L'Isle, a brother of his father's, but so much younger that he was very little older than Louis himself. He was a cold, egotistical, narrow-minded man, whose master-passion was the desire to promote his own interests, and whose whole being was so completely given up to a miserable idolatry of self, that there remained no place for nobler aims or purer worship. Armand smiled contemptuously when he heard that Louis had abandoned wealth and position to follow his kingly master into exile, and he composedly entered into possession of the estates, which, he declared, had been forfeited by his nephew. In this proceeding he was openly supported by the reigning powers; and so astute and worldly-wise did he prove himself to be, that with every succeeding change of government or dynasty which gained ascendency in restless France, he managed always to be on the winning side, even while he never took the smallest active part in the service of his country. Such a character and such a career could not but fill a noble-minded man like Louis with ineffable disgust, and he resolutely repudiated all relationship with his uncle, and refused to hold the smallest communication with him. He never so much as mentioned his name; so that his own family were not aware of the existence of this undesirable relation, and, as years went by, he completely lost sight of him, and did not know whether he were alive or dead. Louis knew that Armand had married a very wealthy woman, of low birth—the

first unequal alliance which any of their noble family had ever made—but while this step served to increase his indignation against his unworthy uncle, it prevented him from ever hoping to regain his lost estates, as he concluded that Armand would have children, to whom he would take very good care to secure the succession. Louis therefore turned his thoughts away determinately and for ever from the old home of his race, and caused himself to be naturalised in England, as we have said, in order that his son at least might not have the pain of feeling that he was living in exile. To himself, the total severance from his native land was an unquestionable trial, but he found a compensation for it in the love of his young English wife, which drew the sting from that and every other sorrow. For well-nigh thirty years she was the very sweetness of life to him; and in her devoted faithful heart he had found a refuge from every care, till, a few months previously, she had preceded him to that yet surer Home, where a love that cannot die makes sunshine evermore. And now he was following swiftly on the noiseless steps with which she had passed to that unseen country, the true native land of souls that are loyal to the sinless King, and there were but two in the world he was leaving over whom his thoughts lingered with a fond regret—Bertrand Lisle, his only child, and Mary Trevelyan, his adopted daughter. His son had been brought up entirely as an Englishman, and was now, at the age of twenty-six years, serving his adopted country as chargé d'affaires to one of the principal Legations on the Continent; while Mary, who was five years younger, had, ever since the death of Mrs. Lisle, been a most devoted nurse and companion to her adopted father. Yet she knew absolutely nothing of the causes which had linked her in such close bonds with a family to whom she was in no way related. She knew that her own parents had both died on the same day that she herself had been born into the world, and that from the very hour of her mother's departure, Mrs. Lisle had taken her to her heart as her own child; but no explanation had ever been given to her of the circumstances which had led to this arrangement, and when she became old enough to feel some wish to penetrate the mystery, Mr. Lisle drew from her a promise that she would never ask of any one a single question on the subject. She had obeyed, as was natural to her reserved character, without a word of expostulation; but an indefinable instinct taught her, from the first, that the hidden grief which had cast so deep a shadow over the life of Mr. Lisle ever since she could remember, had in some way had its origin on that mysterious day, when, out the very shadow of death which had overtaken those to whom she owed her being, she herself had dawned into the light of the living world.

They formed a striking picture, those two, as they sat there in the peaceful twilight. The dying man lay back in his easy-chair, with the pallor of approaching dissolution on his finely-moulded features, his thin hands stretched out upon his knees, his whole attitude betokening the utter exhaustion of his vital powers. The young girl, who sat by him in all the bloom and freshness of her life's early summer, clasping her little hands fondly round one of his, was, in truth, as he had said, fair and sweet like the white rose she had fastened in his breast. She was not by any means possessed of striking beauty, though her slight figure was singularly graceful, but there was an indefinable charm in her pure calm face, which made itself gradually felt by all who approached her. Her dark hair, which was very soft and abundant, contrasted almost too strongly with the marble whiteness of her colourless complexion, but it harmonised well with the deep grey eyes, fringed with black lashes, which were so marked a feature in her countenance that the absence of warmer tints was scarcely noticed. Her most striking peculiarity, however, both in manners and appearance, was the extreme stillness and quietude which at all times characterised her. No ripple of agitation seemed ever to disturb the pure contour of her pale face, which was always like the surface of a placid lake, perfectly motionless and unruffled, and although a sweet smile would often curve the delicately-formed lips, they were never seen to open for the hearty laugh or unrestrained merriment natural to her age.

Yet her expression was not in the slightest degree sorrowful or anxious, and she bore no trace of the lines of care, which in truth she had never known in any shape, while a glance at her refined thoughtful face was sufficient to show that it was no lack of mental power which gave her a look of changeless calm, such as is not often seen in this restless world. This perfect stillness seemed to pervade her whole being—her step was entirely noiseless, her voice so low and soft that it could scarce be heard where louder tones were sounding; even her movements were so full of repose that her entrance seemed only like the passing of a gentle breeze through the room. Many persons declared that Mary Trevelyan's extraordinary quietness was the result of an absolute want of feeling, but any one who had noticed on this evening the expression of Mr. Lisle's mournful eyes, as he turned them upon her, would have seen that this was at least not his opinion.

"My darling," he murmured, "as I told you, I have much to say to you, and this soft air cannot hurt me—do not be afraid to let me stay out while I finish all I have to tell. I shall speak to you best while the shadows are gathering round us." Gently she stooped, and lifting up the old man's cloak, which had fallen down, she wrapped it tenderly round him, and said, in a tone low as the sighing night wind, "Say what you will, dear, be sure that I am listening."

CHAPTER II.

Mr. Lisle sat in silence for a few minutes, looking out, with a far-away wistful gaze, towards the golden sunset glow, which seemed so like the gate of Paradise, with the one bright star hung over it as a lamp to light the weary feet of those who, passing from life's toilsome journey, might seek and enter there. But at last he withdrew his eyes from the heavenly vision, and fixed them on the fair graceful form by his side.

"My Mary," he said, "we have both known for some time past that I am dying—dying fast; but to-night there is a strange mysterious instinct in my soul, which seems to tell me that I have reached the very confines of the unseen realm, and soon shall be drawn within it to be seen of mortal eyes no more. Do you know, when you were wandering to and fro just now among your flowers, I thought I heard a whisper from no earthly tone, but from the voice that was so long the music of my life, and it softly asked, 'Is he coming?—is he coming?' and there was a murmur of yet softer harmony that answered 'soon—soon!'"

Mary did not speak, but she bent down, and tenderly kissed the hand she held.

"How long is it since you wrote to summon Bertrand home?" he asked.

"Four days," she answered. "I think he would start for England this morning."

"Then even a telegram could not bring him any quicker? Oh, that I may live to see him—my son—my only child! but in case he comes too late, I must say to you Mary some part of what I would have said to him, but not all—oh, not all!" and a shudder passed over his frame.

"Mary, I have a good and noble son in Bertrand, have I not?"

"Yes," she answered, quietly.

"You have known him from childhood, though of late years you have been often parted; is it not true that he is a man of generous nature, of pure and high-toned mind, of ardent impulses, that ever lead him on to all that is best and most unworldly—a man, in short, worthy of all love; is it not so?"

And again she answered, "Yes," with unchanging calm.

"Then let me tell you, Mary Trevelyan, that from the first moment when I looked on your infant face twenty-one years ago, the most ardent desire of my heart has been that you might become the wife of that dear son. I have wished this every hour that you have lived since then, and I wish it now, with all the concentrated power which can be given to a man's last earthly desire by the passion of death. Say that you will not deny it to me?—say that my longing hope shall be fulfilled?"

For the first time a faint rose tint, like the reflection of the sunset hues, just tinged the colourless purity of Mary's face, but there was no tremor in her low voice as she answered, "Dear, I think you forget that it can avail nothing to speak to me of such a wish."

"You mean that Bertrand has not yet told you that he loves you," said Mr. Lisle, somewhat impatiently, "and that till he does, your sensitive delicacy shrinks from so much as entertaining the question. These conventionalities are all very well in the days of life and strength, Mary; but surely, in face of inexorable death they need not be allowed to obscure the momentous verities on which so much depends for us all, living and dead alike. I tell you I am very certain that he loves you, who could do otherwise that had ever known you only half as well as he has done all through your lovely blameless life! Has he not seen you, with never a thought of self, living so purely, so devotedly, for the good of others only, actuated in every word and deed by the holiest motives, and yet so unostentatious, so still, so silent, that none but ourselves could have guessed the treasure we possessed in you. Ah, my Mary, be sure he loves you! I have seen him watching you when you have been moving about amongst us with your quiet grace, bringing peace and consolation wherever your footsteps came, and the expression in his bright blue eyes was not to be mistaken then. If he has not spoken of love, or asked you in so many words to be his wife, doubtless he did but restrain himself, because he felt that in my sickness and desolation it would be cruel to detach you from me. He must have known that the time was very near at hand when my worn-out life would stand no more between him and his happiness, and he has caught the inspiration of your unselfishness, and determined to say no disturbing word which could mar my enjoyment of your care and tenderness, even to the end. No! if my great wish depended on him alone it would have its fulfilment, Mary, I am very sure of that—it is only of you that I am in doubt."

"In doubt?" she said, with a questioning tone, as she raised her large grave eyes to his face.

"Not in doubt of your perfect willingness to do all you can for my contentment, Mary," he answered, smiling at her, "but in doubt of the nature of your feelings towards Bertrand, my son. Do you know, my child, that your remarkable stillness and reserve lead most persons outside our home to the conclusion that you are of a cold apathetic temperament, which is incapable of strong feeling in any way. I know well that it is as false as to say that no heart of fire glows under Etna's white veil when winter wraps it round with snow. I am well assured that not only you are capable of love in its deepest meaning, but that if such a sentiment ever took possession of your heart, it would be with a power and tenacity which would hold it rooted there, unchanged and unchangeable, so long as your life itself should last; am I not right, Mary? If you give your affection to any upon

earth it will be but once and for ever—will it not?"

"I have never been able to conceive of love in any other way," she answered. "Surely there can be but one in all the world for each of us, it would be no true devotion which could ever change or waver, for it never could be felt a second time in all the years of life; it seems to me a desecration of the very name to suppose it possible."

"Yet many would tell you that disenchantment, or unkindness, or neglect, has often times driven love from its resting-place to find another home."

"Then it never was true," she answered, "or worthy of the name. How could such trials touch that which becomes a part of the very being of the soul? I do not think that even death, of which we know so little, can in this make any difference, as you will find, dear, when *she* comes to meet you at the gates of pearl."

"Yes, Mary, it is thus that I was sure you would feel, and it is an unspeakable consolation to me to know it, for if my heart's desire is fulfilled, and you do love my Bertrand, it will be for ever. I shall leave him secure in your affection even as you yourself will be safe in his care; and now you know the petition I would ask of you, that you would give to him the priceless treasure of your heart, which I ask from you in his name, and that now—even now—you would not hold back from me the truth, but tell me freely and frankly, if it should be so, that already you have learned to love him."

Her head drooped till her fair cheek lay upon the hand she held, but she did not speak one word.

Mr. Lisle bent over her with an anxious look. "Mary, I am dealing you hard measure, I know well, in trying to force from one so retiring and sensitive an avowal which is never given except as a response to him who alone has a right to ask it, yet I do claim this self-denying kindness at your hands in the name of all the anguish borne till this hour, whose source and whose extent you can never know. If you would not have it gather with increasing horror round my dying heart, if you would not have it follow me as an accusing spectre through the very portals of the grave, you will tell me that you love my son, if truthfully you can speak the blessed words."

She kissed his hands repeatedly, but still no sound passed her lips.

"Mary, I would not ask it," he said, "if your special quietude and calm had not prevented me from ever gaining the slightest clue to your feelings. I know that Bertrand has been dear to you as one whom you have known from childhood, but such a sentiment might well exist while all your heart was given to another. That which I pine to know, if only it were given me to do so, is the certainty that my son is the man whom you have elected, out of all the world, to be the one and only object of your heart's most deep affection. If it be so, though your delicate spirit may shrink painfully from the admission, yet remember, Mary, you are but whispering your secret to the grave, where soon all that has ever been told to me will be buried in eternal silence; will you not overcome even maidenly reticence to give ease to the last hours of the father to whom you have been and are so dear? Ah, Mary, it is the privilege of the dying that their petitions should be granted, tell me, sweet and gentle child, tell me, do you love my son?"

Then at last the answer came, soft and low, but perfectly distinct, "Better than my life: he is now! and he will be for ever, my one and only love!"

"Thank heaven!" said the old man, falling back into his chair. "Oh, heaven be thanked! Now, indeed, can I depart in peace!"

(*To be continued.*)

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 20. St. Paul at Ephesus.

Chapter to be read—Acts xix.

INTRODUCTION. Our last lesson left Paul at Ephesus; and the descent of the Holy Ghost on the Church. What were the great gifts of the Spirit? So these twelve disciples must have helped much in the good work by speaking in different languages, and prophesying.

I. Special Miracles. (Read xix. 8—12.) Where did Christ often preach in the week? Remind of Sermon on Mount, in wilderness, by the sea-shore (Luke v. 2), and many other places; wherever could get people to listen. So St. Paul, always seizing opportunities. For three months teaching in synagogue. How was his message received? (ver. 9.) But was the synagogue a place for public discussion and angry contradiction? So departed from synagogue, and went to a school. Whose was it? Was this a proper place? What should always be taught in a school? and being probably a private place could more quietly set the truth before the disciples. How long did this go on? Time in two years for the news to spread far and wide. All in that part of Asia heard the word of Jesus. What else caused it to spread? Remind of multitudes who always followed Jesus to be fed and healed. So with St. Paul. But what wonderful miracles! Handkerchiefs healing people! Have we heard of any specially wonderful ones before? Who was it whose very shadow healed people? (Acts v. 15.) This almost more wonderful.

And who were healed? Not merely sick, but people with evil spirits. See how much was on God's side. Bold preaching, speaking with tongues, prophesying, miracles. No wonder Satan's power began to tremble. Would Satan make no effort against it? We shall see.

II. Special Superstition. (Read 13—20.) What magicians have we read of? By whom was Simon Magus rebuked, and by whom was Elymas? Do conjurors generally stay in a place? Why not? System of fraud, so might be discovered; so pass on from place to place, like roving gipsies. Some of these wanderers (vagabonds, ver. 13) began to copy St. Paul, and use name of Jesus. Was it any use? See Christ's warning to those who prophesied but did not practise in His name (Matt. vii. 21); and Satan too would not recognise them as allies; so they fled. Remind of Egyptian magicians unable to stand before Moses (Exodus ix. 11). What effect did this have? Showed folly of such superstitions as Ephesians were accustomed to, and showed reality of Gospel of Jesus. But they want to do more. Have been using many books of magic; feel they ought to get rid of them. How shall they do so? Determine to burn them. Picture the scene:—The new converts assembling, each laden with rolls of parchment; the apostles welcoming each comer; a large fire kindled; the valuable books thrown in; the crackling of the parchment; the stirring up of the leaves to make them burn better; the congratulations when the last bad book gone. What was the total value? See what this showed on the part of the converts. (*a*) *They were in earnest.* All old superstitions must be put away, however time-honoured and however dear to them. (*b*) *They valued God more than Mammon.* Would part with books rather than dishonour God. Remind how often God has required similar test. Abraham must give up his son, the young man his possessions—to follow Christ. (*c*) *They were not ashamed.* This burning, done openly, before all. They "confessed Christ," and had reward in that the word of God, which they valued so much, spread widely.

Practical Lesson. Bring this home to the children. Is there anything they ought to give up? Bad books, bad companions, bad habits. Let them do it as Ephesians did—readily and unhesitatingly, or cannot be true disciples.

III. Special Opposition. (Read 21—41.) Tell children that the Athenians wore charms—small models of the Temple of Ephesus. This flourishing city; great many inhabitants; brisk trade in these charms. But what are many Ephesians doing? Giving up books of magic! Will give up wearing charms next! Whom would that injure? So the workmen hold a meeting, to consult as to what shall be done. Who takes the lead? What does he say? (ver. 26.) Which does he really care most about, his trade or the goddess Diana? Like Judas, who wanted the money paid for Mary's spices, pretending he wanted it to give to the poor. Now picture the tumult:—The workmen rushing out excited, shouting aloud; the crowd in the streets; two of St. Paul's companions seized by the mob, carried into the public hall; St. Paul boldly proposing to go to them; his friends keeping him back; the mob continuing to shout; a great many taking part in confusion, but don't at all know what it is all about. Crowds much the same now and always. At last, who comes? The town-clerk, afraid of a real riot; he will be held responsible. So calms the people, and reminds Demetrius that he can always go to law if he has any complaint to make. See how he speaks of St. Paul's friends (ver. 37). After three years' residence in the city, well known to public officials, had reputation for being peaceable citizens, which helped them now. So the danger passed.

Practical Lessons. Why did not these workmen like this new religion? But if this trade injured, might have turned to some new one. Contrast their conduct with that of those who burned their books. Those decided for Christ against the devil; these just the opposite. Such a day will always come to all. For Christ or against—God or Mammon. God will give grace to form right decision.

Questions to be answered.

1. What special miracles were granted to Paul?
2. What were some of the superstitions at Ephesus?
3. Describe the burning of the books.
4. What did the Ephesians show by their conduct?
5. What opposition was stirred up at Ephesus?
6. What practical lessons may be learned?

PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERING.

BREAK not, sad heart!
Full many a bitter tear must yet be shed,
Full many a tender cord lie strained and dead,
Ere thou hast learned, through sorrow's rough path led,
How strong thou art.

Death cometh not
At sorrow's call. The wretched cannot die;
Long at his gate the woe-crushed heart must lie,
Till, raised at length, it findeth, with a sigh,
Grief killeth not.

Wouldst thou learn why?
Perfect through suffering must thy weakness be;
Then, sorrow-taught, thou good in all shalt see,
And joy that not till then was given to thee—
The time to die.

AUNT JESSIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER III.

ESTHER had been struggling with a severe cold ever since that tempestuous night when she had come in so wet, and had been so anxious to hide from her aunt's eyes the state of her boots, knowing that there was nothing forthcoming towards the purchase of a new pair, and that it would only vex and grieve her to find how much they were needed. At length she was obliged to yield to illness, and was confined to bed with a sharp attack on the lungs. Mrs. Lang was her only nurse; and night and day she watched beside her, doing the best she could, and sometimes making her sense of feeling take the place of seeing.

Mr. and Mrs. Webbe were kind, and sent what help they could. But it was a hard struggle to pull through that time; and many a little possession which she had kept and clung to all these years was Mrs. Lang forced to part with to meet the daily needs. Her overtaxed strength, and sleepless watchful nights, moreover, told upon the feeble remnant of sight that was yet left; and by the time Esther began to recover her aunt saw clearly what was the only course left to her. But to gratify her niece, who wished it so earnestly, she would once more pay a visit to the oculist, and hear his opinion.

It was a bright spring day, warm and pleasant, and the doctor's house being at no great distance, and the way so familiar, she decided to go alone, though Esther tried to persuade her to find some companion to guide her. But she said she could see sufficiently in the bright sunlight not to mistake her way; and so she departed, leaving Esther sitting up, for the first time, that afternoon.

The oculist's verdict was—"No hope, no cure; it must end in total blindness." And the patient heart bowed to receive it meekly. With a simple "Thank you, sir," she turned to grope her way home again.

She had to pass over the bridge across the river; and feeling tired—for this was the first time she had been out of doors, save to the little general shop, since Esther's illness began—she stood a while leaning against the stone parapet, and looking down upon the flowing waters, which she could only dimly make out. But she knew well what their appearance was; she had so often stood there looking down when her sight was still good.

Though it was a bustling part of the city, and busy life seemed ever streaming and thronging across that bridge, she soon grew too much engrossed in her meditations to notice what went on around her. Even in that crowded part a fresh breeze fanned her cheeks, brought by the river, as it seemed to her fancy, from the sweet fields and meadows and open country through which its course lay before it flowed past the great city on its way to the sea.

One peaceful spot upon its banks she knew well; and as she stood looking down with almost sightless eyes, a vivid picture rose up before her mental vision. It was a picture of a substantial farm-house, long and low, with drooping creepers and sunny lawn in front, and meadows stretching down to the river's bank, whilst fruitful orchards lay on either side, and well-built hay-ricks and corn-stacks nestled behind—all combining to give an air of plenty and comfort. She saw a group of children playing about—girls mostly, with only one boy amongst them, and he the youngest of the party. They romped and were merry; but the games were always chosen by him, and it was his likings, not theirs, which always seemed to be consulted. And watching them at their sports, looking on calmly and smilingly, were the figures of a white-haired couple, who glanced continually with fond pride towards the bright comely lad.

But after a time those aged figures disappeared from view, and the laughing group of merry children was exchanged for one of sober women, whose faces often wore a look of care, which they seemed to share together, and which deepened as the days passed by, being always deepest when the brother's name was mentioned.

Then the scene changed again: that band of sisters was broken up and dispersed, having sacrificed their all—and each had had a moderate portion left her by the father—to save the brother from exposure and disgrace. They had gone to seek their fortunes, impoverished by the one on whom they had lavished their affection, whom they had made their idol, and the old home knew them no more. It had passed into other hands, after having been in their family for generations; and strangers would sit in the rooms, and walk in the garden, where every nook and corner had some association with happy bygone days in the minds of these sorrowful sisters.

And of all that band there now remained only the almost sightless woman who stood seeing these pictures in the deep waters.

Then rose up another vision of a few brief years of happy married life with the sailor-husband; the settling into the snug little home which he had prepared for her; the way in which she used to stand on that bridge where she now stood, and fancy the flowing waters as they hastened to the sea were rushing to meet him on his homeward way, would kiss the vessel which bore him, and, lapping against its sides, would murmur their welcome to the brave sturdy seaman.

Then came the time when they had gone to meet the ship, and found that it had returned without a

part of its precious freight—without the upright manly spirit which, though firm as a rock to resist evil, was as tender as a woman with the weak and sorrowing; whose bright though quiet example had been as leaven in the midst of that bold, daring, sometimes unscrupulous crew; and who had found a watery grave in the ocean, sending home as a last message to the faithful and faithfully-loved wife, that the God in whom they both trusted would one day gather his ashes again from the deep, and together they would walk in that land where "there is no more sea."

She had waited long for that day—she was waiting still—but come it assuredly would; and meantime she could wait.

Then, still looking back, she saw herself sitting in her sorrow and desolation, and a heart-broken young creature, with a sweet infant, coming in to throw herself upon her for sympathy and protection. It was the brother's wife, whom he had married thinking she had money, and then, finding how miserably small was the portion compared with the greatness of the pressing claims upon him, he had deserted her and her helpless infant, going off secretly to Australia, as he could no longer remain in England.

The little that the sister had was freely shared with the brother's wife. But the latter did not linger long; she passed away to that region above where all sounds of weeping are stilled, and broken hearts are healed, leaving her little Esther to the care of the widowed childless one, who had accepted the sacred trust, and faithfully discharged it. But that (her own part in the matter) was not what she saw; she was looking at the ray of sunlight which had been as a golden thread running through the picture which would otherwise have appeared sombre in its colouring—the love and clinging devotion of the blue-eyed child, who was now approaching womanhood, and from whom, for the first time in all these years, she was about to be called to part. She must let her go out alone to face the world which might have temptations enough in store for one so young and pretty and inexperienced, and from which she would gladly have sheltered her a little longer.

But what was she thinking? Why was she fearing? Would not He who never slumbereth nor sleepeth be keeping guard over her? What need, then, for her to trouble and fret—as if *she* could take better care of her child than her own heavenly Father! Surely she could leave her to Him, and have not a single anxious doubt!

When she entered the little room, on her return, Esther looked up into her face with a glance which showed how many hopes and fears were hanging upon the result of this visit. Though Mrs. Lang could not see the expression on the countenance, or the half-imploring look in the eyes, as though they were beseeching her to say there was hope, she knew by instinct the question the girl longed to put, and replied to it at once by a gentle shake of her head. That was enough. Then she sat down in her chair.

Neither of them spoke; but Esther rose, and coming across, knelt down beside her aunt, and putting her arms round her neck, clung to her in a close embrace. Then she laid her head down upon the shoulder of the elder woman, who silently stole an arm round her waist, and thus they remained for some moments. No need of language to speak their sorrow, which was more for each other than for themselves; no occasion to express in words the sympathy, and love, and tender unselfish affection, which each bore the other. They knew it all without words: but had they not done so, that mute embrace would have told more than the most eloquent phrases.

(*To be continued.*)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

139. Who is mentioned as having written the Epistle to the Romans for St. Paul?

140. Of whom did our Saviour say, "I will make you fishers of men?"

141. Which of David's relatives acted as a scribe for him?

142. Quote a passage in which St. Paul declares that the Gospel which he preached was taught him by the revelation of God.

143. With what blessing did Aaron bless the people of Israel at God's command?

144. How many times does St. Paul say he was beaten?

145. What was the name of the nurse of Rebekah, the wife of Isaac?

146. Quote the first and last words of our Saviour, while on earth.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 336.

127. Eutychus fell from the window where he was sitting, and was taken up dead; whom St. Paul afterwards restored to life (Acts xx. 9).

128. Nehemiah i. 4—11; ii. 4, &c.; iv. 4, 5, 9; v. 19; and vi. 14.

129. Lazarus. "But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death" (compare John xi. 44 and xii. 10).

130. "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" (Exodus xxviii. 36, 37).

131. Cousin (Esther ii. 7).

132. "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matt. i. 1).



(*Drawn by* E. WAGNER.)

APRIL THOUGHTS.

THE April wind was in mine ear—
The low-voiced wind I love so well—
And, like a silver-sounding bell,
A crystal fountain tinkled near,
And dropped into a rippling stream,
Making calm wordless music there,
Whilst all the pleasant woodland air
Seemed taking part in one sweet theme.

The song was old as this green world,
Yet fresher than its fairest spring;
It spoke of beauty on the wing,
Of marvels in a petal curled
By one frail insect for an ark,
Of weeds and coral rich and strange,
And of those ocean flowers that change
To living lanterns in the dark.

It spoke of wonders everywhere—
Wisdom and wonder hand in hand;
The wonders of the sea and land,
The wisdom of "our Father's" care;
Of truths far higher than the stars,
Locked up in Nature from us all,
Save when their shadows faintly fall
On sons of light through prison bars.

And aye, the chorus of the lay
Was, "Gratitude and praise and love
To Him who lives and reigns above—
To Him who rules the night and day!"
So when mine ear had drunk the whole
Of those soft sounds for comfort sent;
The mantle of dull discontent
Fell like chain-armour off my soul.

JANE DIXON.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VI.—OUT OF THE DREAM-WORLD

"WELL, mamma, he *will* come," said Netta. "He says his mother always used to talk about you, and that he should so like to see you."

"But I hate visitors," answered Mrs. Woodward, "unless they are any of your father's literary friends; they are as Bohemian as ourselves."

"Is he a jolly fellow?" asked Tom.

"Very, worth a dozen of your paragon Mr. Fullers, with his big eyes, and tawny moustache he was so fond of stroking."

"How dare you!" flashed Dolly, feeling that she was beginning to hate this interloping George Blakesley already.

"Well, so he is," she laughed merrily back. Netta never got out of temper, any more than she ever had any violent emotions. "And he's an excellent match. I advise you to set your cap at him, Dolly. Mr. Fuller has evidently forgotten all about you, for he has been gone an entire year, and not written once."

"He's not likely to look at Dolly," said Mrs. Woodward—referring, of course, to the coming Blakesley—"she is such a plain little thing," and she looked up at her eldest daughter. A year had only added to her beauty, and the summer sunlight was resting on the golden hair. "Why, I could not help seeing that Adrian Fuller was struck with the difference in the sisters the last evening he was here!" She did not say the words unkindly, or mean them to sound so, and Dolly knew this, and Netta's beauty and her own plainness were things Dolly had been aware of, and heard lamented all her life, yet the remark struck home, and the hot tears came into her eyes, and a wild wish into her heart for just a little beauty. If her mother could only be proud of her as she was of Netta, or if some one older than herself would love her just a little. She had so longed for this happiness lately. She had no one to look up to now, no one to win praise or love from, save her younger brother and sisters; and her older wiser friends consisted of books and the old sycamore tree. There *had* been Mr. Fuller, and how she had missed him through all the long months that formed the present year only Dolly's self knew; and how she had waited for a letter day after day, and week after week, till half angrily, half sadly, she gave him up, it was sorrow even to remember. He was dead, she used to think to herself in the sad moments; and he had forgotten her, she thought, half sorrowfully in the angry ones. Be it which it might, however, she could not allow Netta to speak against him. It was her mother's speech, however, that cut her on her tenderest point, for it spoilt what was as yet the sweetest memory of her life. Tom came to her rescue, as heretofore. Tom was sixteen now. How they were growing up, these Woodward children!

"*Did* he notice the difference!" he said, scornfully. "Netta got the worst of it then, for he was always awfully fond of Dolly. Why, he said he should be in love with her when he came back, which is more than he'd ever be with Netta, I know!"

"Is it?" laughed the Beauty. "Well, we'll see, if ever this wonderful man returns. I shall try what I can do."

"Oh no, Netta!" began Dolly, darting forward, and she put her hand on her sister's arm, and as she did so, saw their two faces reflected in a queer old-fashioned looking-glass, before which Netta had been standing. She gazed for a minute, almost in surprise, at their two faces; the one, with blue eyes and red pouting lips, and a flush upon her rounded cheek—a sweet, fair, English face, crowned with a wealth of golden hair; the other, grave and pale, with dark brown hair falling low on the forehead, and twisted into a knot behind, with grey eyes fearless and truthful enough, but with none of the fascinations of the soft blue ones that were watching her, and a

mouth that was large and yet sweet and expressive, and so formed, perhaps, the best feature of the face.

"We *are* very different," she said, with a long wistful sigh, as she turned away. Then Sally crept to Dolly's side. The quaint child understood her sister better than any other perhaps.

"You would not like the people in books, and all the trees, if you were like her," she said, for these were their common friends.

"No," answered Dolly, looking back almost pityingly at the sister she had envied a moment or two before.

CHAPTER VII.—HOW DOLLY CHANGED HER NAME.

So George Blakesley, who had met Netta at her grandfather's, and who had been anxious to see Mrs. Woodward, because his mother and she had been schoolfellows, made his call, and saw Mrs. Woodward, and was liked, and was asked to come again and see Mr. Woodward, and did. At last he came to spend an evening, just after the fashion of Adrian Fuller of old, and then it was that he first made acquaintance with Dolly. She had determined that she would not see the possible successor of her old friend until she absolutely could not help herself, and she kept her resolution.

Mr. Woodward came home, and George Blakesley arrived, and still Dolly sat beneath the sycamore tree, with a book in her hand, and with Sally at her feet, and Tom standing behind looking over her shoulder. She always felt in after years that she had sat there waiting almost consciously for something that would happen, and when Will came down the garden pathway to her, with something hidden beneath his coat, and said, "Dolly, you are to come in to tea in five minutes; and guess what I've got here!" she answered, without a moment's hesitation, "It's a letter from Mr. Fuller," and it was, and her heart gave a great bound when she saw it was directed to herself, and she was compensated for all the past months of waiting.

She broke the seal, and Tom leant his head forward, and Sally rose to her feet, and Will came round to her other shoulder, and so they read his first letter. He had been ill and lazy, he said, and hated writing, but he had not forgotten them, and in another year he should be home again. "I wonder if I shall find you all much altered," he went on. "You will be quite a woman, Dolly; you must be one already, and I shall call you Dorothy in future. I like the name, and the other is too babyish for you now. I hope I shall find you all the same," he repeated again at the end of the letter, after he had told her about his work and way of living, and the country round about, and said all that people far off invariably do say in letters.

"Why, of course, he'll find us the same," said Tom, when they were going towards the house. "What should we alter for?" and for answer Dolly felt the refrain of a song ringing in her ears, as she heard it for many a long day afterwards:—

"The same, the same, yet not the same;
Oh, never, never more!"

She stopped at the garden door.

"Call me Dorothy in future," she said; "I am too old to be called Dolly any more."

And so the old childish name was dropped for ever.

(To be continued.)

THE TRIPLETS OF THE BIBLE.

BY THE REV. J. HILES HITCHENS, AUTHOR OF "THE FURNACE," "THE FACE OF THE KING," ETC.

III.—THE THREE FAVOURED DISCIPLES.

"And He taketh with Him Peter and James and John."—ST. MARK xiv. 33.

AROUND the centre of Divine attraction and source of spiritual life—Christ Jesus—were gathered twelve disciples. They were planets attendant on the Sun of Righteousness, gems in the breastplate of the merciful and faithful High Priest, pupils at the feet of the Great Teacher. Vital union to Him brought them into contact, and bound them together in social affection. To these Jesus often unbosomed Himself, disclosed His unique character, divulged His matchless purposes, and accorded invaluable advice. Bestowing upon them authority, He commissioned them to go forth as ambassadors, and, so far as possible, secure peace between the rebel sinner and the righteous God. But there were *three* of the twelve upon whom Christ showered signal favours. They were stars of the *first* magnitude; they were probably the most eminent of the apostolic students, and the most intimate friends of the "Man of Sorrows." With Him when He infused life into the veins of the death-stricken daughter of Jairus; with Him when clothed with celestial radiance on the summit of the holy mountain; and with Him when crushed by inconceivable agony in the enclosure of Gethsemane—this elect triumvirate were evidently chosen to play a conspicuous part in the spread of Christianity. They may now, as Lange suggests, be regarded as representatives of the Redeemer's closest followers—John imaging the friends of Jesus who recline on His bosom, or Christianity in contemplation;

Peter personifying the servants of Immanuel, who work for the extension of His kingdom, or piety actively employed; and James typifying the courageous and persevering witnesses of the cross, or piety suffering martyrdom.

Now, looking at these three disciples, we are reminded—

Of *the true humility of our Saviour*. In that Christ whom we love we recognise a duality of natures. He was *divine*, being the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person. But He was also *human*. Though "the Ancient of Days," He was "the child;" though the "altogether lovely," yet he was "without form and comeliness;" though the "Word was God," yet the "Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." Christ was man in the wide sense of that term. He possessed a nature like yours and mine, with only one exception—it was sinless. He placed Himself in the ordinary circumstances attendant on the lot of humanity. He shared the innocent joys and sports of childhood; He discharged the duties of an allotted trade; He secured His earthly maintenance by the sweat of His brow; He worshipped on the Sabbath at the synagogue, as did other devout Israelites; He had dear ones around Him, to whom He was bound by the ordinary ties of humanity. To the full He shared the common occupations, wants, susceptibilities, and woes of man. There was, indeed, so little in the first thirty years of His life to distinguish Him from His fellow-townsmen, that he was known as "the carpenter's son," His divine mission not being suspected. He was no unyielding ascetic. He admired the beautiful, as we do; He enjoyed life's social pleasures, as we do; He did not frown upon innocent enjoyments, not discourage friendly entertainments; He did not withdraw from the elevating stimulus of friendly intercourse. With all human interests He lovingly identified Himself. He sympathised with social feelings, and sanctified by His presence human relationships and joys. He did not relax one of those tender bonds which link heart to heart. And He had His friends, as we have. There were some spots which presented greater charms to Him than others; there were some persons in whose society He felt greater gratification than in others. As He selected from among the many homes where He could have found a warm welcome the united and happy home of Bethany, and found rest in the midst of His true-hearted friends, Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, so from among the twelve disciples He selected these three as favourites, and took them with Him as companions in seasons of His highest joy and deepest grief. In His divine nature He needed not the look, the act, nor the word of kindness; but in His human nature He depended very largely on these. As God, He could not be a stranger to the infinite happiness and omnipotent strength which were inseparable from that nature. But as man He often thirsted for the sympathy, confidence, and attention of the race to which He had voluntarily united Himself. Hence Jesus had His friends, and His favourite friends.

This view is not without its close and encouraging bearing upon our Christian life. We may learn from it that whilst Jesus is a perfect sympathiser with us, He is also a perfect example to us, because of His thorough identification with universal humanity. Goodness, purity, and holiness are ever admirable and precious wherever found, but they impress us less when they have been cultivated amid peculiarly favourable circumstances, and fostered and developed by special means. If our Jesus had been separate from men—separate in His duties, separate in His susceptibilities, separate in His trials, separate in His joys—men would feel that His purity was preserved and His holiness attained by measures to which it is impracticable for us to resort, and hence His example would lose its force. If the Christ had been a solitary recluse, we might reasonably doubt whether the religion He inculcated would be strong enough to assert its ascendency amid the connections, callings, and conflicts of the world. But now, seeing He was every way like ourselves, and yet righteous, we have hope, and heart, and energy in our imitation of Him.

I greatly fear that there is a tendency in these times to ignore the fact that the life of Immanuel affords a perfect model according to which our lives are to be fashioned. The apostolic counsel, "so walk even as He walked," is in some quarters emasculated by erroneous interpretations. It is pronounced presumption for feeble man to attempt to imitate Him. But let us not think or speak so. Just as holy, obedient, resigned, patient, and forgiving as Christ we may never be; but *that* should not prevent our aspiring to His excellences. The most perfect copy is surely the best to follow. Inferiors, who are themselves learners, cannot instruct like the Master. Representations are not so valuable as the originals. The higher our aim, the loftier our attainment. Oh, it is good to think that the Son of God identified Himself so closely with our humanity, that we may be able to turn to His history, the noblest and best that was ever written, and see how we should speak and act in our varied relationships! He has shown us how our Christianity may be developed amid the chequered scenes of earth; how the sweet light of our interior life may be shed upon every surrounding; how whilst loving the Eternal Father with all our hearts, we may yet cling with tenderness of affection to those whom Providence has endeared to us. Our model as well as our

mediator is Jesus. Whilst we give prominence to Him as our propitiation, let us continuously keep Him before us in His humanity as our pattern.

The next thought suggested, as we look at these three favoured men, is, that *Heaven often selects the foremost and most honoured servants from the humblest ranks of life.* These three men, before they were called to the work of the ministry, were poor and unlettered men. Their early days were devoted to the duties of fishermen. They toiled hard and long for their livelihood. They were devoid of worldly wealth, of literary attainments, and of social influence. It was whilst they were in the prosecution of their lowly life-calling that the Great Head of the Church summoned them to the most honourable of all vocations outside the Upper Temple. It is well they were humble men. Had they possessed great intellectual culture, had they been well-known critics and casuists, had their coffers been full, and their retinue of attendants large, they might have tarnished the purity of the Gospel. There might have been introduced into the expositions of divine truth some of the lifeless dogmas of the philosophic schools. The grand and glorious success of our holy religion would have been open to suspicion of collusion and artifice on the part of its early supporters. If they had enjoyed educational advantages, if they had been men of refined manners and cultivated tastes, if they had been favoured with time to peruse the writings of Egypt and Greece, it might then be said that they thus acquired materials to construct the story of an ideal life. If they had been men of wealth and recognised power, it might then be asserted that imposture was supported by their position—that weakness was imposed upon by might. To say the least, men might conclude, with some degree of reason, that the progress of Christianity was to be ascribed to the well-trained natural genius, and much respected popular status of its first Evangelists. But seeing who the disciples of Jesus were, these objections are wholly crushed. It would be an intellectual impossibility for men so humble to conceive such a character. Rousseau well said: "The inventor would be a more astonishing person than the hero." And having the sceptre of the Cæsars, the wisdom of the Roman senate, and the skill of the philosophic schools marshalled against them, their ability to give currency to a fiction is wholly out of the question.

Luther once wrote: "If the Gospel required the potentates of this world for its planting and preservation, God would not have committed it to fishermen." Yes, these three men were untutored in this world's estimate, but they were taught of God. Heaven made high revelations of its will to them, and Incarnate Wisdom trained them for their duties. They were not blessed with this world's possessions, but they were owners of a priceless treasure: they were rich in faith, and carried in the casket of a loving heart the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Such were the men selected to be the favoured companions of Jesus. The weak things of this world were chosen to confound the mighty. So was it before the Saviour's advent: humble men were raised to stand before princes, as representatives of the King of Kings. So has it been to this hour: lowly cradles have yielded the most lordly spirits; from the shady nooks have been brought the fairest flowers. The names that have been carved highest upon the pinnacle of honour are those owned by parents in the middle and lowest classes of society—Bunyan, Adam Clarke, Carey, Kitto, Newton, Jay, James, Moffatt, and others, whose works still live amongst us, are illustrations of this truth. Let then the choice by Christ of these three men remind us that it is nobility of character, purity of heart, and consistency of life God looks for; and where these are found, worldly belongings are secondary. Though ever so poor and unknown we may be bosom friends of Christ, if truly good.

> Glory and shame from no condition rise;
> Act well your part; there all the glory lies.

These favourites remind us of *the diversities existing in the Christian life.* We cannot study the careers of these three men—"The sons of thunder and the man of rock"—without being impressed with the differences existing between them. One is demonstrative, another retiring; one receptive, another originative; one intuitive, another logical; one self-reliant, another clinging; one sturdy, another sensitive; one noisy, another gentle; one hopeful, another timid; one changeful, another constant; one a Boanerges, another a Barnabas. But all three loved Christ, and were loved by Christ. All three were found serviceable in the early Church of the Redeemer; and all three varied in their spiritual attainments as time rolled on. Their piety mellowed; their faith was confirmed, though the faith of one differed in degree from that of the others. Prejudices were softened down; fears were exchanged for enduring courage; and each, as he became a man in Christ Jesus, put away childish things.

Such differences still exist among Christians. Why should they not? One of the simplest but strongest proofs of the affluent wisdom and prolific purpose of the Supreme Being is discernible in the diversities of action, and the varieties of produce with which creation is full. In the animal world all flesh is not the same flesh. In the vegetable world there are many kinds of trees, plants, and flowers—no two flowers, leaves, or blades of grass, being exactly alike. Among minerals

materials differ in preciousness, from the veined marble to the sparkling gem and serviceable gold. In the heavens one star is different from another star in glory; and those which appear to shine with the same brilliancy are discovered by astronomical science to have different orbits, forms, and colours. And so among men: there are no two alike. Not only are there the great distinctions of race and nationality, not only the differences of birth and education, but there are varieties in mental constitution, no two minds agreeing. An individuality in each should ever prevent the one being mistaken for the other. Thus, the infinitely wise God, unlike man, has never used the same mould twice. He has taught us that the line of beauty is always a curve, and that if the poet be correct that *order* is heaven's first law, then *variety* is the second in the code. We might expect a diversity in Christian life, and we discover it both in its commencement and in its development. There is always the same worker, but a modification of operations. Every soul must be quickened by the same Spirit, guided by the same Gospel, clothed in the same righteousness, sustained by the same grace, and directed toward the same goal; and yet each soul may be, *is*, the subject of a very altered experience to that of others. Let us, then, never be discouraged if we cannot find in ourselves the exact counterpart of the experience of other Christians. Expect not the traits of manhood in a youth of but few summers; nor the full corn in the ear when the grain has been sown but a few weeks; nor the gnarled, giant, and matured oak when the acorn has germinated but a few months. Neither expect from all professing disciples of Jesus an equal amount of fervour, an equal strength of faith, an equal depth of joy, an equal buoyancy of hope, an equal breadth of charity. The point of first and supreme importance is this: Are we united to Christ? Are we true disciples of Jesus? Do we feel delight in communion with Him? Are we walking with God?

Looking at these three favoured disciples, we are also reminded that *the liability to err is common to the most excellent of mortals*. One of the strongest evidences of the truthfulness of what the sacred penmen record—aye, an incontrovertible proof—is furnished by their fidelity. With a veracity worthy of all admiration, because so unequivocal, they tell of guilt and error even though they criminate themselves. We know how St. Peter, "the coryphæus of the apostolic choir," erred again and again by his impetuosity, and how he brought sorrow upon himself and his Lord. We know, too, how St. James and St. John erred in their views of the Messiah's kingdom, asking, with hasty ambition, for seats on Christ's right and left hand; and how, when the Samaritans would not receive the Redeemer, St. James wished a visitation of quick vengeance. "What wonder," says St. Ambrose, "that the sons of thunder wished to flash lightning!" We must make great allowance for the early mistakes of these men. They were in the moral infancy of their career. But we may learn from them, what is true of all men be they ever so good, that to err is human. "All great natures in this world that are so rounded, so perfected, that they are heavenly before they have left the earth, are to be suspected. They are not true flesh and blood. You cannot have a man in this world who has not a good deal of flesh and blood if he is going to be a man of might, and a master of men. Those names that the world will not let die, you will find are all of them rude, all of them bulging here and there with excrescent faults, all of them more or less needing the fire to purify the dross and bring out the gold." This is not the land of perfection. Character here is not fully orbed. There never has been, and never will be, more than *One* perfect man on this earth—the man Christ Jesus. All, even His noblest followers, have had their faults, and have stood in need of purification. Yonder, only, are the spirits of just men *made perfect!* "All the ideal perfections must come afterwards, as ideal colours come late in autumn, and not in midsummer." In heaven *alone* the inequalities, infelicities, and irregularities of our affections and passions will be for ever swept away.

But why do I so write? To encourage any reader to sin, or to be indifferent to evil propensities in any form? God forbid! Our duty is to aim at perfection—daily to lay aside every weight, and every besetting sin. No, I dwell upon this lesson to remove what I know is often a trouble to sincere believers, the fear that they are not progressing in holiness, and not pleasing God because they discover still lurking in their life that which is unheavenly. Dear friend, when you are tempted to despond because, in some unguarded moment, you exhibited a temper unbecoming your Christian profession, think of the three favourite disciples—so near Jesus, and yet imperfect. Think of them *not* to think less of the evil temper into which you have been betrayed, but to see that your very frailties and failures Christ knows, and, sympathising with you, will help you to conquer them.

I direct attention to this for another purpose also. To caution you against imitating the mistakes and follies of eminent Christians. The Apostle Paul lays down the safe rule for our guidance, when he says, "Be ye followers of me, even *as I also am of Christ*." So far as the worthies of the Old and New Testaments followed Christ, we may imitate them; but whenever and wherever they depart from the straight line of Christ's example,

we are called on to forsake them. We must not blindly copy the life of any individual whom we may know, be he ever so devout. The great exemplar is Jesus. He only is faultless. The more we can transcribe His excellences, and become assimilated to His unique character, the better for us. Happy shall we be if we can follow the counsel of Chrysostom, "Be clothed with Him from top to toe, that nothing appear in us but that which is of Christ."

Let us remember, in closing, that all the honour and undying renown to which these three men attained they reached by loving and imitating Christ. But for their being followers and associates of Jesus, the world would probably never have heard of either. Thus may we see that moral excellence transcends every other form of greatness, as much as heaven transcends earth. We shall find the royal road to being truly great is that of being greatly good. In a crowded assembly of the nobility of France, when Massillon was preaching the funeral sermon of the French monarch, the preacher solemnly and suddenly exclaimed, "God only is great!" and paused. The entire congregation rose to their feet, and bowed in reverence, under the impression produced by that brief utterance. The eloquent preacher was true: God alone is great; and all greatness worth the seeking, all greatness satisfying to the heart of its possessor, all greatness that shall endure through the changeful influences of time, all greatness that shall be reviewed with endless gratification in the celestial realm, must spring from association with God in Christ.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 21. A Farewell.

Chapter to be read—Acts xx.

INTRODUCTION. (Read 1—5.) Our last lesson left St. Paul at Ephesus, escaped from great danger, after two years' residence there. He would not willingly court danger, so thinks it prudent to retire. Where will he go? His mission was to go far and wide to the Gentiles, so cannot stop permanently as pastor of any church. Time now come, however, to revisit the churches of Greece, so, with a party of friends, he enters Asia once more, dividing the party by sending some on before to Troas, he himself with Luke, the writer of the Acts, following (ver. 5).

I. Eutychus Raised. (Read 6—12). The story of the raising of Eutychus to life may be graphically pictured out as follows:—*The place*, a large upper room at Troas; *the company*, the companions of the voyage, and the Christians of the place; *the occasion*, the presence of these distinguished travellers; *the incidents*, a long evening meeting, continued till midnight. What day was it? Why had they assembled on the Lord's Day? What feast had the Lord appointed, and with what object? Happy communion feast, showing love to Christ and one another; many lights in the room; many people present; room would become very warm; windows, projecting over street, thrown open for coolness; Eutychus wearied, dropping asleep, falls into the street; the sudden alarm and confusion; the rush down-stairs; picking him up; the cries of the women; bringing him to the apostle; his soothing words; now, as they crowd round, what does St. Paul do? like Elijah to widow's son (1 Kings xvii. 21), embraces him, and the dead is restored. Picture the joy of the company; what a happy supper they all eat together (ver. 11), and what a hymn of thanksgiving they will sing! Now call attention to the following points:—(1) *They kept the feast.* Evidently stayed at Philippi for the Passover (ver. 6). Ask why Passover was instituted, and when? (Ex. xii.) St. Paul, as a Jew, kept all appointed ordinances as means of grace. What an example to us. (2) *They kept the Lord's Day.* What day was originally set apart, and why? Day evidently changed now from seventh to first day of week, as Day of Resurrection, so meet on this day for worship. (See 1 Cor. xvi. 2; Rev. i. 10.) (3) *They kept the Lord's Supper.* Remind how at first partook of this daily (Acts ii. 46); now reserved for the Lord's Day, as more appropriate. From these three things may learn the use of the appointed means of grace. The holy apostle used them, how much more need have we of them!

II. A Farewell. (13—16.) How long was there between the Passover and Pentecost? Much done in these fifty days: five days' voyage to Troas, seven days there, then a rapid journey to Miletus (ver. 14—16); here holds a solemn farewell; gathering of the elders of Ephesus; delivers an address, first about himself, then warning to them. (1) *Review of his own work.* (Read 17—27.) The following points may be noticed:—(*a*) *A minister's work.* His name means servant; he serves his people at all times (ver. 18), but does it because is the Lord's servant (ver. 19); he keeps back nothing profitable, preaching now repentance, now faith (ver. 21); he may not preach smooth things, must arouse careless; reprove, rebuke, exhort (2 Tim. iv. 2); also visit from house to house, privately giving word in season, ministering to sick, &c. (*b*) *A minister's trials.* Poor St. Paul! bonds and afflictions in every city; but was he unhappy? What did he do in the

prison? So always. Why was he thus full of joy? but because did his duty, strengthened by consciousness of presence of Christ. So may all trying to do something for God be cheered. (*c*) *A minister's joy.* What was it?—money, luxuries, honour? Better than these—to finish his course and ministry, *i.e.*, to save souls, thus, like his Master, to glorify God on earth (John xvii. 4). How many that could say are pure from blood of all men (ver. 26)? how many have we led into sin? how many have we saved? (2) *The warning to the Elders.* (*a*) *Their duties.* Are appointed by Holy Ghost. What an honour to work for God! but what a responsibility! Their duties: to overlook the Church, feed the flock with the milk of God's Word, *i.e.*, teach Divine truth. (*b*) *Their dangers.* Foes from without persecuting, from within teaching false doctrine. So had Christ warned (Matt. vii. 15). Must earnestly look to God and Word of His Grace, *i.e.*, study the Scriptures, and so be built up in the faith (ver. 32). (*c*) *Their duties.* To be ready to minister to the poor, as well as, when possible, to work for themselves after Paul's example.

Now picture the farewell scene. They all kneel down—these friends of three years. St. Paul offers up prayer, then, doubtless gives them his blessing. Picture the weeping friends, the sad parting words, the affectionate embrace. Now the whole party move to the shore; the missionary brethren embark; again last farewells, tears, waving of hands till the ship is out of sight, the slow and sad return home of the elders.

Practical Lessons. (1) *Watchfulness.* Against what does St. Paul warn these elders? Are other foes beside false doctrine? what are they? without, world and devil; within, lusts of flesh. Against all these must watch and pray. (2) *Love between ministers and people.* What tender affection Paul and elders had for each other! So should be always respect, affection; they are ministers of God, watch for souls; esteem them as such.

Questions to be answered.

1. Describe the raising of Eutychus.
2. What does it teach as to the religious customs of the Church?
3. Why do we observe Sunday, not Saturday, as the Sabbath?
4. Give an outline of St. Paul's account of himself as a minister.
5. On what points does he warn the elders?
6. What two practical lessons may be learned?

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER III.

THE passenger boat from Calais to Dover was making its way over a sea which for once was comparatively smooth, so that the deck of the steamer did not present quite such a scene of desponding human misery as is generally produced by the transit across the channel. One unfortunate Frenchman there was evidently far from comfortable, who kept plaintively asking those around him if they could yet "see de half-way," and two or three Italians, who are proverbially bad sailors, went on continually making significant grimaces, expressive of their intense dislike to the capricious element to which they had trusted themselves; but most of the English on board seemed quite to enjoy the passage. It was nigh summer, in the year 1869, and the sky was blue and cloudless, while the light breeze, that only raised a few little dancing waves on the surface of the water, was full of exhilarating freshness, which seemed to have improved the spirits of many who were seated in groups, talking and laughing, or leaning over the side of the vessel conversing together. All, however, with one single exception, had their looks turned in the direction of the coast towards which they were going, watching for the first shimmer of the white cliffs over the deep blue sea, and eagerly discussing in how many minutes they might hope to set foot on the English shore. The one exception was a very striking looking man, who was leaning with folded arms on the opposite rail, fixing an intent almost impassioned gaze upon the coast of France, which was rapidly receding from his view. Any one who had ever seen Louis, Comte de L'Isle, in his youth, would have recognised his son in the beautifully moulded features of his noble face, and in the stately bearing, which marked the descendant of one of the proudest lines of the old *noblesse*. But aristocratic-looking and dignified as he was, the great charm of Bertrand Lisle's countenance was in the sunny brightness of his expression, and the frank winning smile which so often hovered on his lips. He looked, what in truth he was, a man at peace with all the world and with himself. His life had been happy, and singularly free from temptation and error, his profession was one which suited him well, he enjoyed the cultivated society of the diplomatic circles to which he belonged, and, as yet



(*Drawn by* W. SMALL.)

"He flung his arms round her neck, and kissed her heartily."—*p.* 379.

no tempest of passionate feeling had ever been roused in his heart, to disturb its freedom and serenity. His appearance was very attractive. He had bright blue eyes, clear and candid, that met every look with a fearless gaze; a broad open forehead, over which the thick masses of his brown hair were always falling in rebellious disorder; and there was a peculiar sweetness of expression in the curve of the lips, which he inherited from the mother whose memory he still adored as being the highest type of earthly goodness.

Notwithstanding his likeness to his father, Bertrand Lisle was essentially English in manners and appearance; by education and habits, in thought and feeling, he belonged absolutely to his adopted country. He had never spent more than a few hours in France throughout his life; and he would often say, with a rather uneasy smile, that he even spoke French with a truly British accent. England was very dear to him as his home and the native land of his dead mother, and it would have cost him a bitter pang had he been told that he must spend his days in any other part of the world, and yet the gaze which he was even now fixing on the fast-fading shores of sunny France might have disclosed, if read aright, that which was the master-passion of his soul. There is in most lives some secret thought or sentiment which is held too sacred to be ever exposed to the scrutiny or comments of others, and there were many reasons, besides this natural reticence, which had kept Bertrand Lisle rigidly silent to all on the subject that, up to the present time, had always lain nearest his heart. Look at him now as he stands, with just such a look riveted on the vanishing coast-line as men are wont to fix on a beloved face when death is stealing away its animation and brightness, and none could doubt that an intense patriotism bound him with invisible chains to the native land of his race, and that all the vicissitudes of that beautiful and unfortunate country found a response in his loyal heart, which was none the less fervent that it was outwardly unspoken. Many causes combined to keep him silent on this subject, which was to him as sacred as it was mournful. He entirely agreed with his father in political opinions, and was as little hopeful as the old man himself of ever seeing him whom they deemed the rightful king placed on the throne of France, while he shared with him the conviction that a voluntary exile was the only righteous course which remained to them under the circumstances. Yet he felt that if he ever spoke on this theme, it would not be possible to spare his father the pain of discovering that all his efforts to make a thorough Englishman of his son had not eradicated that imperishable love of country which glows in the breast of every true man, and it would not have been easy either to explain to him, or to any one, the conflicting emotions which swayed him in this matter; for, deep and tender as was his devotion to France, he truly loved England as his home, to which he was attached by many a life-long tie, and by his connection with the Reformed Church of the country, in which he had been brought up by his mother. The fact, of which he was aware, that the ancient estates of the family were all entirely lost to them, prevented him from having the slightest desire actually to live in France, and yet, on the rare occasions when he passed through it on his way to or from the Continent, it never failed to exercise a charm over him which filled him with agitation half sweet half sorrowful.

Bertrand continued now to watch the distant coast with the same intent and wistful gaze, so long as it was even indistinctly visible, but when at length the last faint line of the shore disappeared below the horizon, he seemed to make an effort to shake himself free of the influence that so strongly possessed him, and, turning round, he sat down upon a seat, and let his eyes follow the gaze of those around him—towards the well-known outline of the English coast, which was rapidly becoming visible. Then his thoughts flew on to the home and the father towards whom he was hastening, and his bright pleasant face took an expression of sadness which was rare to it. There was a deep and tender attachment between the father and son, which had never been marred by so much as a word of dissension, and the perfect confidence they had always given to each other had been a great source of happiness to both. Bertrand knew well that all this was about to have an end, and his disposition was naturally so gay and buoyant that it was always his involuntary impulse to seek a refuge at once from painful thoughts whenever they assailed him. He turned his mind straightway now, therefore, to that which had been an unfailing source of peace and brightness to him from the days almost of his earliest recollections, and the image rose before him of Mary Trevelyan, in her stillness and grace, with her sweet pure face, and her dark eyes so full of depths of feeling, to which the delicate lips, in their habitual silence, never gave expression, and a sense of consolation and calm stole into his troubled heart with the very remembrance of that dear presence, which had ever shed an abiding light upon his home.

Mr. Lisle had been right when he told Mary that Bertrand loved her; he did love her, with an earnest enduring affection, which had grown up with him from childhood, and which he perhaps scarcely recognised in its real strength, because it was so completely a part of himself, and so entirely without exaggeration or passion. It had never occurred to him to speak of it to her, because she simply seemed a portion of his existence, without whom it would fail of the best elements of its enjoyment. The idea of marriage with her had perhaps taken no definite form in his mind, because they had never been separated long enough to make him feel

any urgent wish to bind her more closely to him, and he never could have dreamt of removing her for so much as a day from his father, to whom she was more absolutely essential even than to himself; but he never for a moment supposed that his life could go on without her; and when he looked into the future she was always by his side, sharing all his burdens till their weight became almost unfelt. He had never thought of asking her if she loved him, any more than he dreamt of telling her of his affection in so many words. Her peculiar quietude of manner had perhaps held him back unconsciously, but he knew that her silent care had been round him in well-nigh every instant, that his wishes were interpreted and fulfilled without a question, and that every roughness had been smoothed from his path which Mary Trevelyan could in any way reach with her tender solicitude. The thought of seeing her again, after a year's absence, drew the sting from all the pain with which he anticipated his approaching bereavement, and when at length the steamer reached Dover he was the first to spring on shore and hurry on to take his place in the train for London.

Bertrand was not aware that his father's danger was so imminent as it really was, for the invalid had grown rapidly worse since Mary had written to summon him home, so it was without any immediate pressure of anxiety that he arrived, late at night, at the little country station near Mr. Lisle's house, and having left his luggage to be brought on in the morning, he walked quietly away through the starlit fields which led by a short cut to his father's door.

It was nearly midnight when Bertrand reached the villa, and he rang very gently lest he should disturb the invalid, whom he trusted might now be reposing in slumber. Somewhat to his surprise, however, the door was opened so quickly that it almost seemed as if some one had been waiting behind it to admit him, and his eyes fell at once on the familiar face of an individual known in the house as Nurse Parry, with whom his very earliest recollections were connected. She had taken charge of Mary Trevelyan from the day when the poor little infant had been left motherless within a few hours of her birth; but Mrs. Parry was both in education and position much above the rank of a servant—she was the widow of a missionary who had died in Madeira, and she had been on her way home to England when Mary was born on board the vessel in which she was sailing, and it was a mere sentiment of compassion which had prompted her to take the forlorn orphan into her care until some ordinary nurse could be procured at the close of the voyage; but long before that time the good woman had become so much attached to the poor little babe, which really owed its life to her tenderness, that she could not make up her mind to part with it, and as she was herself childless, and very much straitened in means, she very willingly acceded to the wish of the Lisles that she should continue to take charge of Mary, and make her home with them for the rest of her life; although she was not by any means their equal in birth, she was quite enough of a gentlewoman to make her a suitable associate for Mary, and she was such a perfectly simple unostentatious person, that she preferred taking rank with the housekeeper in social arrangements. She had proved a most valuable friend to them all, however, and Bertrand welcomed with cordial pleasure the first sight of her comely countenance, with the shrewd black eyes—looking all the blacker for the contrast with the grey hair and widow's white cap—and the wide good-humoured mouth, which expanded into a smile the moment her eyes lit on Bertrand, despite the fact that there were traces of tears on her cheeks.

He flung his arms round her neck, and kissed her heartily, while she exclaimed, "My dear boy, how glad I am to see you! I have been waiting this last half hour to open the door!"

"But how did you know I was coming to-night, nurse? I sent no letter."

"I knew it in a very strange and mysterious way," she answered, lowering her voice; "come in and I will tell you;" and shutting the outer door, she drew him into the sitting-room.

CHAPTER IV.

"TELL me first how my dear father is," said Bertrand, anxiously, when he perceived in the lighted room the red rims round nurse Parry's twinkling eyes, which showed how much she had been weeping.

"Ah, my dear Mr. Bertrand, you must prepare for the worst, he cannot long be with us! in fact, I believe he would not now be alive if it were not that he has seemed to feel some urgent necessity to see you again, far beyond the mere desire for your presence, with which his love for you naturally inspires him; but it appears so wonderful he should have known you were coming to-night!"

"But did he know, nurse? it seems impossible; for I did not know myself what day I could start, and I did not write or telegraph!"

"He knew most certainly, for he told me the very hour when you would arrive, as you may see by the fact that I was waiting to open the door to you; but, my dear, I have seen many a one pass over the mysterious bridge between this world and the next, and I know that just at the last the dying have powers and privileges which we, who have to remain longer on this side of the grave, cannot at all understand. I could tell you of many strange experiences in my life connected with that subject, but I dare say you would think me a superstitious old woman, so you shall simply hear what occurred with respect to your father. Two days ago we did not think he could last an hour, and dear Mary has sat up with him three nights in succession; she did not mean to

have left him this evening, tired as she was, but about three o'clock to-day he fell into a very deep sleep, and when he woke up from it as it was getting dusk, he called me to him after Mary had left the room, and said, in a very solemn manner, and with unusual strength, 'Nurse, my son will be here at midnight, and I wish to see him alone; you must persuade Mary to go to bed; but do not tell her he is coming;' he spoke with such decision that I asked if he had had a letter from you; then he smiled, and said, 'No, it is not from Bertrand I have heard it, but I have a certain assurance that he will be here to-night, and I must gather up all that remains to me of life and strength that I may tell him a great deal he has yet to learn from me; arrange with Mary that she shall take the rest she needs so much while you watch by me, and then leave me quiet and alone till Bertrand comes.' I had much ado to coax poor Mary to leave him; she could not bear to quit his side, even for an hour; but she saw at last that he really wished it, and she was deceived, poor dear, by his animation into the belief that he was better, though I could see well enough he was only sustained by an unreal excitement, which will leave him more prostrate than before when it passes away. However, it enabled her to go to bed in peace, and she is sweet asleep, the darling, looking as fair and innocent as a little child."

"I had better go to my father at once then," said Bertrand, hastily; for a feeling of greater awe had been produced in him by Mrs. Parry's words than he cared to show her, and, resisting her pressing entreaties that he would take some supper first, he asked her to lead the way to Mr. Lisle's sick room. She took a lamp, and preceded him along the corridor in silence, making him a sign to tread softly as they passed through the part of the house where Mary lay sleeping, unconscious of the new arrival; a half-open door, through which the light was streaming, showed that they had reached their destination, and Mrs. Parry pushed it gently back, and stood aside to let Bertrand enter.

"It will not startle him, he expects you," she whispered; and he stole softly through the room to the foot of his father's bed; there he paused for a moment, struck with the sudden chill, the inexplicable shrinking which we all experience when we draw near to the presence of death.

Mr. Lisle had been propped up in a sitting position in order to relieve the difficulty of breathing, and he was reclining on his pillows in a perfectly motionless attitude, with his hands clasped together over a small black trinket he had brought with him from France so many long years before. There was not the smallest vestige of colour in his face, or in the long thin fingers, as they lay on a counterpane not whiter than they were themselves, and the well-defined lines of his clear cut features had grown sharp and rigid, so that he looked exactly like a figure moulded in wax; the eyes alone demonstrated that he was still a living being, who had not yet escaped the power of earthly hopes and fears, for they were bright and eager, with an expression of keen expectancy, and he held them turned immovably towards the door; when Bertrand came at last within the range of their vision, so that their gaze fell upon him suddenly, there flashed into them a look of such intense delight that it seemed to bring him back at once to the light and warmth of life, and in a moment the ghastly immobility of his attitude had passed away, and he stretched out his arms with a longing gesture, exclaiming, "Bertrand, my son, my son! I have waited for you when already I could hear the voices calling me beyond the brink; I have waited, and not in vain; now shall my spirit be enabled to depart in peace!"

Then the young man went forward, and, forgetting the years that had elapsed since the well-remembered days when as a little child he had often gone to sleep in those protecting arms, he let his stately head fall upon his father's breast, while a great sob burst unrestrained from his lips. The old man folded his arms round him, and held him for a few minutes close to his heart, while Mrs. Parry went softly out and shut the door, leaving those two together between whom so soon was to be fixed the great unfathomable gulf, which even the longing eyes of human love have not power to penetrate or span.

"Oh, my dearest father, I did not think it would be so soon!" said Bertrand, when at last he looked up into Mr. Lisle's face; for the seal of death was so unmistakably set on that pallid countenance that it would have been simple mockery to have appeared to ignore the truth.

"Yes, soon—very soon, my son; and I have so much to say to you; I must not delay, or the strength will fail me which has been given to me for this special purpose. Sit down beside me, Bertrand, and let me hold your hand while I make you my confession."

"Your confession! I am sure after such a blameless life as yours has been you have none to make to me or to any one," said his son, tenderly.

"So it is that we judge one another in our blindness!" said Mr. Lisle, with a sigh; "how little can the human heart be fathomed, even by those for whom it beats with deepest love; but we are a mystery even to ourselves, and well may be so also to others; this I can tell you, however, Bertrand, that the clear illumination which falls from purer realms upon a deathbed, alters strangely the lights and shadows which lie upon our path of life as we look back on it; the interests which were dearest to us in the days of activity and strength shrivel away into nothing compared with any fact in our existence, however little regarded before, which trenches in the smallest degree on the eternal laws of righteousness"—he paused for a moment, while his eyes took a dreamy look, as if his thoughts had wandered back

over that past of which he spoke; but soon he grasped his son's hand more firmly, and went on—"Bertrand, you know very well what have been the strongest sentiments that influenced me throughout all the time when I formed part of the living, working world—devotion to my king and country first of all; then love, so deep and absorbing that it made me well nigh forget my France, love for your mother, the sweet young bride of my brightest days, the tender faithful wife of maturer years, lastly a father's proud affection for a dear and worthy son—these have been the ruling passions of my life, the engrossing influences which swayed me every hour, and yet now, Bertrand, they have receded from that awful shore on which my spirit waits its summons, like the swelling waves when the tide is going out, and left behind them only as it were the ghastly corpse of one dead hour, in which a deed was done that never in all the eternal ages shall I have power to recall. Oh, my son! this is in truth the most terrible of all the conditions of our mortal life, that it is possible for us by the act, the rash unthinking act, of one single instant, to destroy our whole existence, and even our whole eternity, and yet the moment in which it was committed once gone from us, borne away upon the wings of time to swell the irrevocable past, never never can we call it back, or undo its fatal instantaneous work, though we might be ready to offer in exchange for it the entire future of our earthly years, with all their golden possibilities of hope and joy! Yes, it is indeed a dread attribute of our complex nature, that we should have the tremendous power to freight a single instant with the most momentous issues, and yet be so utterly, so helplessly, incapable of reversing the character we have stamped on it for ever one second after its record has been written! Ah, my Bertrand, one such moment there has been in my long past, and it stands out before me now, vivid, menacing, filling up all the foreground of my memory, while the vacant throne of discrowned France has vanished into the shadows, and the sweet face of my only love shows dimly through the unknown darkness, and you, my noble son, from whom I am about to be parted evermore, can scarce draw tears from my eyes with the thought of our separation, because of the drops of very blood that I would shed if only I could bring back that one instant from the inexorable past!"

Mr. Lisle paused, exhausted, and as Bertrand gently wiped the death dews from his brow, he said to him, soothingly, "Dear father, whatever you may have to regret in the past, I am sure you have amply expiated it by the sorrow you have felt for it; will you not let it rest now with the mercy of our God, and turn your thoughts to those celestial hopes which come out like stars in the firmament when the sun of life is going down?"

"Yes, my son, I must indeed trust all my regrets and all my hopes alike to that one and only compassion which has no limits; but I may not so much as claim it till I have made all the reparation that is in any way possible for my fault, and it is you, my Bertrand, who must accomplish it vicariously for me; for the power to attempt it in ever so slight a measure ends with my life. It is for this cause that you have been sent to me in time; for this reason that my soul, when already cast loose from earth, was held back by a single thread of life, that I might see you face to face, and win, as I trust, your acceptance of the charge I would confide to you; but to make my meaning clear you must know the whole, dear Bertrand, and I think that I can tell it you, though to do so I must rake up all the ashes of a long dead past, if only you will have patience with my failing breath and feeble utterance."

"Oh, my dear father, I prize the faintest whisper from your voice! would that I might but hope to hear it longer; but it is the exertion for yourself I fear—will it not try you too much?"

"Strength will be given me for this task, my son, and then haply it will fail for ever."

(To be continued.)

BESSIE AND I.

ROAMING together down the glade,
Playing under the hawthorn's shade,
Picking the buttercups on the lea,
Gathering shells by the ebbing sea,
Watching the swallows skimming the brook,
Reading out of the same old book—
So our childhood fleeted by,
And we were happy, Bessie and I.

Then came a time when a golden glow
Spread itself over all below;
For we, who had loved as girl and boy,
Found out a new and thrilling joy,
When standing together side by side,
She plighted her troth as my own dear bride;
No mortals then beneath the sky
Could happier be than Bessie and I.

Now years have flown, our hair is grey;
Our children all have gone away,
And we are left alone once more,
As in those long past days of yore;
Still happy in our mutual love,
We wait the summons from above,
And hope that when life's end draws nigh,
We may go together, Bessie and I.

E. I. TUPPER.

AUNT JESSIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

ESTHER had by this time recovered sufficiently to return to her situation; but this attack had given additional proof of her delicacy, and made Mrs. Lang feel that it would never do to suffer her for the future to run the risk of such exposure to the weather as she had had in her long walks to and fro to business; especially as it might be avoided by her going into the "house" altogether. So she had gently unfolded to her niece her plan, which was that Esther being provided for in the matter of a home, she, as her sight had by this time altogether departed from her so that she could not manage to get on alone, even if the small parish pay had been enough for both board and lodging, should take shelter for a time in the workhouse.

Esther started as she uttered the last words, and was prepared to make strong resistance to them; but her aunt laid her hand on her arm to stay her, and in her own quiet way showed that there was no other course for the present. So Esther—seeing that to show how much she felt the trial, and how her young spirit was inclined to rebel against it, would only cause more pain to the sorrowful heart which she knew must be bleeding and shrinking at the thought of what lay before them, even though she tried calmly and patiently to meet it—held her peace, and endeavoured to speak hopefully of the time—though, alas! it seemed so very very far off—when she would begin to receive a salary, and they might be able to afford a little room together again.

And now the last day in the little home had come; and though it was but one poor humble room, it had been so peaceful and happy to those two, that it was impossible to quit it without keen sorrow and pain.

Esther was to be spared from business for a couple of hours or so that afternoon, that she might come and fetch her aunt, and lead her to her new place of sojourn. And now Mrs. Lang sat alone awaiting her.

Everything had been put ready. The rent, which had got behindhand, and for which the kind-hearted landlady had never pressed, saying to herself that even if she did lose it, "Why, there! like enough 'twould be made up some other way," had been paid by the sale of some of the few remaining bits of furniture; so that nothing was now left except two or three articles, from which it would have cost the widow much to part, and which the good woman who kept the house had said she would take care of for her until she should be able to have a little room of her own again.

It was almost time to go now. Esther would be coming in about half an hour, as she knew by the clock striking. She had only that brief space remaining of quiet for solitary thought, in which she had been so accustomed to indulge, but which now perhaps would often be interrupted by the perpetual presence of others.

She cast her sightless eyes around the room, as if taking a farewell glance at everything; and then an expression of pain stole into her face for a moment, as if she were realising the fact that she had already taken her last look on earth at every beloved object of whatever nature. She rose, and as though in default of a parting *look*, she passed her hands slowly, with a sort of lingering, loving touch, over each article one by one: the old arm-chair which had always been her husband's seat; the little table which had always stood beside it; and the chest of drawers in which she had laid by her wedding dress when she had come, a happy bride, to the little home in which she had taken so much pride, but which she had been forced to leave for something lower-rented after her husband's death. In another drawer she had sorrowfully and very tenderly, in by-gone days, laid aside certain baby garments, when the first and only child that had been granted her, had spread its little wings and soared upwards, as if in haste to prove its heavenly birth and nestle in the arms of love Divine.

She had put by these mementoes of her darling in that drawer, which she had kept locked, and had opened sometimes with tearful eyes and aching heart. But those treasures were not there now. She had given them all away, years ago, to a neighbour even poorer than herself, who was in need of everything; and the much-prized little garments, which her affection had prompted her to hoard, but her higher nature had told her to give, had been worn out and cast aside long since by the healthy active child who had lived and flourished, and grown up robust and hearty.

She could not help a few silent tears falling as thought went over all this; but there was no bitterness in those tears; and as, passing her hand along the top of the drawers, she came to the old Bible, which had been her husband's, and on the fly-leaf of which were inscribed the dates of the birth and death of her child, as also the day on which her husband had entered into his rest, her courage seemed to revive. Taking the book in her hands, she went back with it to her seat; where Esther found her a little later, with so calm and placid a look resting on her face, that had she not known her aunt as she did, she would have fancied that the parting after all had not cost as much as she had feared, and that she need not have dreaded it so much.

"I can't see to read it any longer, Esther," she said, holding up the Bible; "but I should like to take it with me."

"Let me carry it for you, dear aunt Jessie."

"No, thank you, dear: I think I'll carry it myself. To feel I've got firm hold on it seems to help me somehow. And now let us go."

And so they went: Esther giving her arm to her aunt, and guiding her carefully through the crowded streets. The Union lay outside the town; and soon they reached the open country, where the pure fresh breeze blew upon their cheeks, bringing with it the scent of spring flowers, and the sweet notes of the singing birds.

They walked slowly; for the one was becoming old and feeble, and the other had not yet fully recovered her strength after her illness. Besides, they would willingly prolong this last quiet walk together.

Esther could not prevent the tears every now and then making their way into her eyes, and even rolling down her cheeks; but she did not heed them so much, as she knew they could not be perceived by the other. Her chief care was to keep her voice firm and steady, but in spite of herself a sorrowful quaver made itself heard at times. It caught the listening ear of the other, and made her long to give some comfort before they should part.

"You'll be able to come and see me sometimes, Esther."

"Oh yes, aunt! and you may be sure I shall come as often as ever I can."

"And you won't fret about me, my child?"

A moment's pause, and then came the answer, with a sob which could not be kept back, "How can I help it, aunt? Oh, how can I help it?"

"Because there's no need, darling—no call for it at all. I'm in good hands, Esther, and so are you. You feel that, don't you?"

"I scarcely know what I feel, it all looks so dark—so dark!" murmured the girl, with a sudden burst of sorrow; but, vexed the next moment that she should have given utterance to the words, she went on, "I'll try and think of all you've said and taught me, Aunt Jessie; and I dare say in time it'll all seem right. But oh, aunt"— and again her feelings overcame her self-control—"if your sight could only have lasted another couple of years or so, and we could have scraped on through that time, then it wouldn't have been quite so hard to bear! for we shouldn't have been obliged to part; and you wouldn't have had to go to the——"

She broke off. She could not utter the word which, to her, spoke only of misery and humiliation.

"But why should I not go there, my child? If the path to the home above leads by there, and if that is the gateway by which I'm to enter, should I murmur at having to pass through it, and say it looks low and narrow, when I can catch glimpses beyond it of the mansion the Saviour has got ready for me. A workhouse now—but only for a little bit of time at most. A seat in heaven afterwards for a long time—for ever and ever. Have I anything to complain of?"

"Ah, Aunt Jessie, how good you are! You take everything so meekly. I wish I could bear troubles like you."

"It's harder for young things, who may have a long life before them: but at my time I feel it can be but a little while; for it sometimes seems I've waited long—so long it can't be much longer—to go to all my dear ones who are watching for me."

"Oh, aunt, don't talk of going! don't leave me—oh, don't leave me!" cried Esther, in sudden anguish, as she looked upon the pale face beside her, and thought it appeared paler and thinner than even its wont, whilst the sweet peace which rested on it she felt was not of this earth—as indeed it was not. A fear, which somehow or other had never arisen with such force before, had suddenly taken possession of her.

"You won't ask to be taken, Aunt Jessie, will you?"

"No, no, my child; for your sake I'd be glad to stay as long as ever the Lord sees fit; for 'twould be a sore parting, Esther. But we needn't look on to trouble beforehand."

"For you've enough to bear in the present, poor Aunt Jessie!" said Esther, tenderly.

"Not one bit more than I can well bear, because, dear, I'm not left to bear it alone. And may-be the trouble seems greater to you than it does to me. For comfort comes with it, Esther. Now that it's all dark without, it seems all bright within; I see things I never saw when I had my eyesight."

"What things, auntie?" whispered Esther.

"I see my Saviour closer than I ever saw Him before. I seem to see His tender face looking down on me, oh so compassionately! and He seems to put out His hand, and tell me to hold to it, and He will guide me, so that I shan't stumble. You know how He took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town, when he was going to heal him; and sometimes I feel I'm exactly like that man. I'm being led aside by Jesus, and I know as well as the man did that I'm going to have my eyes opened some time, and that then, just like the blind man, the first sight they will look upon will be my Saviour. But that will be in heaven—not here; only I can very well wait: I wouldn't have it a minute sooner than He sees fit."

"Dear Aunt Jessie," murmured Esther. It was all she could say.

"So don't fret about me, Esther; it's all well. If God takes away a blessing with one hand, it seems to me He's always ready to give two with the other. 'Tis so with me: the light that streams from His face is better than the brightest sunshine, and it seems to

come straight into my heart now. If I can't look upon you, Esther—and yours is the only dear face left to me —I can look upon Christ, and when I look I want nothing more."

After this the two walked on in silence for a while.

The sun had suddenly burst through the clouds which had been hiding him all day, and which, when the two had started on their walk, had made everything look cheerless and gloomy. But now all the landscape was flooded with a golden light, which shed a rich beauty over everything; whilst the sky in the west seemed to have kindled into one great blaze of glory. Esther's eye was caught by it, and as she gazed, the words came into her mind, "At evening time it shall be light." She found herself repeating them half unconsciously, over and over again, "At evening time it shall be light."

But now an abrupt turn in the road brought them within sight of the workhouse. Esther involuntarily slackened her pace. Her aunt noticed it, and immediately guessed the cause.

"You'll try and be happy, Esther, won't you, dear? I dare say you'll miss at first coming home at night, for home is home, and nothing makes up for it; but you'll be with kind people; for I'm sure Mr. and Mrs. Webbe will do everything that's right by you; and you'll get accustomed to it in time."

"But I don't want to get accustomed to being away from you, Aunt Jessie."

"And we'll hope to be together again some day," continued the other. "And now, dear, are we near the door?"

"Yes, Aunt Jessie. Are you tired?"

"Rather. And now kiss me, my darling, and promise to keep a good heart, and not fret."

They turned and kissed each other, but neither could speak for a few minutes.

"God bless you, my child, my own Esther," came at length in faltering tones from the sightless woman, as she gently stroked the soft brown tresses of the young girl. "God bless you! I never can tell you all the comfort you've been to me! But I know I don't leave you alone, or I couldn't tell how to bear it."

They reached the door, and then Esther turned away to retrace her steps alone, with an aching pain at her heart, but inwardly repeating, as if some voice within her were saying the words rather than she herself, "At evening time it shall be light." At evening time! Not till then, perhaps—but assuredly then."

Meantime Mrs. Lang found herself left among strangers. She could not see the inquisitive glances turned upon her—her whole appearance being so different from that of most of the inmates of that place, that they appeared astonished at her presence there—she could not look into their faces, and thus find out what sort of people these, her new companions, might be: she could only judge of them by the tones of their voices and the words they spoke; and these seemed not overfull of either kindness or gentleness. She still seemed to feel Esther's arms clinging round her neck; whilst in thought she pictured her taking her solitary way back to the town. Her heart was full, not so much of her own troubles, as of tender solicitude for the child of her love. But she knew where to seek comfort, and she sought and found it.

(*To be concluded.*)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

147. What sin does the prophet Isaiah say was the cause of the destruction of Moab?

148. Why was Zacharias the father of St. John the Baptist struck dumb?

149. What was the total number of captives who returned from the Babylonish captivity with Ezra?

150. Where is it stated that the father of Titus was a Greek?

151. How is the mischief of idle words described in the Book of Proverbs?

152. Quote the words of our Saviour upon the same subject.

153. What disciples of our Lord wished to command fire to come down from heaven upon the Samaritans?

154. Who did they mention as having done this in olden time? Quote passage.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 352.

133. Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 16—19).

134. By means of His prophet Elisha He multiplied the widow's oil (2 Kings iv. 1—7).

135. "The carpenter stretcheth out his *rule*; he marketh it out with a *line*; he fitteth it with *planes*, and he marketh it out with a *compass*, and maketh it after the figure of a man" (Isa. xliv. 13).

136. The daughters of Shallum, the son of Halohesh (Neh. iii. 12).

137. Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater (Rom. xvi. 2).

138. "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city" (Prov. xviii. 19).



(*Drawn by* R. BARNES.)

"Still happy in our mutual love."

"*BESSIE AND I.*"—*p.* 384.



(*Drawn by* J. TARLTON.)

A TOILER BY THE SEA.

WHEN Baptiste's boat is out at sea,
And weather passing fair,
My heart beats high and merrilie,
It knows no sense of care;

And at my task a lay I trill,
As up the sandy shore
I bear my burden, with a will,
Nor feel that I am poor.

And when I pause to rest a while,
And think how brave and good,
How free from meanness, vice, and guile,
Is he who dares the flood,
I feel that in my husband's love
I'm rich as rich can be;
For howsoe'er his bark may rove,
His heart ne'er sails from me.

When Baptiste's boat is far away,
And stormy winds arise,
And buffet in the face of day,
And clouds o'erspread the skies;
When night no starry robe doth wear
To cheer us through the dark,
I quake, lest some grim sea should bear
To wreck, his gallant bark.

And then I think of Him whose voice
Could still the raging wave,
Who made the widow's heart rejoice,
Called Lazarus from the grave;
I bend my knee and ask His aid,
And even while I pray,
I hear His sweet, "Be not afraid,
But trust in Me alway!"

JOHN G. WATTS.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.—ON TO THE SYCAMORE-TREE.

THEY had tea in Mr. Woodward's study sometimes, especially in the summer, for it looked on to the garden. It was a cosy room, untidy of course, as all the Woodward rooms were, with books and papers all about, and easy chairs and couches covered with faded grubby chintz. The few who knew it always remembered the room, and the group that gathered there, and loved in after years to linger over the memory.

George Blakesley had wanted to know the Woodwards. Mrs. Woodward had been his mother's friend in girlhood, and he had often heard of Mr. Woodward in his editorial capacity. So, when he went to Colonel Wade's, and met Netta there, it seemed the most natural thing in the world that he should find his way to Hampstead, and he did. Mrs. Woodward had liked him on his first visit, and she liked seeing some one about the place who did not bother her; moreover, she was beginning to feel that Dolly was growing up, and she remembered that Netta had said he was a good match.

He raised his head half curiously when the procession, consisting of Tom, and Will, and Sally, and Dorothy, entered; he had never seem them before, and he was fond of children; but these were bigger than he had expected; and when he saw Dolly he forgot—for he was singularly absent—what was expected of him, and looked at her almost curiously. "That girl has a good face," he thought; "I should like to talk to her."

They found it pleasanter than they had imagined, having tea with the interloping Blakesley, as Tom had christened him, though he directed his conversation chiefly to their father, and the subjects of it were dry enough—mathematics, and so on. It gave them an opportunity of looking at him. He was fair and pale, with a straggling faded-looking beard and dull yellow hair, but he had a wonderfully good head, and soft kind blue eyes with dark lashes; he was not very tall, yet well-made and muscular; and with a quiet manner and voice that had withal a certain dignity.

"Well, what do you think of old pale face?" asked Tom, with his usual striking want of respect.

This remark was addressed to Dolly, when, the festival of tea having been completed, the younger branches of the house of Woodward had betaken themselves to the garden again.

"I don't like him," said Dorothy, with almost a shudder.

"Then we'll serve him out," he answered, consolingly.

"I like him," said Sally, cramming her papers into her pocket.

Sally had a quick eye, and was always drawing crude pictures dictated by her quaint fancy.

"I heard father tell him he would always be welcome, and to come often," said Will.

"It's too bad," said Dolly, almost crying; and she thought, "I will never, never like him, never!"

And George Blakesley, looking out at the straggling garden, thought, "There is something in that girl's face I like; but what a child she is!" and then he asked if he might go and look at the summer-house, and made his way for the first time to the old sycamore-tree.

CHAPTER IX.—THE INTERLOPING BLAKESLEY.

IT was six months or more since George Blakesley had first made his way to the sycamore-tree, and the children knew him well, and liked him, and he was fonder of them than ever Adrian Fuller had been.

He was well off, as Netta had told them before his first appearance, having an excellent appointment as actuary to an insurance company, as well as an

income from private sources; and he had some position too, besides that given him by birth—he had carried off high honours at the University, and was clever, nay, more than merely clever, for great things were expected from him in the future. Yet his manner and ways and tastes were perfectly simple, and they seeing him at Hampstead quietly spending his evenings there, or content to pass his hours among the merry group in the garden, scarcely thought or could have realised how great and clever people sought him out, and asked him to their houses in vain. He had his own circle of friends too, who believed in him and made much of him, but though he liked them, and valued their friendship, he only visited them by fits and starts. He never lost a friend, though he was sometimes long ere he made one, for he took no trouble to do so, and he was unobtrusive and unconventional, dressing badly, never making calls, and wrapt up in his pursuits; but when people once learned to understand him, they learned to like him.

At Hampstead he had won Mr. and Mrs. Woodward completely. He talked science and philosophy with the former, and lent books to the latter. The children liked him; but they were true to Adrian Fuller, for they were loyal children—though they may not be called children longer—and constant to old friends.

They had so altered in these six months, and perhaps George Blakesley had had most to do with this. He was so apt to talk over their heads, and they, trying to reach him, insensibly climbed higher. Not, mind, that he ever talked great or grand knowingly. He would discuss the simplest things, but as only a thoughtful and educated mind could discuss them. He was a man who believed in trifles, and thought nothing too small to be considered, knowing how the smallest deeds have altered the whole world's way, and by what narrow paths the greatest cities are sometimes reached.

He had no mother or father, only three maiden aunts (sisters of his father), and these lived together somewhere up at Bayswater; but he himself lived not far from the pleasant ways of Hampstead, in a little house standing in its own garden.

"You must come and see my little place some day," he had said to Mrs. Woodward; but somehow the visit had never been effected, for she was indolent, and he careless and forgetful.

(To be continued.)

"NO MORE CURSE."

BY THE REV. JAMES SPENCE, D.D., AUTHOR OF "HOURS WITH DANIEL," ETC.

"And there shall be no more curse."—REV. xxiii. 3

THERE are many descriptions of heaven in Scripture, and of the future life of blessedness, but most of them are of a negative character, as if in contrast with scenes and experiences with which we are familiar here on earth. Thus intensity and impressiveness are given to these descriptions. Two of them have already come under our notice in recent papers—"No temple therein," and "No night there." But there are many others. In heaven there will be no illness, for there "the inhabitants shall not say, I am sick" (Isaiah xxxiii. 24). There "they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more" (Rev. vii. 16). "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. xxi. 4). Of all these descriptions, however, of a negative character, not one is more pregnant, comprehensive, or suggestive, than that in these words—"And THERE SHALL BE NO MORE CURSE."

Sometimes we have ventured to ask, when thinking or speaking of the future home of the saints, What more beautiful or desirable region, as the future abode of the blessed, can we conceive than this world in which we now are, if every element of evil were removed from it—if sin, with all its influences and consequences, were completely eradicated from it? Some, indeed, allege that this world, redeemed and renovated, will be the dwelling-place of the saints after the Resurrection. There is not perhaps evidence in Scripture sufficient to warrant so definite a conclusion. But we are assured that, "The heavens and the earth, which are now, are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the Day of Judgment," and we are encouraged to "look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter iii. 7, 13). When this wondrous change is consummated, this world, rescued from evil, and renewed, will doubtless be occupied in harmony with the high purposes of God's triumphant grace. And what more fitting than that those who realised that grace here, amidst the tears and toils of time, should reap its glory here amidst the joys of eternity, and find a province at least of their future dwelling-place on the renovated earth? Then there will be "no more curse."

In this world there is a curse, the evidences of which are manifold in us and around us. The moment sin entered, the curse came. Satan, the tempter, was cursed: "The Lord God said unto

the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." (Gen. iii. 14). Adam and Eve were cursed, for on the day of their disobedience they died to the true life intended for humanity; and the region given to be their home and scene of recreation and enjoyment was cursed for their sakes. Bread for their temporal sustenance was to be extracted from it by the "sweat of the face" and persevering laborious toil. Thus, through man's sin, creation, animate and inanimate, came under the influence of a curse; and now we are assured that "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Rom. viii. 22). Everywhere on earth are the evidences of a curse in the fact that this world is a vale of tears, full of sorrow, pain, and suffering; in the fact that man, the lord of this creation, is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward; in the fact that on every side we hear the wail of misery and mark the ravages of sin. Man preys upon his fellow-man, and the history of the race has from the time of Cain been very much a history of robbery, violence, bloodshed, and wrong. It is true, indeed, that out of the infinite mercy of our God the curse of labour has been turned into a blessing, and made a boon suited to man's fallen condition and degenerate nature here; but the heaving, restless, throbbing, anxious heart of humanity, in its wail of woe, proclaims and proves the universal presence of the curse. Even Nature bears its testimony to the fact in the desolating storms which sweep the sky, in the raging ocean which so often mercilessly devours the pride and property of men, in the blight and mildew which destroy the fruits of the earth, and make the labours of the husbandman issue in disappointment and disaster. The tokens that something is wrong with man and with his position here meet us everywhere. It is not merely the Bible that says so, but the experience and observation of mankind in all ages. The revelation of Scripture is to show how the curse has been met by God—how man may be delivered from it and rise to an everlasting home in which there shall be no more curse. However, we have not now to consider the great truth that Christ Jesus has borne away the curse by enduring the cross, but rather to contemplate a little more fully this heavenly life in which there will be no more curse.

1. There will be no curse on ourselves personally as the children of God. There is no condemnation now to them who are in Christ, and there will be no curse on them for ever hereafter. The evidences of a curse on mankind in this life are manifold. An aching body and an aching mind, pain and disappointment, suffering and grief, bereavement and disaster—all are evidences in varied form of the presence of a curse on our fallen and degenerate condition. "And he died!" is the consummation here of every human life, so that there are always many sorrowing hearts and many bereaved homes among the tribes of men. Many on earth have never known perfect health; sickness invades us at all stages of our pilgrimage through this world. Through unexpected illness or calamity human purposes are broken off, many noble enterprises are abandoned, and many good resolutions fail of fulfilment. Here you often see the tokens of an inward conflict in man: there is a law in the members which wars against the law of the mind; and the path of duty is often surrendered at the dictate of passion or the bidding of pleasure. Everywhere there are evidences of something wrong with man and something wrong in him, the noblest creature of God, made at first in the image of his Maker. The very tears of repentance and the twinges of remorse so frequently experienced and observed, are proofs of the evil which has brought upon us the curse. But in heaven redeemed manhood will be perfect. There will be no internal conflict in our renovated nature in our future home, no want of harmony between our powers, no beclouded intellect, no warped judgment, no accusing conscience, no selfish heart—all these tokens of the curse will be for ever gone from us. Then there will be no weariness in our celestial service, no toil in our ceaseless activity, no gloomy fear or dark foreboding, any more for ever. Tears will be wiped from every eye, and sorrow and sighing will have fled away, for there will be no more sin.

2. There will be no more curse in our circumstances or surroundings. Here on earth life is often a hard struggle; in truth, with the great majority of the human family it is so—a battle with circumstances of difficulty and depression, and often of deprivation. The pressure of poverty with multitudes involves a constant fight in which many are worsted, and principle gives way to sin in manifold forms. Often do we see the strong rising in tyranny above the weak, and Might taking the place of Right. The competitions, envyings, and jealousies which prevail, make life a conflict, in which the weakest suffer, and those who cannot adopt the ways of the world are baffled and beaten. Even the abodes and occupations of multitudes are hurtful to their well-being, injurious alike to the health of body and soul. All these things are simply indications of the curse which sin has brought upon humanity. In our associations and companionships here we find dangers. The world is strewed with the wrecks of false friendships, wounded affections, and ruptured ties. Unknown enemies, and evils unexpected, render our good name and our property insecure. Those

whom we have trusted and treated with kindness may unexpectedly turn against us. The tongue which has praised us in our presence may behind our backs breathe slander against us, and whisper our character away. In many instances we see the rottenness which festers in human society, and gives sad truth to the assertion that the "world lieth in wickedness." Everywhere the evidences of the curse abound. What a marvellous transition will it be from earth to heaven, where there will be no more curse in our circumstances! All our surroundings there will be perfect in their character and blessed in their influence. Our occupations, our abode, our companionships, will be in harmony with our redeemed manhood; and our renovated nature will be adapted to them all. There will be no blight in the air of heaven, no desolating storm will sweep its sky, no malaria will haunt its plains, and no danger lurk in hiding-places of the everlasting hills. Nor will life in heaven partake at all of the nature of conflict: there plenty takes the place of penury; and the inhabitants have all things, and abound. There will be no evil companionship, no deceitful friendship, no place for jealousy, no possibility of envy, but pure and perfect trust throughout, without fear, suspicion, or disturbance, for ever. All will delight in the same service, though in manifold forms of activity; all will sing the same song, the "new song"; all will bear the same image; and all will gladden in the same glory. Struggle and dread and foreboding, for ever gone; the battle of life ended and the victory won, and the reign of perfection and felicity begun—a reign which is to be uninterrupted and eternal. In "the general assembly and church of the first-born" there will be no envy, or discord, or bigotry, any more for ever, but universal love. Christ, the King of Love, will be the living personal centre, and all will be like Him; for they will be with Him and see Him as He is, to serve Him and behold His glory world without end.

3. Nor will there be in heaven any more curse in our prospects. We may not see before us or know the future there, any more than we can do here, but in our prospects there will be no room for disappointment or fear. In the present earthly life we know not what a day may bring forth. Happily, the child of God has no need to speculate as to what may happen to him. He can trust all with his Heavenly Father, and cast all his cares upon Him, for "He careth for us." Yet even to the Christian something may occur to dash or blight his worldly prospects. His riches may take to themselves wings and fly away; the son who has been nurtured in affection and kindness, fondly loved and kindly instructed, may turn out to be "a grief to his father and bitterness to her that bore him"—may bring down the grey hairs of his parents with sorrow to the grave. To the parent and to the child, to the servant and the master, some event may happen to disappoint the soul and harass the life as with a canker or a thorn. And death is sure to come—perhaps suddenly and unexpectedly—the darkest evidence of the curse, to close the engagements and sever the ties of this world. The arm on which you have leaned, and the bosom on which you have rested with trusting love, may be withdrawn from you, and you are made to feel desolation of heart and home. Death does not respect a mother's love, nor give way before the fondness of a husband's affection. This sad and gloomy proof of the presence of the curse is everywhere. But in heaven there will be no more curse: there, they die no more, for death itself shall be swallowed up in victory. In the heavenly life unexpected things will doubtless come to the "saints in light," but they will be unexpected blessings. There will be nothing to fear. No unexpected emergency will arise to make demand on our powers or resources which we cannot meet, or which can depress our energy or damp our enjoyment for an instant. There will be new experiences, new discoveries of truth, new disclosures of love, new engagements of service, as the ages of the future life roll on; but they will all be new delights, without a drawback and without a shadow. No confidence will be disappointed, no love deceived, no affection rudely ruptured, any more for ever. There will be no more curse; but, all within us, around us, and before us, perfection and blessing, wonderful, uninterrupted, and unending.

And to whom do we owe this future home in which there will be no more curse? Jesus Christ said to His disciples, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." This place then is prepared by Him, and, in order to prepare it and give us a title to it, He bore the curse for us. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." So, "When He had by himself purged our sins, He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high"—went "into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us," and to prepare the place in our Father's house above. What this preparation is, or what it involves, we cannot know here; but when "within the vail" we shall see what we cannot see now, and know even as we are known. Then the consciousness of moral perfection, the fulness of blessedness, the experience of completed redemption, bursting upon us with glad surprise, will evoke from us the adoring exclamation, "He who died for us hath prepared all this!" and our song shall be "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us

kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever."

Have you not sometimes been taken to an abode which has been erected, or which has undergone reparation and fresh decoration, with a view to make it the home of some one who is the object of cherished affection? and, as you have gone through the rooms and admired the tastefulness and the completeness of all the arrangements, you could readily say, "The hand of paternal affection, of brotherly love, of filial, tender thoughtfulness—as the case may be—hath done this, for it clearly is visible here!" So will it be when we have reached the paradise of God, and see its grandeur and beauty, and experience its blessedness and glory. We shall joyously say, each one of us, "My Saviour hath prepared this home for me: it is the triumphant achievement of His grace, the consummate accomplishment of His love!" Thence we shall go no more out, but be for ever with the Lord: and there can be no curse where He is. He fought the fight with sin here on earth that He might clear the universe of its curse, world without end. And now our duty and our privilege alike is to "walk worthy of God who hath called us into His kingdom and glory." Thus shall we live in the present for the coming glorious future.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 22. A Visit to Jerusalem.

Chapters to be read—Acts xxi.

THE farewells with the elders of Ephesus having been made, the missionary band begin their voyage to Jerusalem. Read 1—3, and let the teacher produce a map and trace their course. Ephesus to Coos, Rhodes, Patara, there a change of ship to Phenicia, passing north of Cyprus to Tyre. Describe the beauty of the Isles of Greece, scattered about in the blue waters of the Mediterranean, and remind similarly in modern times of Bishop Patteson and other missionaries similarly visiting the islands of the South Seas.

I. Conflicting Prophecies. (Read 3—15.) Where do they land, and why? (ver. 3.) From Acts xii. 20, and 1 Kings v. 9, 11, trace out the fact of there being great trade and intercourse between Tyre and Canaan since Solomon's time. Would be many Jews there; some have become disciples, so St. Paul and his friends spend a few days with them. (1) *False prophets.* What powers had the Holy Spirit given the disciples? not only of speaking in different tongues, but of foretelling future events. See 1 Cor. xii. 9—11, for an account of these different gifts; but sometimes persons made mistakes, could not be quite sure whether what they said was their own or Spirit's teaching. What did these disciples tell St. Paul? (ver. 4.) Did this dissuade him? No, for felt convinced in his own mind that he was doing right to go. Sometimes such a suggestion sent to try a person. Recall the sad story of the prophet from Judah (1 Kings xiii. 18), persuaded to do contrary to God's commands. St. John in his Epistle (1 John iv. 1) bids us try the spirit, because of false prophets. So the seven days over, another sad farewell, another prayer on the sea-shore, another parting. Trace Paul's company to Cæsarea. Where do they lodge there? Remind of Philip's past work for the Church, as one of the seven selected deacons. What is he now called, and why? to whom did he preach the Gospel in Samaria? so that evangelist means preacher as well as writer of the Gospel. What family had he, and what was their office? Remind of the prophecy (Joel ii. 28) quoted by St. Peter as fulfilled at Pentecost (Acts ii. 17). How these women prophesied we know not, perhaps taught children, as ladies now in Sunday-schools, perhaps taught adults, as Priscilla did Apollos (Acts xviii. 26). (2) *True prophets.* Now there comes a great prophet from Jerusalem, who was he? Have we heard of Agabus before? (xi. 28). Did that prophecy come true? Perhaps had been sent for to settle the question whether Paul ought to go to Jerusalem. Picture the scene: the friends assembled, Agabus coming in, the still silence, his taking the girdle of St. Paul's robe, his solemnly binding his own hands and feet, his prophetic words, the silence suddenly broken by the weeping of the women, and men too, the crowding round Paul, their entreaties to him not to go up to Jerusalem and be killed. Who alone was calm? but did he not feel it? Yes. Much touched by their sympathy and love, but did not mind sufferings or death for his dear Lord. What only could they say?

Practical Lesson. *Steadfastness, i.e.,* not to be easily moved. How often do we find excuses for not doing something unpleasant? With St. Paul just the opposite. Nothing could divert him from what he felt to be right—not entreaties, tears, nor even the word of a prophet. Must try and get more of this spirit; nothing shall stop our doing right.

II. Troubles at Jerusalem. (1) *About circumcision.* (Read 15—26.) Now Paul, like Christ before him, set his face to Jerusalem, knowing what was before him. Who went with him? to whom did they pay their first visit? Why to James? Another

missionary meeting held, like the first at Antioch (xiv. 27); James, the Bishop, in the chair, all the elders present; Paul, the missionary, tells his experiences. Where had he been in his last two journeys? All over Asia Minor, Greece, &c., preaching to thousands of Gentiles; naturally, therefore, he dwelt most on this in his speech (ver. 19). Were the elders jealous? No, they glorified God, as the Word was His. Now they tell him of a report that had got about, that Paul had said the Jews were to give up their customs (ver. 21). Was this so? Remind of the four requirements made for the Gentiles, but the Jews still retained their old customs. So advise him in most public manner to perform some Jewish ceremonies in the temple, to show how fully he maintains the whole Jewish law. Does this satisfy the Jews? Yes, those who had become Christians, but not the unbelievers. They, as so often before, raised a tumult against him. (2) *About the temple.* (Read 27—40.) What did they accuse him of doing? teaching against the law and temple. So had accused Jesus, and so Stephen. Old saying, "half the truth is greatest lie." All three had shown what was greater even than the temple, viz., spiritual worship. But all valued temple too highly to speak against it. Again, had seen Paul with Trophimus, and Paul in the temple, so now accuse him of taking Trophimus into the temple, *i.e.*, into Court of the Jews. Had he done so? but anything to raise a cry against him. Now describe the riot: Paul seized by crowd of excited Jews, beaten and nearly torn in pieces by the mob, news of the riot carried to chief captain, party of soldiers, hastily collected, appear on the scene. Paul given up to them, bound with chains (Agabus' prophecy soon fulfilled!), led away to castle at corner of the temple. What does St. Paul ask leave to do? was he allowed? Shall speak of his defence in next lesson.

PRACTICAL LESSON. *The troubles of the righteous.* Very hard to find our words and deeds twisted against us; only what we must expect; take care that our words are guileless, and deeds such as can ask God's blessing on, then all will be well (Ps. xxxiv. 19).

Questions to be answered.

1. What two prophecies were uttered about St. Paul's visit to Jerusalem?
2. Which was the correct prophecy?
3. Where did he lodge at Cæsarea?
4. What do you know about Philip? What was he called, and why?
5. What false witness was borne against Paul at Jerusalem?
6. What practical lesson may we learn?

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER V.

BERTRAND re-arranged the pillows so that his father could recline in an easy position, with his face turned towards his son, and then, once more taking the wasted hand in his, he sat down by the bedside to listen.

"How strange it is to recall the sunny days of youth at this hour!" said Mr. Lisle—"sad and strange. But I must go back to the opening years of my existence to find the first link of the chain which binds me even now: I was educated at the Lyceum in Paris, and amongst my numerous comrades there was the son of an Englishman who was holding some temporary official position in the capital. I found Robert Trevelyan the most charming companion in every sense whom it was possible to conceive, and he and I became fast friends, with that strong vehement attachment which sometimes binds two young men together, when each has given to the other a hearty confidence and trust. The friendship between us never knew change or abatement till, alas, till the most awful moment of my life! When Trevelyan returned to his home in England with his father, it was arranged between us that we were to interchange visits every year. I spent a month with them each spring in London, and Robert passed his autumns always at our estate—the dear old home which you, Bertrand, will never see. It was in the Trevelyan's house that I first saw your lovely mother, and it was there that when I had come to live in England as a permament home, I met her again, and won her to cast in her lot with the impoverished exile"—he sighed deeply as he spoke.

"She never repented it," said Bertrand, gently pressing his father's hand.

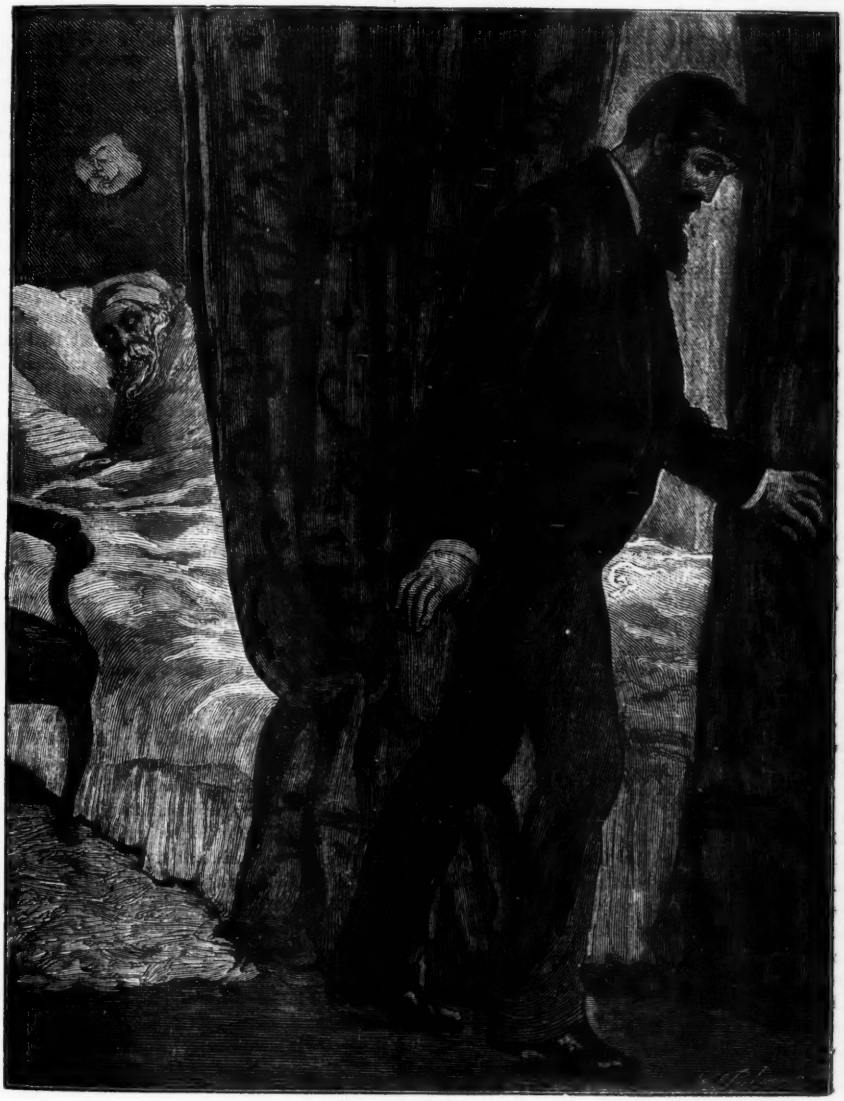
"No; love such as ours can fill all life with inexhaustible riches, and make a home and country everywhere; and we were happy; ah, how perfectly happy we might always have been but for that one dark cloud of which I have to tell you now! Some years after my marriage, Robert Trevelyan also became the husband of a gentle young girl, whom my sweet wife learnt to love very dearly, and the intimacy between the two families became even more strongly cemented. The Trevelyans had,

however, not been married many months when symptoms of delicacy showed themselves in Robert's wife, and he was advised to take her to Madeira for the winter. I was myself at the time suffering from the results of a neglected cold, and I was told that it would be a great advantage to me to escape an English spring; it was therefore decided that we were all to go together to enjoy six months' sunshine in the beautiful island, and it became to the whole of us an almost perfect party of pleasure. We were none of us very rich, for Robert Trevelyan's father had died almost bankrupt, leaving him but a slender income, and he depended for the support of his family almost entirely on an office which he held in London, and from which he had obtained six months' leave of absence; and I myself, as you know, having been finally deprived of my estates, had little or nothing except your mother's fortune, which was just sufficient for our bare subsistence, but we had enough, for we desired no luxuries, and we were rich indeed in love and happiness.

"The time came at last when it was necessary for us all to return to England; and Mrs. Trevelyan especially was anxious that her child should be born in her native land. We embarked all four on the vessel that was to convey us home, and for a few days we sailed in peace and happiness, over pleasant seas and under smiling skies; it was on a lovely tranquil evening that the shock of destiny came to shatter all our joys, and fix upon my soul the load of guilt which it has borne in anguish ever since. Bertrand, that you may understand what I have now to tell you, I must explain that, in spite of the close and earnest friendship which subsisted between Trevelyan and myself, there was one subject on which we had always differed—he was a strong Liberal in politics, a democrat and a republican, and I, as you know, abhorred such principles, and deemed them almost sacrilegious. We had, in our more youthful days, had so many disputes on these subjects, that they had threatened almost to dissolve the tie which united us to one another, and by mutual consent we had agreed to abstain from ever touching on politics at all. It was I, however, who most dreaded a recurrence to these vexed questions, for I knew that it was the one theme which roused my fiery temper to a degree that was almost beyond my control; and only the unusual excitement of the times could have led me to break my resolution of keeping silence with Trevelyan. But it was the year 1848, and a ship outward bound from England, with which we had spoken that day, had brought us news of the revolutionary troubles which were at that time convulsing France and well-nigh the whole of Europe. I was violently excited by the tidings, and so in a lesser degree was Trevelyan; for, at least, his native country was in peace, while mine was distracted by the machinations of those whom I deemed her worst enemies. So long as the light lasted that day I pored over the newspaper accounts, working myself up into a state of furious indignation against the very theories which Trevelyan most affected, and when I could no longer see to read, I joined him on the poop of the vessel, where he was standing looking out over the darkling ocean, and, quite unable to restrain myself, I plunged into a violent discussion on the principles which seemed to me to be undermining the whole basis of society; of course, Trevelyan took a precisely opposite view, and we paced to and fro in hot and eager argument, which grew every moment more fiercely angry on both sides, but especially on mine; we were alone, for your mother and his wife had retired to rest, and the swift descending night of those latitudes had fallen upon us, so that we scarcely saw each other's faces. Some words which Trevelyan uttered suddenly enraged me beyond endurance; I turned round upon him with a burst of passion; I raised my clenched fist! Bertrand, he thought I was going to strike him, but I was not! I call the justice of heaven to witness for me," continued the dying man, lifting up his clasped hands with a solemn gesture, "that never, in so much as a thought, did I seek to aim a blow at my dearest friend! No, I had but made the movement in support of my impassioned oratory; but he misunderstood it—alas for him! and, oh far more, alas for me, for all!—he started back, exclaiming, 'Lisle, do not kill me!' the words ring yet in my ears with their involuntary cry of terror, and then his foot struck against some obstacle unperceived in the dark, and he fell backwards over the side of the vessel, close to which he was standing at the moment. Bertrand, Bertrand, I heard the heavy plunge of his body into the deep dark sea; for one moment I was so appalled and thunderstruck that I seemed almost paralysed, but the next I made my cries resound through the ship, and soon the terrible shout, 'A man overboard!' was heard from one end of it to the other; in a second the captain's orders rung out clear and firm; the vessel was stopped, the boats were lowered; a search was organised over the surface of the shadowy heaving water within a given space, where alone it was possible he might be struggling, in vain! Never was there cry or sound from out the depths of that unfathomable ocean which could so much as tell us where he had gone down. As I hung over the side of the vessel in inexpressible agony I saw the boats returning one by one, empty as they went. He was gone! he was lost! he was dead; my dearest friend; and I had killed him!" the old man let his head fall back as he spoke, while tears—those saddest tears which fall from dying eyes—trickled slowly down his wasted cheeks.

"No, my dear father, no," said Bertrand, earnestly; "you did not kill him; it was quite an accident."

"An accident which would never have occurred if I had not turned upon him with such fury in my



(*Drawn by* W. SMALL.)

"He slipped softly from the room."—*p.* 396.

looks of passion, that he believed I meant to hurl him to the ground; nay, more, his last words—oh, terrible to think that, being of such import, they were indeed the last—that final cry from his lips, implied that he credited me even with a murderous intent. He was a man of nervous temperament; my angry countenance, my menacing gesture, made him start back to escape me, and sent him straightway to his death. I did not kill him wilfully; but none the less surely was it my hand and none other which drove him down, in all the strength and beauty of his early manhood, to lie uncoffined in his ocean grave. Bertrand, when the conviction came upon me that it was so, that indeed and in truth my passion had slain my friend, and that never more, by my one act, should I, or his adoring wife, or any one who had loved him, behold on earth his bright young face, the sharp arrow of an intolerable remorse pierced into my inmost heart, and there it has remained fixed, from that day until now."

"Surely you blame yourself too much," said Bertrand, soothingly.

"Do you think that was all the evil I wrought in the one awful moment which has ruined all my life? You have yet to hear the end of that night's tragedy. When the cries that told of some catastrophe resounded through the ship, they reached the ears of Trevelyan's poor young wife, who was lying, not yet asleep, alone in her cabin; the unfailing instinct of a true affection instantly told her that evil had befallen the one object of her love. Suddenly, as we were watching with straining eyes for the return of the boats, we saw a white-robed figure come flying along the deck with streaming hair and ghastly face, while Robert's name rang out with a despairing cry from her pallid lips; the silence from all around told her that her fond heart had divined the truth; had not some of the men held her back by force she would have flung herself after him into the sea; and all the time we were waiting to know the result of the search she was struggling madly to free herself from their hold, knowing, as if her eyes had seen his lifeless corpse, that he was to be sought only in the fathomless depths which would never yield him up till the Judgment Day. When at length the boats came back, and it was admitted by every one that all hope was over, she seemed to collapse like a senseless heap in the arms of those who held her; she was carried down into the cabin, where my wife and the other women in the ship gathered round her. Before morning a poor fatherless child had been born into the world; and as little Mary's sweet life dawned into being, that of her mother sank away; they buried her next day in the same deep waters that had engulfed the treasure of her heart; lovely and pleasant they had been in their lives, and in death they were not divided; but, Bertrand, it was my passionate hand which had flung them both into their untimely grave."

CHAPTER VI.

Bertrand remained silent as Mr. Lisle lay back with his eyes closed and his lips moving, evidently in secret prayer. He knew too well how sensitive was his father's nature, to have any hope of lessening the scrupulousness of conscience which made him judge himself so severely for the unfortunate consequences of an act, that had in itself been almost blameless; he could well remember now how he had noticed, even in his childish days, that Mr. Lisle's whole life was shadowed by some unspoken sadness which never varied or left him, whatever might be the sources of happiness around him, and he could understand easily enough how the highly-wrought temperament, which had made the Comte de L'Isle sacrifice all his worldly prospects to a sentiment of loyalty, had led him to surrender also the joy of his existence to an exaggerated sense of remorse; he felt that it was useless to combat the feeling at this supreme hour, when those events of life which touch on the region of conscience are projected on the soul, to the exclusion of all others, by the light that streams from the opening doors of the unseen world. Bertrand thought it better to try and lead his father's mind gently to the contemplation of the one part connected with this sad history of which it must give him pleasure to think, so he said brightly, "Well, dear father, at least you have one great comfort in the thought of the happy home you have been able to give to your poor friend's daughter; I understand now why you adopted Mary Trevelyan, and your having done so has been a blessing to herself as well as to us."

"Could anything make up to her for all of which I deprived her? Think of it, Bertrand—father and mother both slain on the very night of her birth; home, protection, fortune, all torn away, for her parents had no near relations, and the income Trevelyan derived from his salary of course died with him. She was left, through my means, a helpless infant, utterly alone in this cold world, without even a provision for her future maintenance."

"But you did all you could to supply her loss."

"Yes, while I lived; but here, hovering as I am over the brink of the grave, my power of reparation ends, and it is for this cause, my son, that I felt such an urgent necessity to see you before I departed; so that my spirit already disengaged from earth had yet no power to go forth upon its unknown flight till I had spoken with you face to face. Bertrand, I dare not coerce you in such a matter, even if I had the power which, in the independence of your maturity I certainly have not, but let me tell you that the one hope which sustains me in the arms of death, is that I so long have cherished, that you would carry on the reparation for my evil deed when I have gone to give account for it before my Judge."

"You must tell me exactly what you mean, dear

father," said Bertrand, fixing his fearless blue eyes upon the dying man's wan face.

"It will not be difficult," he answered, with a sad smile. "My son, when I die the poor imitation I tried to erect round Mary Trevelyan of the home, the love, the happiness, she lost through me, will all crumble away into the ashes of my grave. She will be once more a forlorn destitute orphan, for I cannot even leave her the means of living. I have nothing of my own, and your mother's fortune, such as it is, and that is little enough, descends to you."

"Mary shall have it!" exclaimed Bertrand, impetuously. "My salary from the Foreign Office will suffice for me."

"Mary Trevelyan will never accept of charity from you, Bertrand," said Mr. Lisle, quietly; "she would rather take it, if need were, from any one else in all the world. No, my son, there is but one way in which you can make reparation, and that a reparation final and complete, for your father's deadly act; and oh! if you could but know with what a fervour of entreaty I have prayed that it might be in your power to fulfil my earnest longing—for unless your own heart responds to my desire, it were an unrighteous deed to urge it on you. Oh, Bertrand!" he continued, turning his dying eyes imploringly on the young man's beautiful face—"if only you can tell me that my dream will be realised! you love our Mary do you not? So sweet, so pure, so gentle as she is, you cannot choose but love her!"

"Surely I love her," said Bertrand, with a smile; "I see plainly enough what your wish is now, father, you would have me make her my wife."

The old man clasped his wasted hands together with passionate energy.

"If only you can with a true heart, Bertrand. Not even that I may die in peace, not even that my dark deed may be blotted out in the sunshine of her happy life, would I ask you to marry a woman you do not love, for that were in itself a sin, and it could but work misery for you both; but if you love her as her husband should—and surely you must, charming as she is, our sweet white flower—you will lift away for ever the load that has crushed me down these twenty years; then shall I feel that my expiation, vicariously wrought by you, has been indeed most perfect, covering over all her life, from the cradle to the grave, with a love and joy as full and blissful as that of which she was through me bereft. All through these years, in the past, anticipating this my final hour, I have always felt that if I were destined to leave her at the last to a lonely struggling poverty-stricken life, not only were the restitution I had striven to make to her hopelessly incomplete, but it would have been better for her if I had added to my own guilt by casting her an unconscious infant into the waves that engulfed her parents, that she might have joined them at least in the safety of their rest. But now the bitterness of death will all be past for me, if I may know that Trevelyan's child will be your happy wife, my Bertrand."

"Then be at ease, so far as I am concerned, dear father, for I am very willing. I love Mary dearly. I am sure that my life in her hands will be surrounded with the tenderest care, and although I do not think that I have ever been roused to any passionate affection for her, perhaps because I have always known and cherished her, yet I think the steadfast sentiment with which she has inspired me will lay the foundation for a far more sure and lasting happiness than that which could spring from a more ardent fancy."

"Oh, Bertrand, if you knew the blessed peace and comfort you have given me!" said the old man, raising his eyes, streaming with joyful tears, to heaven. "How can I be thankful enough?"

"But, father," said his son, with a slight smile, "are you not taking too much for granted? it is not enough that I alone am willing to link my fate with Mary's, how do I know that she has any such feeling for me as would lead her to give her own consent? If I know Mary Trevelyan at all, she is the very last person in the world who, for any reason whatever, would marry a man she did not love—no, not to escape death would she do it!"

"You are right in that conviction, Bertrand. Mary is a pure and high-souled girl, if ever there was one, and I know—for she has told me—that not only would she rather die than wed where her heart was not already given, but that she would think it a desecration of the very name of love ever to give her deep affections to any but one upon the earth."

"Then what reason have I to hope that I shall be that one?" said Bertrand, rather anxiously.

"I do not think you need have any fear, my Bertrand," said the old man, turning to him with a tender smile; "it would not be easy to live with you for years and fail to love you."

"So you may think in your partiality, my dearest father; but Mary Trevelyan may take a very different view of the son to whom you have always been so indulgent. It is strange, that intimate as we have been all our lives, I should not now have the remotest idea what the nature of Mary's feelings towards myself may really be; we have always been good friends, and the unobtrusive kindness she has shown me has been unceasing; but beyond that I have never penetrated her reserve in the very least; she is so exceedingly still and quiet always, that it is hard to tell whether she has strong feelings lurking beneath her unruffled calm of any kind at all."

"Ah, Bertrand, believe me, there is *depth* in her stillness, and there is a power and intensity of affection in that reserved and quiet nature, which is far beyond what any more passionate temperament could feel; I can prove it to you if you will, and I think it could scarce be a breach of confidence to tell you that which you will so soon learn for yourself."

"But surely it cannot be that quiet silent Mary has ever spoken to you herself on such a theme," said Bertrand.

"Not willingly, you may be very certain; nor could even I have wrung the avowal from her, but for the circumstances of the moment when I asked it. I will tell you how it was, Bertrand. Four days ago, as I sat with Mary on the lawn, under the starlight, I seemed to receive in some undefined mysterious manner a special summons for my speedy departure from this world, and a great fear seized me that I might not live to see you again, and learn from your own lips whether it would be possible for you to give to Mary the home in your heart which I so desired she should have. I resolved, that if I were not allowed to live—as mercifully I have been—till I could look upon your face once more, I would leave a letter for you, containing the substance of the sad history I have told you to-night, and a statement of the strong desire I felt that you should in this way complete the reparation I had sought to make. But I felt as you did, that this, my cherished scheme, must fall completely to the ground if Mary herself could not give to you alone all the deep and single-hearted love I well knew she could bestow but once for all; and I could not resist the temptation of trying to win the truth from her in the pathetic privilege of my dying state. Even thus it was like drawing the life blood from her heart to wring the secret from her tender delicate nature; but I did succeed. I told her how my departing soul was held back to earth by the overwhelming anxiety I felt that my one supreme desire would be fulfilled, and that she would be your wife. I could not bring myself to tell her that I, whom she cherished as the protector who had guarded her from infancy, was in effect, the destroyer of her father—that dead father, to whose mere memory she was so tender that she never called me by the name, true daughter as she was to me—but I did tell her, that for a secret reason, the only hope I had of passing from this earth in peace was centred in the possibility of her union with my son, and I implored her to tell me if on her side there would be no obstacle, for I scarce feared any upon yours. I had to tell her, Bertrand, that I felt sure you loved her, before I could win a syllable from her lips, and when at length she spoke, it was only to utter what she believed would be buried with me in the grave."

"And what was it, father? you will tell me, will you not?" said Bertrand, eagerly.

"I will tell you the words she said," replied the old man, softly. "When I asked her, with the urgency of a dying man, 'Mary, do you love my son?' she answered, quite unfalteringly, 'Better than my life; he is, and ever will be, my one and only love!'"

"She said that!" exclaimed Bertrand, starting to his feet. "Dear, sweet Mary, if it be so we shall indeed be strangely happy!"

"Yes; and I, dying, shall possess a joy which for twenty weary years, my life has never known."

"Dear father, you must drive away all sorrowful recollections now, and repose on our love for you and for each other. Oh that these new hopes might draw you back to earth, and give you to us for a little longer!"

"That may not be, my Bertrand," he said, smiling sadly; "I feel the cold hand of death laid even now upon my heart; but you have brought a strange peace to my soul, and I feel at last that I can rest. Heaven's blessings be upon your head, my son. Kiss me once again as you used to do long years ago, when you came, a little child, to give me your sweet 'Good-night,' and then leave me to sleep a while, for I am weary."

Bertrand bent down his handsome head, and pressed his lips warm with life and health upon the wasted pallid face, then, seeing that his father's eyes were already closing, he slipped softly from the room, and sent nurse Parry back to watch by Mr. Lisle till morning.

(*To be continued.*)

SPRING.

BIRDS, showering fairy music, take their flight
Adown these beechen groves of tender green;
And where those bars of sunshine intervene,
Dance in their golden rays the wind-flowers light.

Each mazy winding of the wood is bright
With primrose clumps and "alleluias"—seen
Through the dead leaves where last year's flowers have been
And perfumed undergrowth of woodruff white.

So from dark days of sorrow overpast
Blossoms of Faith and Charity may spring,
So hearts from cold despair and doubt, at last
May rise, and songs of trustful gladness sing.
Earth's days are not all bright, for 'tis not heaven,
Nor wholly gloom to whom that hope is given.

"ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."

BY THOMAS ARCHER.

GIVING REST TO THE WEARY.

WE have not yet done with this wonderful district of Soho. It is one of those attractive quarters of London which is interesting alike for its historical associations and for memorable houses that were once inhabited by famous men. In essays, letters, fiction—all through that period which has been called the Augustan age of English literature—we find allusions to it; and after that time it continued to be the favourite resort of artists, men of letters, wealthy merchants, and not a few statesmen and eminent politicians. In Leicester Square Hogarth laughed, moralised, and painted. The house of Sir Joshua Reynolds stands yet in that now renovated space, and a well-known artist has a studio there to-day. But the tide of fashion has receded since powdered wigs and sedan chairs disappeared. The tall stately houses are many of them dismantled, or are converted into manufactories and workshops. The great iron extinguishers which still adorn the iron railings by the door-steps have nearly rusted away. It must be a century since the flambeaux carried by running footmen were last thrust into them, when great rumbling creaking coaches drew up and landed visitors before the dimly-lighted portals. Silence and decay are the characteristics of many a once goodly mansion; and the houses themselves are not unfrequently associated with the relief of that poverty which is everywhere so apparent as to appeal to almost every form of charity. Before one such house we are standing now, its quietly opening door revealing a broad lofty hall, from which a great staircase, with heavy baluster of black oak and panelled walls, leads to the spacious rooms above. This mansion is historical, too, in its way for we are at the corner of Soho Square, in Greek Street, and are about to enter what was once the London residence of the famous Alderman Beckford, and his equally famous son—the man who inherited the mysterious and gorgeously furnished palace at Fonthills, the author of "Vathek," the half-recluse who bought Gibbon's extensive library at Lausanne, that he might have "something to amuse him when he went that way," and afterwards *went* that way, read himself nearly blind, and then made a friend a present of all the books, sold Fonthills, went abroad, and set about building another mysterious castle in a strange land.

In that big committee-room on the first floor, which we shall visit presently, there was to be seen, four or five years ago, a stupendous chimney-piece of oak, elaborately carved, and said to have been a masterpiece of Grinling Gibbons. It was taken down and sold for a handsome sum of money, to augment the funds of the Institution which now occupies the old mansion, for the door at which we enter receives other guests than those who once thronged it—suffering, depressed, poverty-stricken weary men and women, who come here to seek the rest that is offered to them in the quiet rooms—the restoration of meat and drink and refreshing sleep, the comfort of hopeful words and friendly aid. It is named "The House of Charity," and the work that its supporters have set themselves to do is carried on so silently—I had almost said so secretly—that the stillness you observe within the building, as we stand here waiting for the lady who superintends the household, is suggestive alike of the repose which is essential to the place, and of a severe earnestness not very easy to define.

Members of the same committee, whose earnest hearty work is apparent at Newport Market and at the Soup Kitchen in Ham Yard, are helping this House of Charity, which has the Archbishop of Canterbury for its patron and the Bishop of London for its visitor.

Here, in the two large sitting-rooms opening from the hall, we may see part of what is being done, in giving rest to the weary and upholding them who are ready to faint. One is for men, the other for women, who have been received as inmates, for periods extending from a fortnight to a longer time, according to the necessities of each case, and the probability of obtaining suitable employment. Of course the aid is intended to be only temporary—though in some peculiar cases it is continued till the applicant recovers from weakness following either uninfectious illness or want. There can be, of course, no actual sick-nursing here; but in a warm and comfortable upper room, near the dormitory, which we shall see presently—a room which is the day-nursery of a few children who are also admitted—I have seen young women, one who was suffering from a consumptive cough, another an out-patient at an hospital for disease of the hip, and wearing an instrument till she can be admitted as a regular case. They were both sitting cosily at their tea, and were employed at needlework, as most of the women are who find here a temporary home. For it is one of the beneficent results of an influential committee, that a number of cases are sent to hospitals or to convalescent homes, and so are restored; but till this can be done they are fed and tended—fed with food more delicate than that of the ordinary

meals—and are allowed to rest in peace and to regain strength.

But we are still in the men's sitting-room, where several poor fellows are looking at the lists of advertisements in the newspapers for some announcement of a vacant situation. A supply of books is also provided both for men and women, and the latter are just now engaged in mending or making their clothes.

Between thirty and forty inmates can be received at one time, and those who are in search of employment, or who require to go out during the day, may leave the house after breakfast, and return either to dinner or to tea. There are indeed few restrictions when once preliminary inquiries and the recommendation of a member of the committee result in the admission of an applicant; and it is easy to see how deeply and thankfully many of these poor depressed men and women, beaten in the battle of life, with little hope of regaining a foothold, weak, dispirited, destitute, and with no strength left to struggle under the burden that weighs them down, find help and healing, food and sleep, advice, and very often a recommendation which places them once more in a position of comfort and independence. A large proportion of those who are admitted are provided with situations either permanently or for a period long enough to enable them to turn round the difficult corner from poverty and dependence to useful and appropriate employment. Some are sent to Homes, hospitals, or orphanages, and many return to their own homes. From those homes they have wandered, hoping to find the world easier than it has proved to be, and in going back to them they have fallen by the wayside.

There are sometimes remarkable varieties here—emigrants waiting for ships to sail that will bear them to another land; men of education, such as tutors, engineers, engravers, and professional men, who have been unsuccessful, or have lost their position, often through no immediate fault of their own. Of course, the large class of genteel poverty is largely represented in the five or six hundred cases which make the average number of yearly inmates. Clerks, shopmen, and travellers, are about as numerous as servants, porters, and pages. Poor women, many of whom are ladies by birth or previous position and education, find the House of Charity a refuge indeed, and feel that the person who has charge of the household arrangements, as well as those who have charge of the inmates, the accounts and correspondence, may be appealed to with an assurance of true sympathy. Here, beside the two sitting-rooms, is a large room which we will call the refectory. It is plainly furnished, with separate tables for men and women, and the quantity and description of the food supplied is such as would be provided in a respectable and well-ordered family—tea or coffee and plenty of good bread-and-butter morning and evening, meat, bread, and vegetables, for dinner, and a supper of bread and cheese. There are no "rations," nor any special limit as to quantity, and if one could forget the distress which brings them hither, the family might be regarded as belonging to some comfortable business establishment, with good plain meals and a club-room on each side the dining-hall for meeting in after working hours.

Let us go up-stairs, and look at the dormitories, which occupy respectively the right and left side of the building, and we shall see that they are so arranged as to secure that privacy, the want of which would be most repulsive to persons of superior condition. Each long and lofty room is divided into a series of enclosures or cabins by substantial partitions about eight feet high, and in each of these separate rooms—all of which are lighted by several windows or by gas-branches in the main apartment—there is a neat comfortable bed and bedstead, with space for a box, a seat, and a small table or shelf.

A resident chaplain or warden conducts morning and evening prayer in the chapel, which is built on part of the open area at the back of the building; and I would have you consider, not only that to many of these weary souls this sacred spot may come to be associated with that outcome to renewed life for which their presence in the Institution gives them reason to hope, but that it is most desirable for the invalids, who frequently form so large a portion of the congregation, to be able to attend worship without practically leaving the house.

Not only because of the sick and the physically feeble, however, does the House of Charity represent a work that needs vast extension.

The case-book would reveal a series of stories none the less affecting because they are entered plainly, briefly, and without waste of words. They need few touches of art to make them painfully interesting. They tell of ladies, wives of professional men, brought to widowhood and sudden poverty; of men of education cast adrift through failure or false friendship, and not knowing where to seek bread; of children left destitute or deserted under peculiar circumstances; of women removed from persecution, and girls from the tainted atmosphere of vice; of weary wanderers who, in despair of finding such a shelter, and dreading the common lodging-house, have spent nights in the parks; of foreigners stranded on the shore of a strange city; of ministers of the gospel brought low; of friendless servant-girls, ill-treated, defrauded of their wages, or discharged almost penniless, and cast loose amidst the whirlpool of London streets.

But, as I have already intimated, it is not alone for its temporary aid in affording a home that the House of Charity is distinguished; it affords a

good hope also, by seeking to obtain situations, for cases where peculiar circumstances make such a search difficult—for bereaved and impoverished ladies, and for educated men, as well as for domestic servants and ordinary employés. Its supporters give their special aid to the work, and, as they number amongst them many ladies and gentlemen of considerable social influence, employment is frequently found for those whose misfortunes would otherwise be almost irretrievable.

GOD'S MIRROR.

OH, might I see,
As in a glass, the glory of Thy love:
That so, on me
Thy light reflected, I to men might prove
A mirror that might something show of Thee.

Fain would I gaze
Unwearied, till I gazed all self away;
That so Thy praise
I might in every act and word display,
And Thou in me live only all my days.

So, through my heart,
Thy love unchecked, unceasingly should flow,
This all my part—
The glad possession evermore to know,
And then to all the living joy impart.

Oh, might it be!
O Thou that dwellest in the gardens, hear!
Grant this to me:
Cause me to hear Thy voice, to feel Thee near,
That so I may forget all self in Thee!

AUNT JESSIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER V.

WHENEVER Esther could get time to come so far, she paid a visit to the workhouse. And she seldom came empty-handed, for Mrs. Webbe generally managed to send a little packet of tea, or some other small gift, which she begged Mrs. Lang to accept, with her love.

Thus the months rolled on with nothing special to mark them, until one day Esther presented herself at the workhouse to see her aunt, not alone, but accompanied by a sun-burnt middle-aged man, whose countenance, which had once been and indeed still was good-looking, bore unmistakable marks of suffering, either mental or physical.

Esther seemed in a strange flutter of excitement, and the first words she spoke showed her aunt that she was not like her usual self. The stranger had sat down at once without uttering a sound, but he was gazing with a look of pain and tenderness upon the peaceful quiet face, so pale and calm, so full of love and gentleness. It had aged more than he had expected since he had last seen it. Had he anything to do with the lines which care had left there? However that might be, some deep emotion seemed to stir within him as he gazed, for once or twice he covered his eyes with his hand, whilst his lips seemed to quiver.

"Did I not hear some one come in with you, Esther dear?"

"Oh, aunt, how quick your ears are! Yes, some one did come in with me; some one who has come to see you. Guess who it is, Aunt Jessie. It is some one you would like to see—I mean to meet again."

"I can't tell who it is, for I've no one now besides you, Esther; all the others are gone. Your father was the last; and you know we never heard from him after he went away to Australia when you were a baby; and report came some time afterwards that he was dead. Oh, how often I've wept over him; for he was our only brother, and we had all set such hopes on him!"

"But what if the report shouldn't have been true, auntie?"

Esther had no need to say more. With a little low cry Mrs. Lang rose from her seat with outstretched arms, and the same instant found herself pressed against her brother's heart.

"I've come home, Jessie, to ask to be forgiven."

"Frank, dear Frank!" was all she could say.

"Can you forgive me? Can you and my child here, ever forgive me the wrong I have done you?"

There was no need to ask the question again; the loving faces which looked up into his—the warm kisses which were printed upon his cheek, answered it plainly enough.

Then sitting down beside his sister, with his arm round his daughter, who stood hanging over him, he told his tale, which, however, would be too long for us to relate here.

He wound up by saying, "At last I had a long illness, when I was brought down to death's door; and then it was conscience fastened upon me, and showed me what sort of a life mine had been. It

all looked very black, Jessie—so black that I must have despaired if I hadn't at the same time come to see One who once shed His own blood that all my stains might be washed away, and I made pure and white. And now I've come back to tell you, as I've already told my Saviour, how it cuts me to the heart to think of all the past, and the suffering I've caused you and those who have gone away where they are beyond the reach of all the love I would have shown them now to prove my sorrow for the way I behaved to them."

His voice broke down at these words, and Jessie, who had seen one patient sister after another pass away to her rest, with only words of love upon her lips for the brother who had caused her latter days to be spent in one long struggle with poverty, who had heard the young wife murmur, "Lord, forgive him, and grant us both to meet again," Jessie replied, "They all forgave you; and God himself has made it up to *them*. He has wiped away all tears from off their faces, and satisfied them with His love."

"God bless you, Jessie, for those words!" said her brother, in faltering tones, as he tried to master his emotion.

"But now," he went on, "I will spend the rest of my life in trying to make what amends I can to you, Jessie and my own Esther. But how can I ever repay you, sister, for all the care and love you have bestowed upon her? how can I ever thank you for having made her what she is? I never can do it; but the God I've lately learnt to know, *He* will reward you!"

It was a happy trio that left the workhouse that afternoon: Jessie leaning upon the arm of her brother, whilst Esther clung to her father on the other side. Deep joy shone on all their faces; and as they walked they discussed future plans. For the present they would go to a lodging, until they could look about and meet with a permanent home. Frank Grey's suggestion was, that as he had come back possessed of sufficient capital to start a little business, he should seek for something in which Esther might help him; and so they would all three live together.

The idea met with no opposition from either of the others, who declared that it far exceeded their utmost dreams of happiness. Esther's eyes beamed with joy; whilst her aunt's glad smile and softly uttered words of thankfulness, showed how deep and full was her rejoicing.

And Esther thought of the burst of glory which had caught her eyes that sorrowful evening when she was bringing her aunt to the workhouse; and once more the words came into her mind, "At evening time it shall be light." L. C. Silke.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

155. State the circumstances connected with the death of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah.

156. Who is it refers to his death in the New Testament? Quote passage.

157. Where is it stated that Elijah *wrote* a letter to King Jehoram?

158. Who, in the New Testament, is mentioned as having had a dream which made her much afraid?

159. Who is mentioned as having dwelt in the *college* of the prophets?

160. When God sent an angel, in the days of David, to destroy Jerusalem, who are said to have seen the angel, and hid themselves?

161. Why should we suppose that St. Luke was with St. Paul when he journeyed through Macedonia?

162. What country was that in which the king bought *all* the land from his people, and then sent them about as slaves? Quote passage.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 368.

139. Tertius (Rom. xvi. 22).

140. Of Simon Peter, and Andrew his brother (Mark i. 17).

141. Jonathan, his uncle (1 Chron. xxvii. 32).

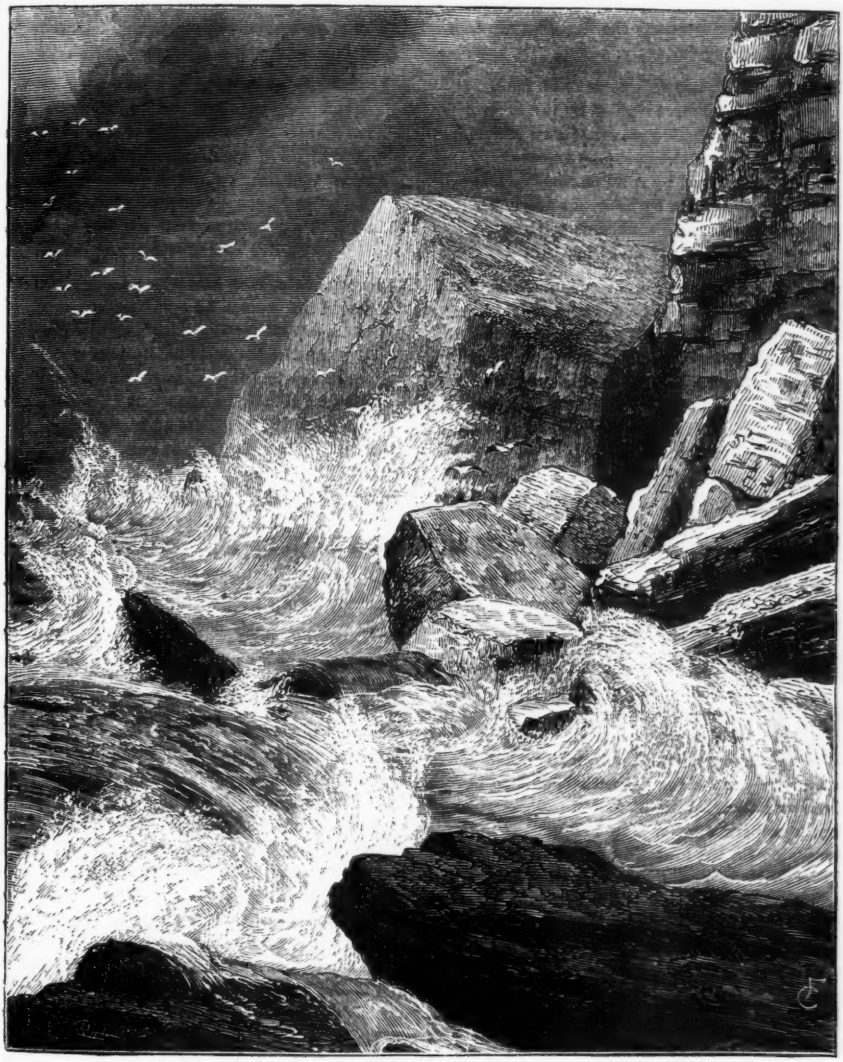
142. "But I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me, is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. i. 11, 12).

143. "The Lord bless thee and keep thee: the Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace" (Num. vi. 24—26).

144. Eight times—five times by the Jews, and three times by the Romans (2 Cor. xi. 24, 25).

145. Deborah (compare Gen. xxiv. 59, and xxxv. 8).

146. "How is it ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business;" and "It is finished" (Luke ii. 49, and John xix. 30).



(*Drawn by* F. CARLESS.)

CONTRASTS.

STRETCHING along a billow-beaten shore,
A low white line of foam and hoary spray,
Fringing a coast whose cruel rocks loud roar,
Resounding with tempestuous fray,

There, rooted firm amidst the circling waves,
A jutting crag with high uprearèd crest,
The fierce attacks of wave and weather braves,
With bold unyielding breast.

Fierce eddying whirlpools rage around its base,
The sullen roaring of the sea fills all the air,
As many a billow breaks upon its face,
And leaves its deep-traced furrows there;
And often, with the lightning's lurid flash,
Loud thunder rolls across the troubled sea,
And threatening tempests the fierce waters lash,
Uprising furiously.

Flowing between two sedgy banks of reed,
A peaceful rill scarce rippled by the breeze,
There where the shallow wavelets slow recede,
A pebbly mound o'erspread by trees—
A spot ne'er touched by wind or rushing tide—
Hid from the storm by branches overhead,
Yet where the dancing sunbeams softly glide
Through green and leafy bed.

And as with ocean crag and river mound,
Is it not too with life on earth below?
While one man lives amid a ceaseless round
Of trouble, sorrow, sickness, woe—
While ever round him foaming billows roar,
And gathering tempests crowd the darkened sky,
Another's lot is cast on happier shore
Of bright prosperity.

And seeing this, have we not often dared
To doubt the justice of the Great All-Wise?
Look we still further—see how it hath fared
Where Nature's book before us lies—
Mark how that while the stone amid the rill,
Covered with moss and earth, is hid from sight—
The wave-worn ocean crag remaineth still
Unspotted, pure, and bright.

So too with man. For he whose lot is cast
Upon prosperity's untroubled shore,
Above whose head no clouds of woe have passed,
Nor waves of trouble flooded o'er,
Amidst such long unbroken peace is apt
To quite forget the goal of precious worth,
And with a growth of sloth and sin enwrapped,
To live alone for earth.

Far otherwise with him who has his place
Amid the turmoil of opposing waves,
Who meets misfortune with a cheery face,
And hostile tempests boldly braves;
For sorrow then but points the soul away
Beyond this earth to seek the Father's breast,
Where, midst the glories of eternal day,
The weary are at rest.

G. W.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER X.—IN THE FIRE-LIGHT.

DOROTHY was sitting over the study fire alone that evening. She was beginning to realise how, when we are very young, we walk hand in hand along one path with many others round us, but as we grow older the path begins to branch out here and there, until at last we all, or most of us, journey separate ways. Tom had gone to business that morning for the first time in his life. He was nearly seventeen, and "it was time that he did something," his father had said to George Blakesley. The Woodwards made very few friends, but with the few they generally were very intimate, and they consulted Mr. Blakesley now on all their private affairs, and he had been instrumental in getting the sturdy Tom a junior clerkship in an insurance broker's. It was not much, he said, and at first he would get no salary at all, but it would lead to better things perhaps. Sally had evinced some crude talent for drawing, and had gone to the School of Art in —— Street. Caroline Barker, close by, went, and that was how Sally came to be a student; and Caroline, who was older by some eight years, took charge of the little girl to and fro. Will had not come home from school yet, though it was nearly four o'clock, and getting dark, for the December days were very short. Mrs. Woodward had gone to read her book in her husband's room at the office. It was "making-up day" for the paper, and they disliked being apart even on necessary occasions, so Dolly—how the old childish name clings to her—was alone waiting for her brothers and sisters, and longing to know how Tom had got on during his first day at work. She expected Mr. Blakesley presently too. She was almost angry when she remembered how completely he was established on intimate relations with her people; it was such treachery to Adrian Fuller, in her estimation, and *she*, at any rate, had never let the interloper usurp his place, though she could not but own that he was very good and clever, and it had been kind of him to find a post for Tom.

Six months more, she was thinking, as the fire flickered and sent a pleasant glow round the cosy room, and Mr. Fuller would be home. How our imaginations turn and alter the current of our lives! and on how slight a foundation will they build up realities that form the histories of our lives! The quaint child had developed strangely since the morning Venus had been buried—how much she hardly knew herself. She only did know that Adrian Fuller's parting words haunted her strangely and sweetly, that his letter was hidden away, yet taken

out secretly, and read again and again, and that she lived and waited simply to see the day that brought him home. It only wanted six months more to the time, she thought; when the leaves began to bud, and the swallows came to herald the summer, there would be only a little time longer to wait ere he came.

Then the door opened, and George Blakesley entered.

"I wanted to hear how Tom got on to-day," he said, "so I have come, and hope you'll give me some tea presently." He gave up his dinner many a day without a murmur, to come and see her, little though she appreciated the sacrifice.

"They are all out," she answered. She did not want to be interrupted in her reverie, but he came and sat down opposite to her, ready to talk or to be silent, as she pleased. He always fidgeted her, somehow, and she could not sit and think while he was there watching her. She looked up almost angrily, though he did not know it.

"Well!" he said, as if in answer to some strange wonder expressed in her face.

"I was thinking it is such a pity that we live *always*," she said, "if we could wake and be conscious on the happy days and sleep through all the weary ones."

"Are you weary already?" he asked.

"No, not weary exactly, only time drags so. One can't feel an interest in everything."

"There is nothing so dangerous as the beginning of that idea," he answered. "It grows on us if we encourage it, till at last we care for nothing."

"The days are so long!" she pleaded.

"Why don't you occupy yourself with work?"

"Work!" and she opened her sleepy brown eyes. "Why should I? and what is there I *can* do?"

"Why should you? Because work, be it what it may, is a noble occupation, and no men, and very few women, have a right to live without taking their share of it."

"But some are rich, and have no occasion."

"There is always occasion to work, but it does not always mean money-getting," he said; "nor does it mean that those who are rich should work for nothing, and so take the bread out of the mouths of those who have their living to get. There is plenty to do, to make life better for others, and those who do not want money can surely give some of their leisure and their intellect for this purpose.

He stopped a minute, for the girl was looking up at him half afraid, half surprised. She hated work. And oh, how dreadful the world would be if George Blakesley governed it! He would make it full of galley-slaves.

"I think the conception of Mazzini's," he went on, "that we should regard the world as a great workshop, in which we have all to make something good and beautiful, is a very grand one, and our Master is not hard to please."

"But how can I, a woman, work?" she asked, and stopped at the sound of her own voice, and in surprise at her own words. She had never been called a woman before, even by herself.

"You can make those you know happy, and be useful to them, and you can gain knowledge, child, and help others through its means."

Then there was a long long silence, and George Blakesley looked into the fire again, and Dorothy sat watching his face by its flickering light, and thinking of the past summer days of indolence and lazy happiness into which these words of his seemed to have put a sting, yet there was something grateful in this idea of work, in theory at any rate.

"I should so like to make something good and beautiful," she said, wistfully, turning her face away from him, and looking on into the twilight, as if far away behind its shadows there was a new life waiting for her.

"So you can," he answered, and he went over to the sofa on which she was sitting, and sat down by her; "so you can, my child," he said, gravely; "if you will you can make my life more than beautiful for me."

"Your life!" she said, with her startled eyes wide open in surprise. "What has that to do with my work?"

"It has everything to do with mine," he answered, gently. "Don't you understand me, Dorothy," and he looked up at the low broad forehead, and into the grave innocent eyes, and felt even then how capable she was of development into all that was great and noble in woman, or of utter shipwreck, if her character were formed by careless hands. "Don't you understand me, dear? I love you, and want you to marry me, my darling, and then we will work on together;" but she rose from her seat, and stood facing him.

"Oh no, no, no!" she said, shrinking away from the hand he stretched out as if to hold her.

Then suddenly there flashed upon her the meaning of it all—of what her day-dreams in the past had been, and for what she was waiting in the future, and sinking down on to the sofa, she put her hands over her face, and burst into tears.

"Dorothy," he said, in a strange pained voice, "what is the matter, dear? Is the idea so dreadful to you, or is it only new and abrupt. Don't you think you will learn to love me a little? You are all the world to me, my child."

"Oh no, no, it is quite impossible!" she said, and then for a moment she thought of what her life might be with that clever matter-of-fact man, with all his notions of work, and want of sympathy with dreams and lazy happiness, and thought too of a letter hidden away in a dress. "Oh no!" she shuddered; "never, never!"

(To be continued.)

THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF THE LORD JESUS.

BY THE REV. T. M. MORRIS, IPSWICH.

V.—THE WORD OF AGONISED HUMANITY.

"After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst."
ST. JOHN xix. 28.

WE now come to the fifth word spoken by our Saviour from the cross—which we have designated *the word of agonised humanity*. "After this"—μετὰ τοῦτο—generally indicates an immediate consequence, but must not be so understood here. The three-hours' darkness and cry of desertion have intervened. It is not unreasonable to suppose that St. John, having received the commission from Christ to take charge of His mother, recorded in vs. 26, 27, did forthwith, at that very time, conduct the mother of Jesus to his own house or lodgings in Jerusalem, so that she was spared the sorrow of seeing her son in the time of His extremest agony; and that the apostle John, having thus provided for Mary, returned to the cross in time to listen to the last words of Christ. That he was present at the very last is placed beyond dispute by v. 35, where St. John is expressly declared to have been an eye-witness of the closing scene.

We have listened to Christ as he cried from the lowest depth of all, "*Eli, Eli, lama sabacthani?*" which cry appears only to have awakened to fresh activity the spirit of mockery and derision which had been in some measure quelled by the supernatural darkness. That darkness seems to have ceased at the time of, or shortly after, the cry of desertion; the sudden brightening of material Nature being, it is probable, simultaneous with the return of tranquillity to the soul of Christ. It was on hearing that cry that some said, "This man calleth for Elias;" and our Saviour's cry of "I thirst!" must have been heard very shortly after His cry of desertion.

If we compare the narrative of St. John with those of St. Matthew and St. Mark, we shall be able to trace the sequence of events. The cry of desertion is misunderstood, or at once wilfully perverted, by the mockers who were congregated at the foot of the cross. "This man," they say—this would-be Messiah—"calleth, and calleth in vain, for His Elias." At this moment, conscious of thirst, and remembering one unfulfilled word of ancient prophecy (Ps. lxix. 21), that this Scripture also might receive its accomplishment, Christ saith, "*I thirst;*" upon which one, moved by a spirit of half-scornful compassion, at once hastens to procure the refreshment which the dying Saviour so evidently needs; upon which his associates, as though they would hinder him from doing this act of kindness, mockingly say, "Do not trouble thyself to do this, there is no need for thy interference, let us wait and see whether Elias will come and save him;" upon which the man himself—not desisting, however, from his work—joining in the mockery of his companions, says, while giving Jesus to drink, "Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down."

We may take this word as expressive of *great physical suffering, and present helplessness*. The previous cry had reference to the agony of Christ's soul; this speaks to us of the condition of His body. We can form no very distinct idea of physical pain save as we suffer from it, but we may gather from the accounts of those who have suffered and survived, that extreme thirst is one of the most unbearable of physical torments. This state may be induced by a variety of causes, privation of drink, extreme heat, the withdrawal of the fluids of the body in the form of blood or perspiration, severe and protracted suffering. In the case of Christ there was the concurrence of nearly all these causes. For nearly twenty hours He has partaken of no refreshment, which hours have been hours of constant and constantly augmenting agony, agony of mind and body. There was the fearful conflict in Gethsemane, in which He sweat as it were great drops of blood. There was the mental anguish inseparable from His treacherous betrayal by one disciple, the blasphemous repudiation of Himself by another, and the faithlessness and defection of the rest. There was the distress caused by the insults and indignities to which He was exposed during His hurried and informal examinations before Caiaphas, Herod, and Pilate. All this was followed by the cruel scourging of the Roman soldiers, the cross-bearing to Calvary, His attachment to the cross, and His untold and mysterious sufferings upon it. We need not wonder that His tongue cleaves to the roof of His mouth, and that His moisture is turned into the drought of summer. And we should remember in what way extreme thirst affects the body. In a well-known physiological work we read: "We can understand how any unusual abstraction of fluid must produce that disturbance of the general system which is known under the name of raging thirst, a disturbance far more terrible than that of starvation, and for this reason: during abstinence from food, the organism can still live upon its own substance, which furnishes all necessary material, but during abstinence from liquid, the organism has no such source of supply

within itself." And by recent experiments it has been shown that the nerves gain an extraordinary increase in their excitability as the proportion of water decreases.

We have reason to believe, then, that our Saviour was at this time enduring one of the most horrible sensations from which humanity can suffer; and when He said "*I thirst*," He teaches us most convincingly that He was truly a partaker of flesh and blood, that He really shared our nature, becoming subject to all those inconveniences and sinless infirmities which are incident to it. "We have not a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." *We have here the cry of agonised humanity.* We see here the sinless but suffering *Son of Man.*

But while clearly recognising the physical sufferings of Christ, there are other things to be kept in view, and, among them, always this—that these, great and extreme as they were, formed the smallest part of His sufferings. As we have already seen, *Christ's agony was agony of soul.* The torment of this physical thirst was nothing compared with the sufferings endured through those three hours of darkness, when, with a strange sense of desolation, He was thirsting for the light of His Father's countenance which had never, until then, been obscured.

This word is the word of the hero at the close of the battle's strife; while the full tide of battle is surging round him, while the deadly contest remains undetermined, the wounds may bleed, the body may suffer, but in pressing on towards victory there is no thought of them, but in the pause of victory the conqueror has returning consciousness of physical need, and says, "*I thirst.*" So dearly bought has been the triumph, so exhausted is the conqueror by the protracted, but now for-ever-concluded strife, that He needs refreshment in order to shout forth to the joy of heaven and the confusion of hell, the undying word of victory.

In these words "I thirst" we have the only expression of physical suffering which Christ seems ever to have uttered. We read through the Gospels, and we see that Christ's life from first to last was one of suffering and of self-denial, but we can nowhere distinguish the voice of complaint. Everywhere we see simple, meek, patient endurance of whatever was inflicted upon Him. This word reminds us that Christ's silence was not that of insensibility; if He did not complain, it was not because He did not feel.

As we think of these sufferings of Christ we must think of them as voluntarily incurred, voluntarily endured. Who is this that in suffering and apparent helplessness says, "I thirst?" It is He whom angels were longing to minister unto; who, with a few small loaves and fishes, had satisfied the need of famishing thousands; who, only a few hours before, had rebuked the impetuous Peter with the words, "Thinkest thou that I cannot pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" Never let us forget, as we witness the sufferings of Christ, that they are the sufferings of One who had power to lay down His life, and the power to take it up again. "No man taketh it from me" He saith, "I lay it down of myself." Yes, He who submits to the torment and outrage of crucifixion does so having the full consciousness that He is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. That we might be saved, He condescends thus to suffer; and we see Him to whom all honour belongeth, make Himself of no reputation, and stoop to the death of the cross.

But we may fairly take these words *as expressing the thirst of Christ's soul* for the accomplishment of the work on which He had entered. We see the gleaming forth of that same spirit which so constantly influenced our Saviour during His earthly mission and ministry—that spirit of self-abnegation, which led Him to account everything as unimportant which did not bear upon the work He came to accomplish. Here His thought is of the Scripture to be fulfilled rather than of the thirst to be assuaged. We see every line of life converge upon one point, and the most thorough subordination of all earthly circumstances to the effectuation of the Divine purpose. From eternity had He contemplated this end. After the preparations of ages and generations did He come forth as the Mediator, the Redeemer. From His birth in Bethlehem do we find a continual onward reference to this period of consummation—this sacrifice to be offered once for all. He is thirsting for the salvation of sinners, for the redemption of the world. He is bound to the cross by His great love to the children of men, and, yearning for their deliverance, He cannot come down. To effect the salvation of souls for which He thirsts, He came to live and to die; and knowing beforehand the full bitterness of the cup, He was determined to drain it to the very dregs.

In this simple incident we see that absorption and concentration of spirit of which we have spoken. Christ does not so much complain of thirst that He may obtain something to mitigate His sufferings, for He knows that they will in a few moments have an end, but that the hitherto unfulfilled prophecy may receive its accomplishment. This is rendered perfectly clear by Christ's previous refusal of the wine and myrrh, a medicated draught intended to produce stupefaction, that the sufferer might be less sensible to the intense and dreadful agonies of crucifixion. This opiate which, according to custom, had been offered to Christ, He refused, choosing rather to endure

the pain than to die with the faculties of His mind beclouded. Hanging there as a sacrifice for sin, He would not avoid one pang, or leave clinging to the cup one dreg of bitterness. The drink which was accepted by Christ was a mixture of vinegar and water, a beverage in common use among the soldiers of the Roman army.

Christ sets us an example in every respect. What can we conceive as nobler than the conduct of Christ on this occasion? Enduring sufferings of unexampled intensity, we see Him manifest no impatience, we hear Him utter no complaint. Free from all excitement, we see Him possessing His soul in that spirit of patience which He had inculcated on His followers, and to the exercise of which, in their case, He had annexed the promise of such manifold blessings. He here teaches them how "to suffer and be strong."

And we are as much struck by the collectedness of thought as by the composure of temper manifested by Christ at this time. We all know how difficult it is with any degree of purpose to exercise thought when we are suffering physical pain to a comparatively inconsiderable extent. If we look to Christ, we see the endurance of sufferings the most extreme, and yet perfect collectedness of mind. While hanging on the cross, the subject of physical pain to an extent that we can but faintly imagine, and mental agony that we cannot imagine at all, and exposed to distracting influences of many different kinds, Christ could think calmly, consecutively. We see this in the provision He made for His mother; we see this now again in the very article of death, we see Him deliberately contemplating the work in which He is engaged, and not overlooking one of its most minute and apparently unimportant details. Christ seems to have been comparing the life that He had lived and which had now so nearly come to its close with the portraiture of that life in the Old Testament, with all that the prophets had predicted concerning the Son of Man, and, that all might be fulfilled, that this outstanding prophecy might receive its accomplishment, He said, "I thirst." The closing scene of the great tragedy was near, but Christ would wait and taste the vinegar which the soldiers gave Him on a sponge before He would say, "*It is finished.*" Does not this afford us strong assurance as to the completeness of the whole scheme of redemption? All is done, the work is finished, nothing is neglected, nothing is overlooked. We may feel quite sure that the entire scheme of redeeming love has been carried out to the very letter. Christ came to do God's will, to fulfil all that had been spoken concerning Him, and He would not declare that all was finished until the work, down to its minutest particular, was accomplished. Incidentally, then, does this word, which seems the least significant of all those uttered from the cross, afford strong consolation to those "who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us." That work ought to satisfy *us*, which Christ has declared to be finished, and which God has accepted as complete.

We may safely leave all in the hands of that Saviour, who, when in the very pains of death, "*knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, 'I thirst.'*"

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 23. St. Paul's Defence.

Chapter to be read—Acts xxii.

INTRODUCTION. Question as to the circumstances under which St. Paul made this speech: a prisoner in the hands of the Roman centurion, just rescued from an angry mob of Jews, accused of speaking against the law (xxi. 27); allowed to speak in self-defence.

I. The Conversion Narrated. (Read xxii. 1—21.) In what language did he speak, and what was the effect on the people? (ver. 2.) His perfect knowledge of Hebrew would show him to be a Jew and not a foreigner. Now he wants to show that he is a loyal Jew; describes his birth and education; under whom? Gamaliel, well known at Jerusalem, one of the Jewish Council; had once before taken the part of the Christians (ver. 34). He was in all respects, both as regards law and religion, the State and the Church, a good Jew. More than that, was trusted by the high priest and elders — on what errand? (ver. 5.) But what happened on the journey? The story having occupied a previous lesson, only the leading points need be touched on. Who appeared, and in what manner? To whom was he sent for further instruction? Ananias, a man learned in the law, probably well known by report at Jerusalem. Notice his message to Paul. By what name was God called? the name most dear to the Jews. Remind how often called God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; this same God called Paul to be a witness to all men of Christ, called "that Just One," in whom even His enemies could find no fault. Show how all this was a defence to the charge of speaking against Jewish law. Paul, educated as a Jew, instructed by Jewish teacher after the vision, sent by the God of the Jews to testify to His Son, the

promised Messiah of the Jews. But was the message received by the Jews? No; so a second vision given to Paul, to leave Jerusalem and go to Gentiles.

II. The effect on the People. (Read 22—30.) Let the teacher try and describe the effect of the word "Gentiles." Till now had been perfect silence; the interesting story had arrested their attention; so far all was consistent with Jewish feelings; even mention of Jesus of Nazareth allowed to pass; but that Gentiles should be preached to, or treated as on equality with Jews, this they could not bear, so the suppressed rage broke out with greater intensity. Picture the scene: the people yelling with excitement; Paul, pale with emotion, not fear, standing guarded by the soldiers; the mob, casting off their outer clothes, throwing dust into the air as a testimony against Paul, the frantic cries, &c. What did the chief captain propose to do? Was it lawful to scourge a Roman, or any one, uncondemned? Where was Paul born? Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, a Roman province; so he was superior to the captain, who bought his citizenship. So he was saved from scourging, and loosed from his bonds, and delivered up by the chief captain to the Jewish Council.

III. Practical Lessons. (1) *The duty of self-defence.* Show that St. Paul, being wrongly accused, did right to defend himself. Remind of Christ's injunctions not to be anxious as to what they should speak (Matt. x. 19). St. Paul had no time for deliberation, no trained orator to speak for him, but could not have made a better defence. Children not likely to be called upon in this way, still are told to be ready to give an answer when asked a reason for the hope that is in them. (1 Peter iii. 15.) Help them to answer such questions as these:—Why am I a Christian? In whom is my trust? What must I do to be saved? Then apply the subject to their consciences. St. Paul's life agreed with his profession, does ours? He was a *consistent* Christian, no fault could be brought against his life, and his life was a blessed one accordingly, bringing thousands of souls to Christ. (2) *The unselfishness of true religion.* Why were the Jews offended this time? Not because he spoke of Jesus, but because he said he was sent to the Gentiles! Yet their own Scriptures full of prophecies about the Gentiles. (See Ps. ii. 8; Is. xlix. 1, &c.) Jews wanted to keep their worship, temple, God, to themselves. Let each ask, What *can* I do? What *am* I doing to spread the knowledge of Christ? (3) *The benefit of a soft answer.* See what St. Paul gained by the right way of putting things. Did not make great fuss, asserting his right as a Roman, but quietly asked whether it was lawful to scourge a Roman. This always best way, even in self-defence preserve self-respect, not attempt to gain rights in a wrong way. For example, a child at school, or servant in a family, wrongly accused: let them not make disturbance, but wait for quiet opportunity of putting themselves right. Will thus gain a hearing, and more likely to obtain redress. In all things remember example of Jesus (1 Peter ii. 22, 23).

Questions to be answered.

1. In what language did St. Paul speak? What effect did it have?
2. What points in the story of his conversion does he dwell most upon?
3. What word gave offence, and why?
4. What is the first lesson we may learn from the story?
5. Show that true religion is unselfish.
6. How should we answer when wrongly accused?

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

It was a glorious summer morning which dawned on the world next day, with every accessory of light and music and colour to make it gorgeous and brilliant, for there was not a cloud on the clear blue sky, and the rosy flush in the East was reflected in the sparkling stream and in every drop of dew that quivered on the grass, while the fresh air was full of melody from the carolling bird voices that sounded through the trees. Mary Trevelyan started awake from happy dreams with a sense of hope and buoyancy, which did not altogether leave her even when the full return of consciousness brought back to her the recollection of Mr. Lisle's critical state. The fact that nurse Parry had allowed her to sleep undisturbed all night convinced her that at least he could not be any worse, and her heart thrilled with the idea that possibly he might even be a little better. Hastily throwing a dressing-gown round her, she went softly across the passage, and glanced through the open door of his room. He was lying on his back, perfectly motionless, and evidently in a deep sleep, while Mrs. Parry, reclining in an easy chair by his bedside, was giving audible testimony to the fact of her being also buried in profound slumber. Mary came back well pleased to her room, and proceeded to dress, hardly able to account to

herself for the strange feeling of happiness which seemed to pervade her whole being, and which could not be explained by the simple fact that Mr. Lisle was enjoying some refreshing rest that could not make his case any the less hopeless ultimately. She was standing with all her beautiful dark hair falling round her like a veil, contrasting well in its dusky hue with the white garments which she wore, when suddenly she paused as she was in the act of gathering it up in both her hands, and stood for an instant listening intently, then a light stole into her eyes which filled their thoughtful depths with radiance, her lips parted in the loveliest smile, and her alabaster whiteness gave place to a warm tinge of delicate colour; any one seeing her at that moment would have pronounced her a beautiful woman, though in general her quiet unassuming appearance would not have attracted notice as in any way remarkable; but now it was the glow of sudden joy that had glorified her face, and sent her heart throbbing with unexpected rapture, for she had heard a step in the passage—a step purposely made so noiseless for the sleeper's sake that it was strange it should have met her ear at all—and in an instant all her soul was penetrated with an inexpressible delight, as she murmured softly, "Bertrand is here—I shall see him; I shall hear his voice; now I know why I felt so mysteriously happy!" and she turned with a glad smile to the open window, feeling that the whole world for her was full of light which came not from the morning sun.

Half an hour later, when she left her room and went once more to Mr. Lisle's door, Mary was met by Mrs. Parry who was coming out, her round face beaming with satisfaction, to tell her that the invalid was sleeping still, more tranquilly than he had done for weeks, and the good woman, putting on a very significant smile, drew back so as to let Mary look into the room, and said, "Now, my dear, take a peep in there and see what there is to be seen." Mary went forward a few steps, and then her glance fell upon a picture which lived in her memory for long years afterwards through many a chance and change: Bertrand Lisle stood by the side of his father's couch in all the glory of his youth and strength, looking the very personification of manly beauty with life at its best and brightest animating the stalwart frame, and the fine face glowing with health, while before him on the bed, all white and rigid, lay the dim shadowy figure that seemed already but the ghost of a vanished life, with eyes that no more could see the sunlight, and lips that would never smile again, and mutely pleading hands folded in submission over the breast that faintly rose and fell with slow waves of breath, like the growing calm of the long troubled ocean when the breeze is dying down. The splendour of a summer noon and the cold solemn immobility of a snowclad winter's night could scarce present a greater contrast; and dear as the dying man was to Mary Trevelyan, her heart trembled with thankfulness that while he, alas! represented death and decay, the type of life and hope was that one in all the world in whom her own existence was exclusively bound up. Bertrand turned, and saw her, and the smile that brightened his lips was so surely one of intense pleasure, that she could not mistake its import; he came swiftly towards her, and clasped her hands in his, saying softly, "Little Mary, what joy it is to see you once again, even at this sad time." She raised her deep grey eyes to his face for all response, but he read their eloquent depths, and was well satisfied.

"I thought you would have been taken by surprise, Mary," said Mrs. Parry, in a rather disappointed tone, for she had expected to see Mary's start of astonishment at the unexpected sight of Bertrand; "did you know he was come? did any of the servants tell you?"

"No," said Mary in her soft, low tone; "but I heard his step."

"Did you?" said Bertrand. "I thought I passed your door so quietly that no one could have heard me; and, in any case, how could you recognise my step after all these months; but, to be sure, you were expecting me."

"Yes; but I should have recognised it any way," she answered, quietly; "how glad your dear father will be that you are come."

"I have been with him nearly all the night," said Bertrand, as they walked along the passage together.

"And he has proved a better nurse than any of us, Mary," said Mrs. Parry; "for Mr. Lisle has already slept longer than he has done at all since his illness became serious, and he shows no sign of waking yet. You must have brought him great peace of mind, Bertrand, somehow, to produce such a result."

"Perhaps I did," he answered, glancing at Mary, to see if she had any suspicion of the means by which he had brought calm to his father's anxious spirit; but there was no token of agitation on her guileless face, and she looked up at Bertrand innocently, saying, "He wished to see you so very much; I think the mere sight of you would give him rest and happiness."

"Well, Mary, my child," said Mrs. Parry, "we must take advantage of his unusual tranquillity to have our breakfast, it is quite ready; and when we have finished, I will come and sit by him till he wakes, so that you and Mr. Bertrand may have a little time together; you will have to tell us all about your travels, my dear boy."

"I am afraid they have not been in very savage countries," said Bertrand, laughing, "where I could have any interesting adventures. My life passes in the height of the most refined civilisation."



(*Drawn by* W. SMALL.)

"Bertrand gently took her hand."—*p.* 410.

"Then it may be quite as new to us," said Mary, with a smile, "considering how completely we are out of the world in this retired home."

"Anyhow, I am sure you have plenty to say to each other," said Mrs. Parry; and when the meal was over, she prepared at once to return to her watch by the sick bed.

"But, nurse, will you promise to send and tell me the very moment he wakes?" said Mary, anxiously; "for I long to speak to him, though I would not disturb him for the world; it seems so strange not to have heard his voice since yesterday evening."

"He spoke so much to me in the night that I have no doubt he is very much exhausted," said Bertrand.

"You can trust me to call you so soon as he wakes," said Mrs. Parry; "he will want to see you both I have no doubt," and she bustled from the room with the lappets of her widow's cap flying out behind her, which recalled to Bertrand an absurd recollection of the days when he used them as reins, the good lady herself being his steed, as she carried him about on her back.

"It makes me feel like a boy again to be once more in this dear little home," he said, turning to Mary. "Come out into the grounds with me till my father wakes, and let us explore some of our old haunts."

She agreed, with a bright smile, and together they went out into the glad summer morning with its sunny skies and its scented breeze and its rainbow-tinted flowers. They were young; they loved each other well, and they could not feel altogether sad as they wandered down the shrubbery paths towards the little streamlet, but they spoke with hushed breath, and in gentle reverent tones, because of the shadow of death that hung over the house, and the awful sense of the near approach of the one dread mystery before which the proudest spirit quails, and the most assured hope falters. It was of the dying man they spoke as they strolled along in the gay sunlight, for he was very dear to both of them, and their hearts were filled with that tender pity which the living seem ever constrained to bestow upon the dying, forgetting how soon and how surely they shall themselves succumb to the same mysterious power. Mary told Bertrand how the physicians had assured her that he could not possibly linger many days longer, and that they were indeed surprised he had lived so long.

"I am so thankful I was able to come here in time to see him for every reason," said Bertrand; "but, dearest Mary, though he is my father and only your friend, I think that it really will be sadder for you than for me when he is taken; for my profession necessarily leads me to a life apart from him, and to you it will involve much more than the loss of one you love."

"The loss of home, of protection," murmured Mary; but her voice died away, for she dreaded beyond words that her forlorn condition should in any sense appeal to Bertrand, so long as she was uncertain that Mr. Lisle was right in believing she had won his love.

Bertrand gently took her hand, and was sorely tempted to tell her then and there that all she was about to lose would be given back to her fourfold in his affection; but to talk of love or marriage in that atmosphere of death seemed a desecration, discordant as the clash of wedding bells over a grave, and he only said, "Such a one as you are can never be left lonely or unprotected, Mary, do not fear."

She was silent, and they walked on thoughtfully together, while Bertrand pondered, with some perplexity, over the arrangements which must be made to provide Mary with a home till such a period had elapsed after his father's death as would enable him to marry. The villa was merely rented, and must be given up. Mrs. Parry's private income was too slender to enable her even to support herself, and he knew, though Mary did not, that the very small sum she had inherited from her own father was such as young ladies in her rank of life would consider scarcely sufficient to provide them with clothing. Mr. Lisle had always told his son that he had carefully concealed from his adopted daughter how completely she was dependent on his kindness, and that the truth in this respect would never be known to her till after his death, when it would be no longer possible to hide it; but Bertrand thought it probable that in his tender care for her he might have made some plan whereby a home might be provided for her, at least during the interval that must elapse before Bertrand could offer her one himself; he found, on questioning Mary on the subject, that this was really the case.

"Yes," she said, "he was so good and dear, he did not limit his kindness to his own life, but thought of what was to become of me when I was deprived of his precious care; he has provided me with a shelter, for one year, in the only home he could find for me—with your mother's cousin Mrs. Wyndham. I do not know why my residence there is to be limited to one year; but he told me it was so decided."

Bertrand could easily understand that the reason of this limitation was simply Mr. Lisle's inability to pay Mary's board in advance for more than one year, as, although he had scarcely any personal acquaintance with his relation, and none with her husband, he knew enough of their circumstances to be certain that they were not in a position to receive visitors freely for any great length of time; he knew that Mrs. Wyndham had, late in life, married a widower, who, though an elderly man, was still only a poor curate, and that they lived in a very lonely and inaccessible district of Yorkshire, eking out an exceedingly small stipend by taking pupils; it did not

sound a very enlivening prospect for Mary, but it was probably the best arrangement that could be made under the circumstances, and he thought to himself, with a glow of satisfaction at his heart, that he would certainly remove her from hence at the end of the year.

CHAPTER VIII.

"It seems a sensible plan, dear Mary," said Bertrand, after thinking it over, "I have no doubt Mrs. Wyndham will be very kind to you; do you like the idea?"

"Oh, Bertrand, no!" she said, tears welling into her eyes, "I dread it so much; I would not have told your father this on any account, it was so kind of him to think of me at all."

"But why do you dread it, dear?"

"You know Mr. Wyndham had a grown-up daughter when he made his second marriage, and I have heard that she was annoyed at her step-mother coming there, and that she makes the home very unhappy in consequence; she may not like my presence either."

"She must be very difficult to please if she does not like to have you, little gentle Mary; I believe she will love you very much, she will not be able to help it."

Mary shook her head. "I wish so much I could have lived with nurse Parry, but of course I will adhere to your father's plans; his wishes are sacred to me."

"Yes, let them be so always, Mary," said Bertrand, with a significant smile, which sent the blood surging through her heart with sudden agitation.

"But what is nurse Parry going to do?" continued Bertrand; "I cannot consent to lose sight of her."

"Oh, I hope not, indeed; it would break her heart to be altogether separated from either you or me. She does not like this plan of my residing with Mr. Wyndham at Chiverley, but since it must be so, she is going to live for the present with a friend of hers, who is also a widow, and keeps a boarding-house in London."

"That would not have been at all suitable for you, dear child, so I am glad another home has been found for you; and you must shake off your fears, and look at it brightly. I shall take care that you are not made unhappy, for I shall come and see you at least once in the course of the year."

"Oh, will you!" exclaimed Mary, looking up to him with such a light of rapture in her eyes, that he smiled at the full confession of her love for him which they involuntarily made.

"Yes, that I shall; whenever I can get leave. Mrs. Wyndham is my cousin, and I shall assume that she is bound to exercise the duty of hospitality, and I can always bring the Gorgon of a step-daughter some trinkets from Vienna to propitiate her savage nature; so you must take courage, little Mary."

"You shall hear no more complaints," she whispered, while his fingers clasped closer round the little hand he held.

They sat down under a willow-tree that grew on the banks of the stream, and Bertrand began to tell her of his life on the Continent; of the courtly ceremonies he attended, and the brilliant society which surrounded him in the diplomatic circle to which he belonged. She was intensely interested in every detail which concerned him, and the hours flew away on golden wings; high noon had come and passed some time, when, at a pause in the conversation, Mary said, "Surely, it is impossible that your father can be sleeping all this time, and yet nurse Parry promised so faithfully to summon us when he awoke; it almost makes me uneasy to think of such a long slumber. Let us go and see how he is."

"By all means; but quiet sleep can only be beneficial," said Bertrand; "and he has suffered much, has he not, from wakefulness?"

"Oh yes, it has been his great trial; I am truly thankful he is quiet now; I have so longed that he might rest."

Did she know what she was saying? They strolled on together over the sun-lit lawn, and went into the house, where all was perfectly quiet and silent, for the servants' offices were at the back, and Mr. Lisle and nurse Parry were the only occupants of this part of the dwelling. They went on up the stairs, through the passage, and in at the open door of the sick-room. Mrs. Parry's absence was at once accounted for, as she had laid down on a sofa placed at a little distance from the bed, and had, naturally enough, again fallen asleep in the slumbrous heat of noon. Then Bertrand and Mary Trevelyan went and stood by the side of Mr. Lisle's couch. Was it the living father that lay there or a statue carved in monumental marble to represent eternal peace, white and inanimate, with sealed eyes and lips set in a strangely meaning smile, as though some wondrous secret had just been revealed to him? Something there was in his aspect so antagonistic to the glow and warmth of life that a deadly pallor stole over the two bright young faces that looked down on him, and a chill of dread struck to their hearts. Involuntarily Bertrand grasped Mary's hand, and then stooping down, he laid his own reverently on his father's breast; no heaving breath, no throb of life, responded to his touch, but the mysterious inexplicable change which pervaded the whole well-known form, struck home to him instantly with that unmistakable conviction of the presence of death which compels the living invariably to recognise it the very moment they are brought in contact with its mystery. Bertrand turned and looked at Mary without speaking, and, gently drawing her down beside him, they knelt together by the couch in silence.

It was even so, carefully as he had been tended by that poor human love, which is so helpless in

the face of death, the old man had gone through the last dread change in solitude, unaided and unwatched, secretly, silently, the long life of hope, and fear, and love, and anguish of thought and error, had floated away into the invisible air on one expiring breath, and now it no longer existed at all, save as a memory, a feature of the past, which soon would vanish, even from the remembrance of those to whom his living presence had been most familiar.

As the sunbeams flickered through the Venetian blinds that shaded the room, and fell in straggling rays upon the kneeling group, and the rigid figure with its folded hands and marble whiteness, it looked as if all were alike cut out in stone—the effigy of one long dead stretched upon a tomb, and the sculptured representatives of those who had lingered a while to pray for him, carved by the cunning of the artist's hand into a vivid imitation of life. But the spell which held them in such perfect immobility was soon dissolved, it was broken by a cry from Mrs. Parry, who, waking up suddenly, had come towards the bed, and in a moment had understood all that had occurred.

"Oh, my dear master! my dear friend! to think that I should have gone to sleep and left him to die all alone! I shall never forgive myself!" she exclaimed; "and you will never forgive me," she added, turning to Mary and Bertrand, "for not having called you."

Her distress and excitement were so great, that they both were obliged to draw their thoughts away from the contemplation of their loss, in order to console her. Bertrand emphatically assured her that he did not blame her, and that his dear father had passed away in sleep, so that it could have made no difference if they had all been present; but Mary's gentle soothing did more for the good woman than all his vehement protestations, for her sympathetic nature told her she should best relieve the sense of remorse for neglect, by reminding her that she had still a duty to accomplish for him whom they mourned, and by begging her to calm herself in order that they might join together in performing the last offices for the dead; even in that sad moment Bertrand could not help admiring Mary Trevelyan's delicate tact, and it had at once the desired effect, Mrs. Parry wiped her eyes, and resumed her composure, while Mary, in a tremulous whisper, asked Bertrand to go into the garden and cut some of the white roses his father had so specially loved, that she might lay them in the form of a cross upon his quiet breast.

A few days passed away—days of glorious summer beauty in the world without, floods of sunshine streaming over wood and field, birds making the whole air musical with ecstasies of song, green grass waving, flowers opening new blossoms to the light, all nature full of gladness and life, and within shaded rooms and voices hushed, falling tears, and footsteps lingering round a silent bier; yet it might be that the truest life was there, in the midst of that atmosphere of death, for the sunshine of the summer days would fade, the birds would cease to sing when came the winter snows, the grass would fall beneath the mower's scythe, the flowers would shrivel and perish in the chilling frosts, but out of the very rigour and soullessness of death there springs the imperishable hope of a life that cannot die, and from the gloom and horror of the grave there rises a light for the righteous, which shall for ever shine in the unfading brightness of the perfect day. This much is certain, that, deeply as those true mourners grieved for their personal loss in him who had been taken from them, there yet seemed to be a strange prophetic sweetness in the peculiar calm that was all around and within them, during the waiting days before he was hidden out of their sight till the morning of the great awakening; for it had befallen them, as it does to most in the actual presence of death, to receive so strong an impression of the utterly ephemeral nature of all those conditions of life which it could terminate so suddenly, that it seemed scarce possible to attach much importance to the vicissitudes of that mortal state, which would seem but as a vanished dream when once they had passed to the eternal existence on which they believed he had already entered.

This is a phase of feeling which all have experienced probably who have seen a familiar friend, that has shared all their daily cares and passing joys, suddenly withdrawn behind the veil; but for a brief time only it reduces the things of sense to their true proportions, and then all the passion and frenzy of earthly hopes and fears rush in again to blind our eyes, and they loom out before us so near and prominent that they seem to drive back all that lies beyond them. Already the hopes and anxieties of their earthly career had returned to beat tumultuously in the hearts of Bertrand and Mary Trevelyan, when they turned away to leave the father and the friend lying peacefully beneath the green turf of the little country churchyard. It had been Mary's special wish that he should be buried at sunset, when the same soft waning light and heavenly stillness was on all the living nature, which had filled him with such serenity when last she sat by his side, and bade him mark how like the golden west was to the gate of paradise. Quietly, as the sun was declining, they walked out hand in hand behind the coffin, borne on the shoulders of poor men to whom he had been kind; Mrs. Parry followed near them. And so they carried him to the rustic graveyard that surrounded the village church, and laid him down by the side of his lost love, with the music of celestial hopes breathing in every one of the solemn holy words with which they lulled him to his rest.

(To be continued.)

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL.

BY THE REV. W. M. STATHAM.

FASHION.

DEAR me, what a nuisance! The dressmaker is so busy, she sends me word that I cannot have my things home for another week, and here am I with absolutely 'nothing to wear!' How can I go out in these outlandish old fashions!"

Why I declare, Gertrude, you quite upset my gravity. Outlandish did you say? Why, these were in fashion three months ago, and style *does* change apace if your dresses are old-worldish now! But the fact is fashion changes now as suddenly and startlingly as the weather! By-and by lady travellers will have to secure telegrams to follow their journeyings, so that they may secure new clothes by the time they arrive at the place of their destination. Fashion, always an autocrat, is becoming a tyrant; and instead of complaining, it seems to me that people love to have it so. What do you say, Gertrude, that it encourages trade, and stimulates production, and circulates cash! You should read the "Political Economy of Art," and you would have more distinct and enlightened views on that question. All depends upon the wisdom of the investment, not upon the degree of it. But most seriously, Gertrude, don't you think it must all seem supremely ridiculous in the eyes of the lilies, and the crocuses, and the roses, who keep in the same steady fashion from age to age? We don't complain of old fashion in flowers, and yet we are everlastingly altering our own.

It is not the ladies, you say, it is the gentlemen as well. What with peg-top trousers, and sugar-loaf hats and brimless ditto, and Noah's ark great-coats, and all the infinite inventions in new ties, men are as obedient to the great fashion-god as women. Oh yes, Gertrude, I quite admit all that! Pray do not think that I wish for a moment to load your sex with all the huge weight of this folly. Far from it. There are tailors' fashion-books for men as well as Parisian toilet ones for ladies; and I know quite well that there are lovers of fashion beneath hat-roofs as well as beneath bonnet-roofs. Nor do I complain of variety; the ever-same is wearisome, and human nature loves novelty. Perhaps, though, I must exclude more than half the human race from this remark, for the Chinese and the Hindoos seem to have settled the dress question *en permanence*, but I freely admit that the European nations show vitality in all these matters; and in this, perhaps, as in other respects, "better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay." All I intend to criticise, is the variety when it becomes a disease! Now I have been intensely amused to-day by a new style on the lady side of this fashion question—a style which I am told next season is to develope itself in a remarkable manner. I have just seen a head with no bonnet, no bunch of ribbon even on it, but an immense chignon, and a bonnet *on that*—a clever swordsman could have cut off the whole lot without touching the head at all—and I am seriously told that next season that is to be *the style*. In all seriousness it seems to me that ladies might as well have a bonnet affixed to the middle of their backs! I always thought that elegance in dress was associated with some element of use to be beauty at all. At least that is my humble opinion. I remember a sermon of the golden-mouthed Chrysostom's, in which he pleads with the ladies to take off their delicate *high-heeled* boots, and to hang them round their necks. A very admirable suggestion; as, if it may not minister to ornament, it helps to avoid accidents. It is startling, however, to find that so many many centuries ago these same evils were unsuccessfully fought against, and it rather tends to make one feel how helpless we all are in the presence of this old idol. Bel bows down and Nebo stoops, but the old goddess Fashion is as erect and supreme as ever. You will remember, Gertrude, that when the Germans hemmed in Paris, the fashions were sent to England and elsewhere in balloons. One empress had gone, but the older empress Fashion reigned on, through bombardment and war! Well, after all, you say, I am obliged to admit that there is use in variety, and that stagnant dress would be as unlively as stagnant laws. Unquestionably I admit all this; but laws ought always to embody justice, righteousness, and truth, and fashion ought always to embody use, adaptation, and elegance.

My complaint just now is that fashions are becoming supremely ridiculous, and are simply "new fashions," and nothing more. How many ankles have been put out, and how many accidents have occurred, through the absurdity of small-heeled high-heeled ladies' boots it is not necessary to suggest. And how many have suffered agonies of "tic," through bonnets that are not bonnets, I leave sufferers themselves to discuss. But the great question is this—Have we none of us pluck enough to stand out against any absurd fashion? Are these influences as inevitable as the measles? Must we "have them," at any cost whatever, simply because they are fashions. I can quite imagine some "grim ogre," at the head of the fashion-world, deciding to put her followers

through agonies worse than oakum-picking or treadmill-grinding, and I positively believe that the victims would follow on. What ridiculosities the world has seen! "Let plaister appear!" says the goddess Fashion, and forthwith our great-great-grandmothers dotted their faces all over with bits of black plaister, as though they had all cut themselves in shaving. "Let us limp!" says the goddess, and forthwith young ladies set themselves to walk genteelly lame! "Let us twist!" says the goddess, and forthwith the Grecian bend appears. What next may come one knows not; but if the goddess takes to walking on her hands and knees, fashionable knee-caps will surely make their appearance. We are all commanded by the goddess to write on long day-book letter-paper now, and forthwith we do it! Is it because human beings have so little *in themselves* to command attention, that they fly to these resources to proclaim their existence? Surely the quiet dignity of self-respect should lead us all, Gertrude, to be masters of fashion, as we are masters of ourselves! If fashion decided that it was right to lose our tempers, probably we should think fashion a fool. But are we not to be masters of the tabernacle as well as the tenant? Why should fashion dictate how I am to build my house? Neither ought fashion to be allowed to dictate how I am to plant my garden. Much more, then, ought the vestiture of the body to be decided by taste and judgment! For my own part, Gertrude, I do not hesitate to say I think variety would be charming in this as in all else. I am not an admirer of sheep when they all run through a gap in the hedge. And humanity is never presented to me in so "sheepy" a way as when ladies and gentlemen press each other's heels to run through the gap of some new fashion. Yes! men *are* as foolish in this as women. "Let there be heavy watch-guards!" says Fashion, and forthwith men load themselves with golden anchor-chains. We can all do much, Gertrude, to preserve a dignity of personal taste and self-respect; but that woman deserves a monument who would venture to a morning concert or a morning call in a bonnet that really kept the rain off, and kept the head warm. It is easier to fight a battle with most of the powers that be than with fashion, and it is probably true that because the valiant have gone to the very opposite extreme, and opposed new fashions by old fashions, that so few have taken the moderate course of harmonising taste with use and variety, without slavery to novelty.

Well, all my criticisms will be thrown away, you think; the shield of Fashion was never dinted yet by the arrows of satire, and never will! Perhaps not, Gertrude, but let me whisper this into your ear—the most perfect fashions are not always winsome attractions to the best men, nor are they the necessary associates of the happiest homes.

Simplicity, after all, wins the day; and as ladies exceedingly dislike their servants to imitate them, let them remember that the inimitable is not stylish decoration, but tasteful apparel. Moreover, let it be well remembered that there is inter-action in these respects; and the very raiment we wear affects in some degree the mind. It would be quite impossible (to put an extreme case) for a gentleman to dress like a clown without feeling like a clown; and the outward man affects the inward man. An untidy habit creates an untidy mind; and grotesqueness of dress produces to some extent grotesqueness of character.

Would I have you dress always in the "same style," like the Quakers do, then, you ask. Extremes again, Gertrude. I am quite willing to admit that the simplicity of a true Quaker girl's dress is often very beautiful to my mind, but I am pleading for no such sort of uniformity. But this I do say—*use* should decide a great deal. Boots should help us to walk, not hinder us; bonnets should protect and shade, and not float out at the back of the human being like a ship's flag; strings should be made to tie, or else be consigned to some more available department of dress. Fashion is often a kind of death-warrant in the winter; and if the newspapers told the plain truth, they would contain many notices of "Died of ribbon-bonnets, or of thin boots." Taste in dress is never to be derided. God clothes Nature in beautiful but appropriate garments, and warmth and protection are most admirably studied in all the clothing of the feathered tribes, and of the cattle on a thousand hills. I am not protesting against adornment, but against bad taste and *waste*. Yes; I repeat the latter. How many incur debt not because their garments are old, moth-eaten, and worn, but simply because they are out of fashion! Many a miserable tragedy at home has occurred because Fashion has demanded unworthy submission to her imperious demands. Let dress be as *good* as you please, and as *tasteful* as you please, but there is no need to instal Fashion as a goddess in the mythology of modern life.

This "Private and Confidential," Gertrude, can be read with this convenience—that it is addressed through you to many who need only to be a little easier to be a great deal happier. Independence of mind, in this as well as in many other matters, needs for its exercise heroism of heart.

A GRAIN OF SEED.

ON a bright sunny morning in early Spring, a party of children passed along the dusty road leading from Sunday-school to church.

"What are you stopping for, Ada?" asked one of the elder girls. "Come on quickly, or we shall be late."

"I am searching for a seed, Laura," replied the child, as she drew from between the pages of her Bible an illuminated text.

"What do you mean?"

"My teacher was telling us about the sower; she said the seed was the Word of God, so this ticket must be one grain. I am going to try if it will grow, and what kind of fruit it will bear." And as she spoke, little Ada threw down the card on the edge of the path.

Her companions laughed.

"It is useless to sow by the wayside, Ada, the ground is too hard."

"Ah! I never thought of that; but, if God likes, He can make it grow anywhere."

By this time the bell had ceased tolling, and the children hastened to take their places in church. On the way home Ada looked in vain for the ticket, and turning to her sister with a disappointed face, exclaimed, "You were right, Laura. I am afraid a bird must have carried away the seed. My teacher said something about that too, and yet I asked God to make it take root and grow."

"You do not understand rightly, Ada; texts don't actually take root in the ground, like common seed. It is likely your ticket was blown away, or some passer-by picked it up. Come home; you will never find it now."

While this party of happy children passed through the pleasant sunshine to their kind friends and comfortable homes, a far different scene was to be found at no great distance, where, in a miserable lodging near the end of the village, a boy, pale and worn, lay on a wretched bed, moaning in uneasy sleep. Several little children, too hungry to play, roamed restlessly about the bare room, whilst a sad-looking woman strove in vain to hush their cries and entreaties for a bit of bread.

"Father's not home yet," was all she could answer, "and I'm afraid when he comes it's little money he'll have left for us. I sent Effie out to try if any of the neighbours would lend us a loaf."

Some time passed away, the church bell had stopped ringing, and the children were growing more and more hungry, when a little girl pushed open the door.

"Mother," she said, eagerly, "kind Mrs. Black gave me some bread, and a cup of milk to warm for poor Johnny. I went to her house, and on the way home found this pretty thing," and Effie held up in triumph the very Sunday-school ticket which Ada had let fall on the pathway a short time before. The little ones gathered round to see the treasure, and could not sufficiently admire the bright border of coloured flowers.

"But what's in the middle, Effie?" asked a little brother.

"I am sure I don't know," she answered, "but it looks like letters; we'll ask mother."

The poor woman was busy dividing the bread into small portions, so that each of the family might have a share, and as soon as all were quieted, if not satisfied, she glanced at the card.

"Yes, indeed, they are letters," she said, "and there was a time I could have spelled them out, but with all the sorrow and hardship I have gone through since, any little knowledge I ever had has left my mind. Johnny could read them for you may-be when he awakes; he got some learning once, and a fine scholar he'd have made if he'd been long enough at it. I'm thinking he'll never do much in this world now."

"Why, mother?"

"Because he'll not be any time in it."

"Where is he going?"

"To Heaven, I hope, but we don't know much about that, for God doesn't care what becomes of us, or He wouldn't leave us to starve while your father's away drinking and poor Johnny dying."

Then followed a long silence, during which the mother hid her head in her hands, and sobbed bitterly. At length Effie ventured to ask her to pin up the little card against the wall, "just where Johnny could see it when he awoke." Then all was quiet, for the younger children, having stared to their heart's content at the pretty picture, went out to wander about in the sunshine, and wonder why things always looked so dark within their home, and why they were so hungry and ragged, while all the little girls and boys they met coming from church looked pleased and smiling, and were neatly and comfortably clothed.

"Mother says God doesn't care for us," remarked the eldest; "I suppose He loves other childen, and that's what makes the difference."

Meantime, Johnny awoke from his feverish sleep, and, looking round, was not long in observing the little card, which hung near the foot of his bed, for, like most sick people, he was familiar with every minute speck or spot within sight, and had so often counted them over that he could have noted the smallest change, either in number or position. The wreaths of bright red roses, blue forget-me-nots, and green leaves, which formed the border of the ticket —though not, perhaps, very true to Nature—pleased his weary eyes, accustomed to dingy walls, varied only by marks of smoke or damp.

Effie watched his awaking with much interest, and, while his mother hastened to warm the milk which her kind neighbour had sent, the sick boy, turning languidly to his sister, and, pointing with his thin finger, said, "What is that pretty thing, and where did it come from?"

"It is mine!" said Effie, proudly; "I found it on the roadside. What's written on it, Johnny? can you make it out?"

"Yes, yes!" he replied, with a new interest in his voice; "to be sure I can," and, spelling the letters one by one, with some difficulty he read the three simple words in the midst of the gay border of flowers—"God is Love."

"Why, those are strange words, Johnny," remarked his mother, as she handed him the milk and a piece of bread she had reserved. "He never showed us much of His love, or we wouldn't be in this state now!"

"It's true though, mother, for I heard those very words read out of the Bible when I was at school, long ago, but it's little I've thought of them since."

"He may love some people, but not us."

"No, no, mother! I can tell you a verse about that too: 'God so loved the world'—that's every one, you know—'that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'"

"If He loved you, Johnny, would He leave you so long ill?" asked Effie.

"May-be He's going to take me away to Himself. Wasn't it love made Him send that card to comfort me before I go? For no one gave it to you; you found it on the roadside; so it must have come from God. And, mother, He loves you too, if you'd only believe it."

Tired with the exertion of speaking, the poor boy lay back exhausted, but his eyes were still fixed on the precious ticket. The sun was sinking behind the hills when he next spoke. From his lowly bed he could not see

> "Those hues which mark the sun's decline,
> So soft, so radiant;"

but as his sun of life was fast sinking too, he could gaze, by the light of that illuminated text—

> "Through golden vistas into Heaven."

God's love! Yes, that was the key-note to all his new-found happiness. His mother, Effie, and the children crowded round the bed, for they knew that a change had come, and in the midst of the solemn silence another figure entered softly, and leaned also over the dying boy. One glance was enough—"He is going; oh, I little thought it would be so soon!" and a pang of sorrow and remorse shot through the strong man's heart. "If he'd only stay a little longer I'd be better to him; but God's angry; he won't hear me."

"Father," said Johnny, pointing to the ticket, "God is love. He loves you, and He's taking me that you may love Him. Mother, Effie, and all, you'll believe, and come too." His voice grew so faint he could hardly finish the sentence, and these were Johnny's last words on earth.

Time passed by. The little ticket still kept its place on the wall, and often when the father was tempted by his old habits, a glance at it helped him to resist. The mother, too, could now see the love of God, and no longer murmured at her lot. Many an almost forgotten comfort found its way to the once wretched room. Effie and her brothers and sisters attended Sunday-school with the other village children, neat and tidy, happy and joyous, like the rest.

The grain of seed which little Ada had sown in faith had indeed sprung up, taken root, and brought forth good fruit. S. T. A. R.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

163. Our Saviour bade His disciples "shake off the dust of their feet" against those cities who refused to receive them—where did they do this?

164. Who was the captain of the guard appointed to look after Jeremiah, and remove him from prison?

165. What prophet, in the New Testament, foretells a famine, which afterwards occurred in the days of Claudius Cæsar?

166. How were the Ephraimites, on one occasion, known from the people of the other tribes?

167. What passage is there which states that the men of Issachar were well-read and very learned?

168. What prophecy do we find concerning the blindness of Zedekiah, king of Judah?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 384.

147. Pride (Isa. xvi. 6).

148. Because he believed not the words of the angel who told him of the birth of his son (Luke i. 20).

149. "Forty-two thousand three hundred and three score" (Ezra ii. 64).

150. "But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek" (Gal. ii. 3).

151. "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin, but he that refraineth his lips is wise" (Prov. x. 19).

152. "That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the Day of Judgment" (Matt. xii. 36).

153. St. James and St. John (Luke ix. 54).

154. Elias. "And Elijah said, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty" (2 Kings i. 10—12).



WAITING.

TO watch and wait—alas!
Wearily, heavily pass
The lonely days.

Far better work and wait,
And strive with adverse fate
While Hope delays.

499

"Poor child of grief and pain!
Unfold thy hands again
Unstrain thine eyes;
Arouse the slumbering wheel;
Unwind the cumbered reel;
Arise! arise!

"Thy loved to war are gone,
Yet art thou not alone,
For God is here.
If orphaned, still above
Thy Father looks with love
Upon thy fear."

The solitary maid
That inward voice obeyed,
And knelt to pray;
Then spun the lonely hours,
While tears, like dew on flowers,
Had silent way.

She waits in work and prayer.
What echoes through the air?
The drum! the drum!
She starts—she looks afar—
Back from the cruel war,
They come! they come!

ANNE BEALE.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XI.—DOROTHY ASKS A RIDDLE.

THE two years were over, the early summer had come, and Adrian Fuller was due in England, and Dorothy Woodward was waiting for him. She was not impatient; the dream-castle she had been building all these months was so pleasant to behold that she hardly dared to enter it now that its door was almost creaking on its hinges. She wished, sometimes, that she knew precisely when he was coming; she should like to meet him under the sycamore-tree, she thought; to be sitting reading there with the boys and Sally about, and her father and mother in the study; to hear a step, and look up and see him and greet him quietly and composedly as if his absence had been all a delusion, and in reality he had only left them yesterday. "How we have altered in these two years," she thought, looking at her brothers and Sally, "and I most of all, especially lately." George Blakesley's talk in the firelight had been a sort of revelation to her which she understood well enough now. She was getting more thoughtful, too, and fonder than ever of reading and day-dreaming, and climbed great heights, and journeyed into far countries in imagination, as many of us do, for we should achieve mighty things and be great travellers, indeed, if we could tack our hands and feet on to our fancies.

"Dolly," said Tom, one morning, "I shall get away from the office at three to-day. If you like to meet me I'll take you for a long pull upon the river." Tom had fifty pounds a-year now, had enjoyed that magnificent income for the last three months, and out of it kept a boat, and had invested in a tent, and occasionally camped out.

"Netta is coming to spend the day. She says it's so dull now that grandpapa is ill, and she cannot have visitors."

"Well, you don't want to see her."

"No, I would rather come with you."

"What have you done to scare away your valiant knight of the sickly visage?" asked the Beauty that same day, while Dorothy was preparing to go forth and meet her brother.

"Nothing," she answered, guiltily.

"But he never comes now; and he used to be so wonderfully sweet. I thought he was number two on your list of slain."

"I don't know what you mean," said Dorothy, colouring up.

"Don't you, really?" she laughed. "Take my advice, dear," she went on, "and get married as soon as you can, and as well as you can; I shall. We have no money and no position. I am sure I don't know what would become of me if grandpapa died, unless he left me some money."

"I wouldn't have any one for the sake of money," said her sister. "One ought to be in love in order to get married."

"Nonsense. Love is all very well to dream about, but, we have to live the best part of our lives wide awake. If you can catch your recreant knight take my advice and do; if Sir George Finch proposes I shall have him, and *I'm* sure I am not in love."

"I think it's wicked," said Dolly to herself, an hour later, as Tom pulled away at the oars; "and I am very glad that Mr. Fuller is poor." In thought she always bound up their two lives together. "Tom," she asked, shyly, "do you know why Mr. Blakesley has not been lately?" for though meeting had been awkward, he had not altogether ceased his visits after her refusal.

"No," he answered; "but he seems to have cut Hampstead. Don't know why, I am sure, unless it's because he's getting to be a swell. I have not seen him for ages. Fact is," he added, carelessly, "he thought proper to say that in his opinion I'd no

business to keep a boat, but should keep myself, or help my father, or some bosh; just as if the governor couldn't afford to give us all a home. So I told him I meant to spend what I got on myself."

"Tom, that's selfish."

"Don't be a stupid, Doll, it's nothing of the sort; every fellow does it. He said the governor's paper, too, was doing badly, but that's all nonsense."

"Tom, do you think people ought to work?"

"Men ought, of course," and he loosened his collar a little more (for the June sun was warm) with a consequential air which showed he was speaking of himself among others. "Idleness is a disgrace; I told that young snob Barker so only yesterday. He was grumbling because he couldn't get into anything, and that his father had not been able to bring him up to a profession, and said that it was his misfortune that he had been born the son of a gentleman, and so could not go behind a counter. So I said yes, it *is* a misfortune, but why don't you sweep a crossing, that doesn't want much talent, and brooms are cheap; that showed him what I thought of his upstart speech."

"Yes, you were quite right, Tom," she answered, admiringly, watching the ripples on the water. "There is no disgrace in work of any kind."

"Of course there isn't," he said.

Then poor Dorothy sat, and wondered what was the *use* of working to spend the money on one's own pleasure when, too, one could be just as happy—as she could for instance, with her books and trees—without spending anything at all; it was no use to work to pay for pleasure which could be obtained in another form, and as pleasant a one, for nothing.

"I don't understand it a bit," she sighed, and then she said aloud, "Tom, I wonder what we live for?"

"To eat, drink, sleep, wear out our clothes, and hang about; and we die to fill coffins."

"But what is the *good* of that?"

"Don't know, I'm sure. You had better write and ask Blakesley."

CHAPTER XII.—THE FATE OF THE ROSE.

"I AM so tired," thought Dolly, wearily, as she toiled along by the heath. She had left Tom behind to put up his boat, and had come home alone. There was a little aching in her heart, as if she had been seeking for something and failed to find it—perhaps it was only that she was waiting for Mr. Fuller. She used to think it would be all right when he came. It was such a lovely evening, and the cloud mountains were clearly defined in the sky. She watched them for a minute or two, and, in fancy, climbed them over and over, and up and up, and into heaven.

"I wonder if it *is* such a very lovely place," she thought, abstractedly, not feeling much interest in the matter, she had no occasion to do so for many a long year yet, not till she was old, and had tired of the beautiful earth. She came in sight of her home at last. It was a dear old house, she thought—a dirty-white coloured house, with straggling creepers twining over it, and a careless happy look about the open windows as the lace curtains swayed gently to and fro in the evening breeze. "I wonder if Netta is there still," she said to herself as she entered. There was an odd look on Jane's face as she opened the door, but Dorothy did not notice it, and went straight through into the study. No one was there, and she looked out of the window, as, long ago, Netta had looked out and watched her brothers and sisters burying Venus. She started, with a cry that was almost pain. Will and Sally were together, reading, in the summer-house, and going towards them, as if to speak, were Mr. and Mrs. Woodward; and under the sycamore-tree was Netta—Netta, with the last rays of the setting sun glinting through the leaves above to light up her golden hair; with a flowing robe of white about her, and a rose in her bosom, a wonderfully lovely dress it seemed to her sister, though it was merely a simple muslin one—and she was looking up at some one who was watching her face, and seemed to be lost in admiration of it, and that some one was Adrian Fuller. She stood staring at them for a moment, then went out to seek the domestic.

"When did Mr. Fuller arrive?" she asked.

"This afternoon, Miss Dorothy; just a little while before your papa came home. Master Will and Miss Sally were at school, and your mamma was up-stairs. He walked straight in when I opened the door, and into the study, and looked out at Miss Netta, who was reading under the sycamore-tree, and then he went right away to her. I believe he expected it was you, miss."

She went slowly back to the study, and sat down in the twilight, without making any effort to meet her old friend. Netta had done that in the very place and manner in which, in her day-dreams, she had hoped she should meet him on his return, and since that was so, he should enter the house now before he saw her, just as two years before he had entered it to meet the Beauty. So she sat and waited, her heart beating, and her pulse throbbing beneath her self-imposed penance; but it was so long before they came, and she could hear their voices in the garden, and imagine how happy they were without her, and how he was talking to Netta while the stars came out. It was too bad; they might have guessed that she was home, and have come to see. But no, they were quite content, and so at last, unable to bear it longer, she rose, and, going into the sitting-room, which was next to the study, opened the piano and began to play. Then, directly she had touched the notes she was afraid of the sound they made, and ashamed of her own foolishness, and yet more ashamed *now* to go into the garden and tell them how long she had been in the house. Then they, hearing perhaps the sound of the piano through the

open windows, came in, and Dorothy rose, and stood in the middle of the room, while Netta entered, with a white shawl twisted round her slender shoulders, and Adrian Fuller by her side. He started forward in a moment.

"Dolly!" he exclaimed, forgetting the more dignified name by which he had said he should call her. "Well, I declare, here is my little Dolly at last; and grown into a woman, too, as I feared she would!"

She was so happy.

"But I am just the same," she said; "I don't feel a bit different;" yet while she spoke the song came ringing in her ears—

> "The same, the same, yet not the same,
> Oh never, never more."

"And I am so glad you have come home, Mr. Fuller," —and she raised her eyes to his just as the Dolly of old would have done—"I have missed you so."

"That's a nice confession for a young lady to make," laughed Netta. Her voice made Dorothy start and colour, and brought her back with a bound from her old self to her new one.

"I did not mean——" she began.

"Never mind what you meant," he said. "I am very glad to see you again. We shall resume our old footing now, eh?"

"And what is to become of your faithful knight of the house of Blakesley?" asked Netta, almost mockingly. "My little sister is a sad coquette," and she looked up innocently at the returned hero. He was so very handsome, that she did not relish resigning him into the hands of her sister, especially as all that afternoon he had seemed lost in admiration of her lovely self. Poor Dolly, Netta seemed like a female Mephistopheles that evening.

"You know I have not seen him for months," Dorothy retorted, and she turned her brown eyes upon her sister with a flash.

"Haven't you, dear," answered the Beauty, and going to the piano she ran her fingers over the keys. "I think I shall come home and practise two or three times a week," she said; "grandpapa does not like the sound of a piano now that he is ill."

"Why don't you sing something, Netta dear?" Mrs. Woodward said, eager to show off her daughter —she was so proud of her.

"No," she said, hesitatingly, looking across at Adrian Fuller and Dorothy talking together in the window-seat. What could they have to say to each other? she wondered. It so annoyed her to see any one else getting attention which she considered she had a right to monopolise. He had heard Mrs. Woodward's request, however, and came towards her.

"Oh, do sing Miss Woodward!" he said, and so she suffered herself to be persuaded, and sat down, and sang "Jock o' Hazeldean" as hardly any one, perhaps, but Netta Woodward could sing it, for she had a voice such as but few women possess—wonderfully sweet and sympathetic, and so carefully modulated, it thrilled and enchained her listeners.

Adrian Fuller went to her side, and hung upon her tones, and forgot poor Dorothy altogether.

"Oh, do go on!" he said, entreatingly, when she stopped; and so she began again, and sang song after song to them as they sat listening in the twilight, till, almost unnoticed, the night had come, and the brougham was at the door to take the Beauty back to her grandfather's.

"One more," pleaded Adrian Fuller, but she rose from the piano with a laugh.

"No, I have finished. Dolly!" she called, looking towards the corner where her sister was crouching in the dark, forgetting the singer in her delight at the music. "Come and sing something, dear." Netta was always very affectionate to her sister before people.

"I!" said Dorothy, in surprise. "Why, you know I can't."

"Yes you can," she answered, sweetly; "come and try."

"But you know I can't," she said, in amazement.

"Of course she does," said Tom, who would not learn to be polite, "that's why she asks you."

"How can you be such a bear, Tom?" laughed Netta, unruffled as ever, wrapping her delicate shawl around her, and as she passed him she stroked Tom's hair with her fingers, and subdued him. "Why didn't you get yourself up?" she whispered, as she passed Dorothy "you had plenty of time, and I never saw you look such a guy."

"I never even thought of such a thing," she answered.

"You won't forget your promise," Adrian Fuller said, as she gave him her hand to say good-bye.

"Was it a promise?" she said. "I did not know that, but I never break one. Mr. Fuller wants me to sit to him Dorothy, dear, and mamma does not object. Do you know he was foolish enough to draw my face from memory, he says; he saw me, you know, the evening he left, when in my vanity I came to show myself."

"I lost the book, unfortunately, the next day—a pocket sketch-book I carried about with me," he said.

"Why, that was the book in which you put Dolly's rose," said Tom; "did you lose that too?"

"No," he answered, "I took care of that," and so the Beauty was not altogether triumphant, and as she drove away she saw that Adrian Fuller, with the privilege of an old friend, had drawn Dorothy's hand through his arm.

(To be continued.)

THE TRIPLETS OF THE BIBLE.

BY THE REV. J. HILES HITCHENS, AUTHOR OF "THE FURNACE," "THE FACE OF THE KING," ETC.

IV.—THE THREE CROSSES.

They crucified him, and two others with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst."—JOHN xix. 18.

OF all the places of special interest on earth none has such potent attractions as Calvary. Hallowed associations cluster around that consecrated height, and solemn voices ever reiterate spiritual lessons. As on the ever-memorable morning of the crucifixion, so now, immense and motley crowds ascend that hill. But they visit it only in imagination; for all reliable data as to the actual site of that hill are wanting. The infidel bends his steps thither, but only with averted eye, curled lip, and jesting words, to heap opprobrium on One who died there. The artist ever and anon scales the mountain-side, but it is simply to pencil on canvas the expiring moments of the Man of Sorrows. The far-reaching poet becomes a pilgrim to Golgotha, that the "lyre of thought" may be "thrilled with magic," each pensive chord vibrating at once in poetry and praise. Scores, like the vacillating Pilate and the uncertain centurion, resort to the theatre of the last sacrifice almost persuaded to surrender to the claims of the Great Victim. Hundreds, like the impious priests, inhuman soldiers, and shouting populace, gaze on the dying God-man with the most sinful and soul-destroying feelings. But, thank God! the pupils and partisans of the man called "Jesus" often visit that well-known and eventful spot, whilst some, in thought and affection, bivouac and abide there. They find it lofty vantage ground, from which their souls obtain clear and comprehensive views of divine truth. For ever Calvary will be a memorable spot to mortals; and to the sainted, bright-robed host, it will remain what it is, the best loved of all earth's elevations.

Why the hill is so famous we all well know—because of that long-anticipated day when three crosses were erected there, bearing three sufferers. Not, however, so much because of two of those crosses. The crucifixion of the two malefactors was not enough to render that spot so memorable. Many other evil-doers were crucified, but the places where they died are unmarked, and the particulars of their deaths unrecorded. The crucifixion of these two thieves is only famous because of their association with Jesus, "in the midst." The attractions of Calvary are derived from Christ. The central cross has made the other crosses famous. Artists, historians, poets, and theologians, conduct humanity to Calvary because *Jesus* died there. Good, devout, faithful men and women love to linger there in silent, sweet, and sacred musing, because He, whom they love before all others, expired there for them. They sing or say, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

In our visit to the sacred mount at this time we will repair to the central cross—to "Jesus in the midst"—that in all things He may have the pre-eminence.

This central cross reminds us of the stupendous strength of divine love.

We have often deciphered the goodness of the Almighty in the volume of creation which lies ever open before us; but the immeasurable extent of His grace, the unlimited yearnings of His affection for guilty man, the summer sunbeam cannot pencil, the placid rivulet cannot lisp, the soft zephyr cannot whisper, nor any spot in Nature, however profuse in beauty and melody, reveal. God does not point to the beauties and bounties of creation when He commendeth His love toward us. He directs attention to the sacrifice of Calvary, and says, "Herein is love!" Apostles and prophets do the same. Whilst we do well to follow natural philosophers in their varied excursions into the realms of creation, whilst we are strengthened in our convictions by a study of the discoveries of science or the portrayals of art, let us never forget that, independently of all human discoveries and abstract reasonings, God is love, and that the crowning and completest evidence of that love is presented in the truth which tuned the harps of Judah even in the wilderness, and which caused the Roman empire to ring with songs of joy, even when the singers knew the penalty of death awaited them. Yes, it is in the work of redemption that all the outgushings of infinite love concentrate. It is in the cross of Christ all the other attributes of the Divine nature are eclipsed. Opulent as is the Maker and Proprietor of all things, He exhausted His treasury, and could render no more expressive assurance of His affection than He presented in His "unspeakable gift." That is an infinite demonstration—infinitely capacious, infinitely durable, infinitely strong, infinitely sure, and infinitely precious. The strains of intercession Jesus presented for His murderers, the accents of sympathy He breathed to Mary, the cry of agony He poured forth to His Father, the revilings He endured, the promise of Paradise he gave, the tears and blood He shed, were the mighty manifestoes of the love of Deity—evidences that our Father's heart pulsates with the firmest, fondest, fullest affection for

the sinful creatures of earth. Something of the length, breadth, depth, and height of the love of God, which passeth knowledge, may be learned from the central cross. Dear reader, let us see to it that this love cements us to the cross. Let us gladly yield to its magnetic power! None ever suffered for us, presented to us, or accomplished in us, what Jesus has! Not one in the wide universe can be found so deserving of our confidence and love! With unwavering zeal we should aim to live so that all our thoughts and feelings, and desires, and deeds, may converge toward Immanuel as the glorious centre! Not till the angelic intelligences weary of looking into the sufferings and glory of Christ, not till the harps of the celestial choir cease the sweet strains of the new song, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain!" let us cease to dwell in thought upon, and speak with unfaltering tones of the glory and greatness of redeeming love!

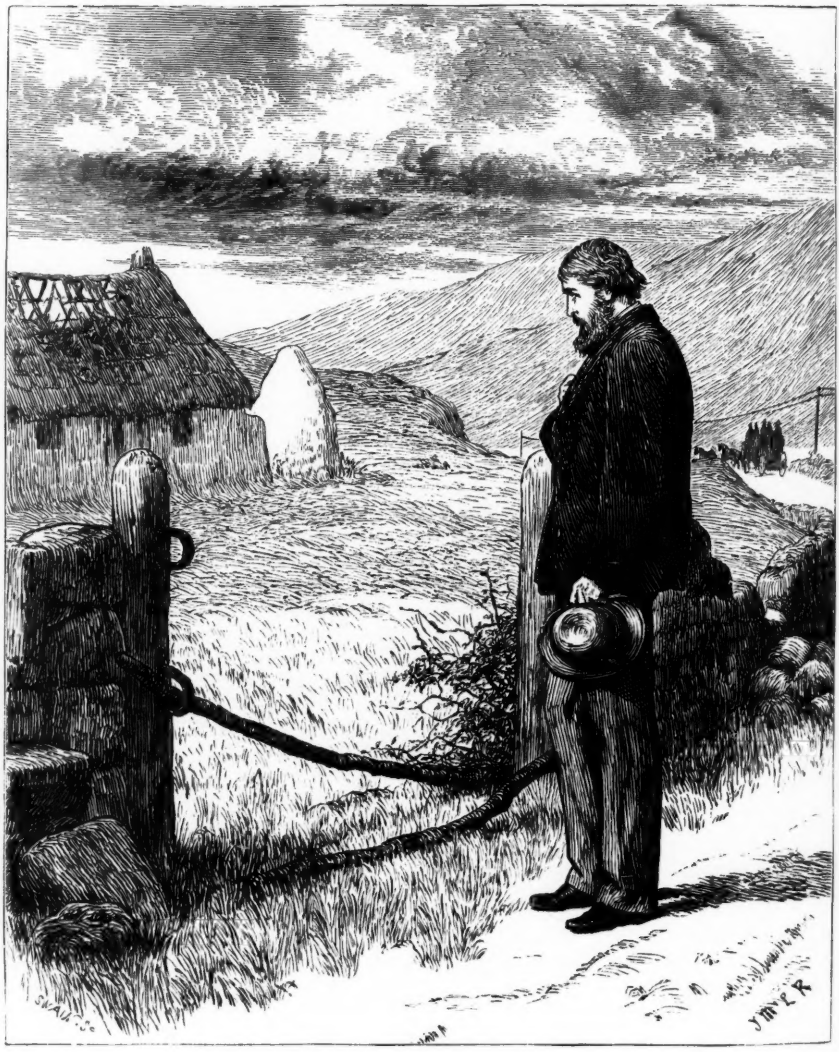
This central cross reminds us also of the only divinely appointed way of salvation—faith in the crucified one. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." By the efficacy of Christ's blood we have pardon and peace. In the study of His example we find stimulus to holiness. From the recollection of His mediation we gather strength. We find life, and we retain it, by clinging to the cross of Jesus. Our souls throb with vitality only whilst looking unto Jesus, and living on His inexhaustible fulness. What the orb of day is to the goldening sunbeam, what the balmy atmosphere is to your lungs, what the ethereal light is to your eyes, what the full fountain is to the limpid stream, that Jesus is to the believer's soul. Man, regenerated man, is dependent. As the clematis clings to the post of your garden-bower, or as the convolvulus twines around the sturdy tree, so man's soul must lean upon, cling to, expand, blossom, and bear fruit, by the cross of Jesus. Here or nowhere have we spiritual life! Whatever can elevate the affections of the heart, develop the faculties of the mind, satisfy the longings of the soul, and ornament the features of the character, is unfolded here! Everything the Infinite could bestow, more than the finite can embrace, and enough to engage all heads, hearts, and tongues through time and eternity, is unveiled here. The culmination of the beautiful, the summit of the sublime, the acme of all that is affecting, the climax of all that is mysterious, is visible here. Here, then, by the cross of Jesus we sinners are permitted to stand—permitted to fix our gaze on the great Saviour, and feast our famishing heart on His rich bounties. Here rebels can fraternise with the Eternal King. Here the creature and the Creator can enjoy the closest communion. Here the most abject child of dust can hold intercourse with the Infinite Father of Spirits. Here, then, beneath the shadow of this central cross, let our hearts nestle, for here the world is crucified unto us, and we are crucified to the world.

Looking at this central cross we may learn submission to the will of God.—The servant is not greater than his Lord. The pious Herbert has beautifully said, the cross is "the decreed burden of each mortal saint." No pilgrim heavenward should expect exemption from this uniform condition. There is a cross appointed and prepared for each—prepared by a loving God with full adjustment in form and weight to our characters and capacities. Ponderous and painful our burden will often feel, but if we realise the sympathising presence of the once crucified One we shall have strength joyously to endure. Our heaviest affliction will be light, our protracted season of agony but a moment, whilst we are near the cross of our dear Lord. We shall say:—

> "O holy man of sorrows! dare I breathe
> One murmuring sentence? What this cross of mine
> Beside that cross Thou didst endure for me?
> A few brief tears and transient sufferings,
> Compose my sum of trials; but Thy woes
> Claim as exponents mighty drops of blood!"

Let us now turn to the cross of the penitent thief, and we shall witness the place of execution turned into a place of grace—a display of mercy on the arena of justice. From the narrative of the Evangelists we gather that both thieves were conducted to the place of execution reviling Jesus. With feelings of animosity they both joined with the infatuated multitude in accusing Him of arrogantly assuming a title and character that were never His. One of these criminals eventually yielded to Christ's supremacy, and acknowledged himself dependent on Christ's love and power. A change was effected in his spirit. His prejudices were banished, his passion subdued, his antipathy converted into affection, and his revilings transformed into reverence. Prayer was offered and answered. The Redeemer gave the thief an assurance of final salvation. Standing in thought by the cross of the penitent thief we are reminded—

That the cry of faith is always heard by Jesus.—Though the utterances be brief and broken, they are welcome to Him who is willing to save. If the expressions of the lip be the sincere outcome of the heart, they must, they will be readily heeded. What the penitent thief was brought to feel and believe is just that of which we must be sensible. He was convinced of his sins, so must we be. He regarded Jesus as the only Saviour, so must we. He saw Christ as the promised deliverer, the man mighty to save. He beheld Him gathering the burdens of men and hurling them away for ever; grasping the barred gates of death, and



(*Drawn by* J. McL. Ralston.)

"The home of youth stands ruined there."

"*THE LONG-AGO.*"—*p.* 423.

throwing them wide open; grappling with principalities and powers, and effectually subduing them. He did not think his cry for mercy unnecessary because of the Saviour's sufferings and intercessory prayer, nor must we. He prayed for himself. He exercised faith in the Redeemer, so must we. The perfect work of the Saviour is not intended to encourage indolence on our part.

We are reminded, too, that no person is too vile, and no time unfavourable, for the extension of divine grace.—With the experience of the penitent thief, who had loved his evils and lived long in the corrosive indulgence thereof, yet rescued and raised to heaven as a monument of sovereign grace, none need despair. The Divine Philanthropist is not like man. He may be always found. You may come to Him at daybreak, when the first faint sunbeams are struggling above the horizon and tipping the hill-tops, as Mary beheld Him at the sepulchre. You may come to Him at noonday, when the sun is culminating, as Saul of Tarsus experienced on the road to Damascus. You may find Him at eventide, when the flowers fold their beauties, the clustering stars emerge from their hiding-places, and sweet serenity reigns around, as the disciples experienced on the first day of the week. You may commune with Him when the curtains of night are gathered round the face of Nature and mankind are lapped in sleep, as the history of Nicodemus and the Philippian gaoler proves. When expectation is disappointed, and efforts appear fruitless, as when the disciples on the sea of Tiberias had toiled all night and caught nothing; when alone and diligent in duty, as when the woman was surprised by the weary traveller at the well of Samaria; when in the crowd, as when publicans and sinners gathered around to listen to His teaching; when troubles assail and the heart fails for fear, as when the disciples saw One walking on the waters and heard a voice exclaiming "It is I!" and when come to the spot where the stream of Time commingles with the ocean of Eternity, as in the case of the dying thief: at *any* season, in *any* place, and under *any* circumstances, Jesus is willing and wishful to receive the expressions of our faith and affection. Oh, cheering thought for those who lie in anguish upon the couch of sickness, feeling that the final hour is near, that as the penitent thief found mercy in the eleventh hour, so they may look unto Christ and be saved, even when the pallor of death is stealing over the countenance and the solemn hush of dread suspense reigns in the chamber! Jesus is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto the Father by Him.

But, looking toward the third cross, what sad reflections fill our minds! We see a man favoured with the same revelations of love and power—permitted to listen to the same expressions from the lips of Jesus, and drawing near to the same eternal state, remaining callous and indifferent. Cannot we here see how sins harden the heart to a degree almost beyond hope? Gradually, by indulging evil, the mind grows darker, the will set on the abominable thing, the habits fixed in their downward tendency, and the whole man stands before divine influences as though encased in triple mail! Alas for such a man! There is little hope of his salvation! And do we not learn too, from this third cross, the dangers of procrastination? We cannot presume to say, that because one man is saved in the last hour, when the swellings of Jordan are upon him, that therefore all will be saved, or that *we* shall be saved if we defer seeking Christ. The one cross tells of *hope*, the other warns against *presumption;* the one says, "It is never too late to return," the other says, "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation!"

THE LONG AGO.

AFTER long weary toilsome years,
Spent far away in foreign clime,
For every one there comes a time
When a glad voice from home he hears—
After long years.

Fond memories of the days of old,
The echoes of some far-off strain
Waken the heart to youth again,
And none but pleasant dreams enfold
The days of old.

But if perchance the Long-Ago
Should exercise a mystic spell,
And some lone wanderer impel
To seek the home he used to know
Long years ago;

Gazing o'er ground well-known of yore,
He sees indeed the self-same hills,
And hears the music of the rills,
But seeks in vain to view once more
The home of yore.

All bears the impress of the years—
The home of youth stands ruined there,
The thatch has fallen, bleak and bare
The house its tottering roof up-rears,
Grown old in years.

Ah well! though of the Long-Ago
Old friends and scenes scarce aught remains,
From memory still in tender strains
Kind thoughts of thee will ever flow,
Old Long-Ago. G. W.

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER IX.

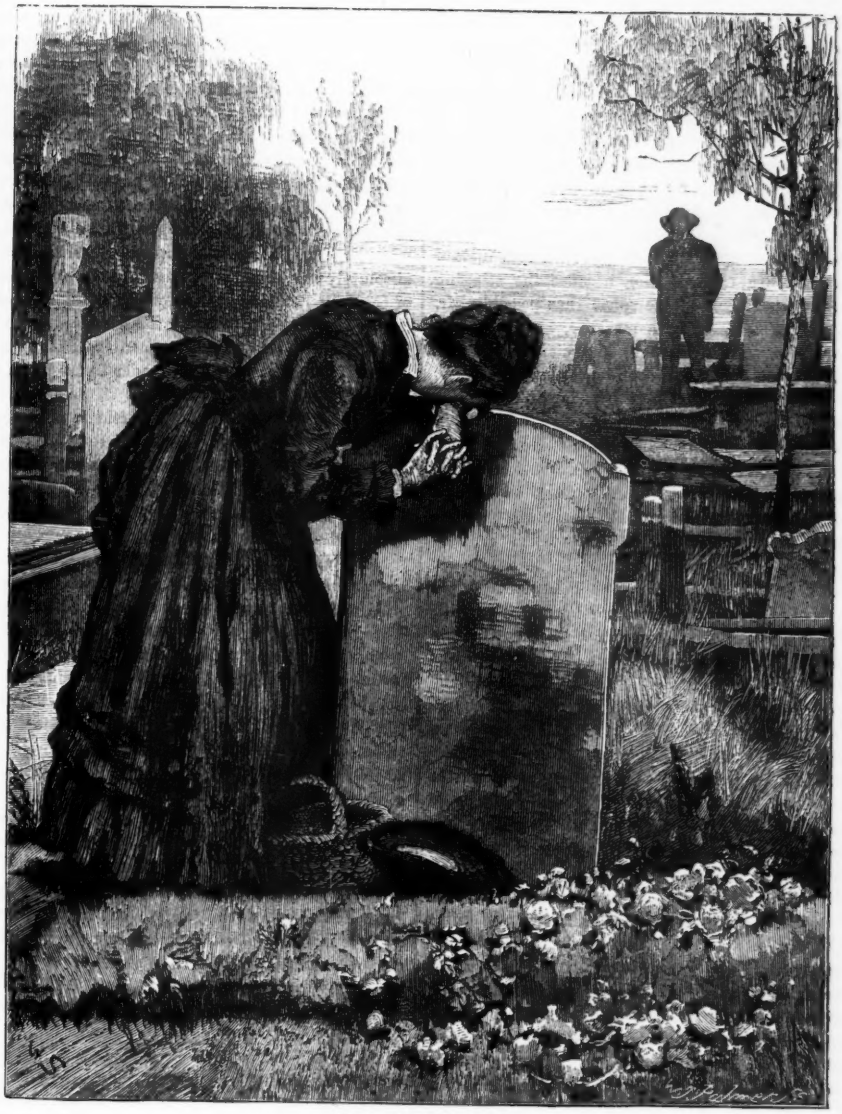
BERTRAND LISLE found that his father had left a letter for him in case he should not arrive in England in time to see him alive. It contained the substance of the sad history Mr. Lisle had told him on the last night of his life, and the expression of his earnest hope that his son might be able, with the consent of his own heart, to make Mary Trevelyan his wife; he added, that as the income derived from Mrs. Lisle's fortune, on which he had been living, would of course belong after his death exclusively to Bertrand himself, he had managed to set apart a sufficient sum to pay for Mary's board and lodging at Chiverley for one year, as he knew that the Wyndhams were in too straitened circumstances to receive her on any other terms. This money, he said, he had already dispatched to Mrs. Wyndham, with the understanding that so soon as she heard of his decease she was to write and invite Miss Trevelyan to come to them at once, so that the poor child might be spared the pain of knowing the arrangements it had been necessary to make for her maintenance during that first year. At its close Mr. Lisle earnestly hoped she would have her home with Bertrand to their mutual content and happiness—if not, he could but commend her to the care of her Heavenly Father, since he had himself deprived her of the protection of both her parents on earth. On the day following the funeral the expected letter from Mrs. Wyndham arrived, written coldly but politely, with a request that Miss Trevelyan would let her know on what day she might expect her. Poor Mary would fain have lingered in her old home, with all its dear associations, instead of going at once to utter strangers—for she had never even seen Mrs. Wyndham—but she knew that the house was now Bertrand's, and that he wished to sell the furniture and give it up as soon as possible, in order that he might return to his post on the Continent, which he had left without any regular leave of absence on the sudden emergency of his father's illness. It so happened that important diplomatic interests required his attention there at once, so that he was unable to take Mary down to Chiverley himself, which he had specially wished to do, in order to judge, by his own observation, what her chances of happiness were likely to be in her new home. Mrs. Parry had received no invitation whatever from Mrs. Wyndham, even for a time to accompany Mary; indeed, her name was not even mentioned in the letter; but she could not bear the idea of her poor darling, as she called her, setting out on her dreary journey quite alone, so it was decided that she was to escort Mary to the station nearest Chiverley, where some of the Wyndhams could be asked to meet her, and there take leave of her and return to London.

They were to start very early in the morning, and Bertrand was to go down to Dover a few hours later on the same day, and cross in the night to Calais, so that the last moments in their childhoods' home arrived only too soon for both of them.

On the evening before their departure some persons had come to see Bertrand on business connected with the winding-up of his father's affairs, and Mrs. Parry was busily engaged packing-up, so that Mary found herself alone, and free to go and take a last farewell of the spot it most pained her heart to leave.

It was again the sunset hour; but not as on the two former occasions, with floods of glory streaming from the gate of heaven, and earth made lovely by the dying smiles of day. It seemed now as if mysterious Nature were in sympathy with the sadness of her human children, for the skies were covered with clouds as with a mourning veil, and drops were falling like tears from every flower and tree, left there by a recent shower; the moist air was soft; the low night wind rose sighing as the twilight fell; and the one black-robed figure, passing with noiseless step along the churchyard path, seemed well in accordance with the scene.

Mary Trevelyan went on, threading her way with scrupulous care among the graves, so that she might not step on any one of them, till she found herself at the spot where Mr. and Mrs. Lisle now lay side by side. She placed some wreaths of flowers she had brought with her on their graves, as the last token of affection she could ever show them, and then, leaning upon an old tombstone which stood near, she looked down sadly on the sods that hid from her the first friends of her helpless infancy, and gave herself up to the painful thoughts which, in the depth of her silent nature, were weighing upon her with an intensity of which her outward calm and stillness gave no sign. She felt that she had reached a point in her existence when the past lay all behind her like a fair and sunny garden, within whose safe enclosure the guarded years of her happy youth had passed in an atmosphere of ease and tenderness, where no storm or danger could disturb the peaceful air; while the future seemed to loom before her dark and menacing, full of terrible possibilities, and of one most bitter certainty close at hand which she well knew contained the sharpest pain she could in any way endure.



(*Drawn by* W. SMALL.)

"Leaning upon an old tombstone."—*p.* 424.

She was about to be parted from him who was and ever had been more than all the world to her. Reserved and silent as she was in all her intercourse with others, Mary Trevelyan was no self-deceiver, and she knew that all the vast capacity of affection which lay in the depths of her strong earnest character had been given once for all to Bertrand Lisle, never to be withdrawn or lessened till her heart should cease to beat for ever in the cold grasp of death; but as yet she knew not if the profound intense love she bore him was to be her uttermost anguish or her very crown of bliss. No word on such a subject, of course, had crossed his lips during the mournful days through which they had been passing, and she herself grew every hour more guarded and distant in her manner towards him, because the stinging fear tormented her delicate spirit that possibly Mr. Lisle might, at least in a measure, have betrayed the secret of her devotion to his son on that last night of full and final confidence between them. This thought was terrible to her, for it seemed to leave her for ever exposed to the dread that Bertrand might seek to make her his wife from compassion rather than from love, and it drove her to the resolution that she would not let him even see the sorrow she felt at parting with him, much less the faintest indication of her feelings such as they really were. Could she have imagined—as she did not in the least at the time—that Mr. Lisle would have lived to see his son again, not even to gratify his dying wish would she have made him the revelation which she did; and she could but trust that he had carried her confidence with him unbroken to the grave; if it were so, she saw clearly that the course of reserve and almost coldness, which in her uncertainty she felt constrained to adopt towards Bertrand might well have the effect of causing him to mistake her real sentiments altogether. If it should be that he loved her, however, as his father had assured her and his manner to herself since his return almost led her to believe, it surely could not fail that they should one day understand each other, and that Bertrand would then appreciate and forgive the line of action which her maidenly pride compelled her for the present to adopt. Meantime, whatever the future might bring, this much was certain that on the morrow she was to be separated from him; not, as it had been hitherto, when he had merely gone away to his official post, leaving her in his father's house, to which he could not fail to return on every occasion when he was able to absent himself from his duties; now, the home they had shared together, the home that had been hers as well as his, was broken up for ever; she had no claim on him whatever, excepting such as his own heart might elect to give her, and she well knew how likely it was that the natural affection which might have drawn him to her in the familiar intercourse of former days, would now give place to some new sentiment drawn forth by the attractive society in which he would live habitually. She herself must turn away from him to go out into a cold strange world, where she was not bound by the ties of blood to any one human being; and despite his promises of visiting her, despite the hope that lurked even in this hour of despondency within her heart, it might be that never again would the sunshine of his beloved presence bring light and love and happiness to her young forlorn life. The bare thought of such a possibility was too much, even for her strong patient spirit, and, as she clasped her hands tightly on the rough stone monument in the effort to control herself, she let her head fall down upon them despondingly, while her frame shook with suppressed sobs. She was absolutely resolved that Bertrand should see no trace of tears on her face when they met again, and only in this solitary resting-place of the dead did she allow herself to give way to the momentary abandonment of grief, which swayed her slender figure like a reed shaken by the tempest.

It was thus that Bertrand Lisle saw her as he came quietly over the grave-strewn ground to join her. He had sought her when his business was done, and guessed that he would find her here—where, indeed, he wished himself to come for this last hour, to take his final leave of the spot where his parents lay.

He paused a moment to look at her before she was aware of his approach, struck by the unconscious grace of her attitude as she leant, in her dark flowing robes, against the grey stone, with her face hidden in her little white hands.

She looked so young, so slight, so unfit to battle with the rough waves of this troublesome world, that Bertrand could well understand his father's anxiety to secure for her a safe and happy haven, where she would be sheltered from the storms that might overtake her in an unprotected life.

"Dear Mary," he thought, as he advanced towards her, "I could have no fairer, sweeter wife if I sought the wide world over."

There was no sound of weeping from her lips as he came and stood beside her; but in the powerful agitation which she was restraining with all her strength she did not hear his step. Very gently he touched her on the shoulder. "Mary," he said. She started, lifted up her face, and saw him.

CHAPTER X.

Bertrand noticed at once the whiteness of her quivering lips, and the expression of anguish in her tearless eyes, though she struggled to compose herself the moment she met his gaze.

"Dear Mary," he said, tenderly, "I can well understand how sad a moment this must be for you, when, in taking a final farewell of these cherished graves, you seem to be breaking the last link that connects you with those we have lost."

As he spoke a vivid crimson flamed for an instant over her white pure face; for she knew that he mistook the cause of her sadness, and that it was not for the dead but for the living that her young heart was torn with passionate grief, not because those who had been the guardians of her childhood were at rest in Paradise, but because he who stood by her, in the strength and beauty of his youth, was about to be borne away from her side by a wave of that inexorable destiny which never might bring him back to the shores of her life.

She did not speak, for she was absolutely true, and she would not even by a look confirm his mistaken opinion. He was accustomed to the stillness of her manner, however, and went on frankly, "Of course, I share all your feelings in that respect entirely, so in future we must comfort one another, little Mary."

"If we ever meet," she said, in her soft low voice.

"If we meet!" he repeated, in surprise; "why surely, dear child, you have no doubt on that point?"

"We part to-morrow, and the future is so uncertain," she answered.

"Doubtless; we cannot forecast an hour in this world, and we may meet with a railway accident, one or the other of us, no later than to-morrow; but I do not see why we should anticipate such terrible contingencies; I dare say we shall both get safe to our destinations, and I mean to come to Chiverley to see you in the spring, so there is as much certainty of our meeting as we can ever have in this life of any event which is yet a few months distant. Do you not believe this, child?"

She lifted to his face the deep grey eyes which always reminded him of the line,

"Dark, and true, and tender is the North,"

so thoroughly did they combine these qualities, and said, "I believe that it might be so, of course—but you may not come——"

"Why? Do you think that I am of so much importance to the nations of Europe that I cannot possibly be spared from my diplomatic post, even for a month or two? Why, you know, do you not, that I can have leave of absence for a few weeks every year? I came over surreptitiously just now, without having applied for my usual *congé*, so as I am wanted there at present I shall not ask an extension of time now, but shall wait till the spring, when I can claim it for next year, and then I can be with you for some weeks at least—so you must prepare to welcome me properly, little Mary." With all her natural reticence and her present purpose of careful reserve, she could not restrain the murmur that escaped her lips, so low that he had to bend his head to hear it, "Welcome as flowers in May."

"I shall come sooner than they will," he said, smiling. "When the carnival is over in Italy, and the quiet days of Lent have begun, so that there are no more state receptions and ambassadorial balls, then you will see me appear at Mrs. Wyndham's hospitable home, for I shall assume it to be so, whatever may be the reality; but now, Mary," he continued, throwing off the light manner with which he had tried to beguile her sadness, "I have one word to say to you seriously. This is not the time or the place, standing by this new-made grave, to speak of future hopes; but I believe you know what my father's wishes were, and I am anxious you should understand that they are mine too, and I hope that they will be yours when I can speak to you more openly on the subject."

He took her hand as he spoke, but his natural delicacy prevented him from looking into her downcast face; as for her, her heart stood still in a conflict of feeling which almost took her breath away, for her whole soul leapt up in boundless rapture at the idea that he might really so love her as to wish for his own sake to make her his wife; but, on the other hand, she shivered with the shrinking dread that his father might have told him how he had wrung from her the avowal of a love that had been given unasked, and that the words he had spoken to her now were born of pity, not of spontaneous affection, and the fear kept her absolutely mute, even at the risk of being misconstrued by Bertrand. Her silence did not surprise him, however, for he knew that it was difficult for her, especially with her habitual timidity, to answer such a veiled declaration as he could only make her now. He felt her little hand trembling in his like a fluttering bird, and when he grasped it tighter she made no attempt to withdraw it, so he was perfectly satisfied, remembering as he did the strong heart-wrung words with which she had told his father what he was to her. He felt entirely secure of her love and faithfulness to him, and at a fitting time he would know how to make her own to him all the devotion which he knew her concentrated nature could feel for that one whom she had, as she had said, elected to be her only love for ever.

He stooped and took two of the white roses from the wreath she had laid on his father's grave, and putting one of them into her hand, he said, "Keep it, Mary, as I shall mine, in remembrance of this hour; and now I think we must take our last look of the dear graves, for it is getting so late and dark."

They knelt down together for a moment at the sacred spot, and then, hand in hand, they went down the churchyard path towards the home that was to be theirs no more.

Next morning, when the crimson dawn was filling all the world with roseate light, Mary Trevelyan came down the steps she had so often trodden in light-hearted happiness, and which were never to know the touch of her noiseless feet again, and

entered the carriage which was to take her and Mrs. Parry to the nearest station. Thus far Bertrand had declared he would accompany them, though he had to return to the deserted house to make various arrangements before finally starting for Dover. Mrs. Parry sobbed unrestrainedly as they drove out of the gates, for she, too, had lost a happy home; but Mary sat like a statue, without a vestige of colour in her sweet still face, and with shadowy eyes, which she kept persistently averted from Bertrand's face. She was struggling with all her strength to maintain her self-control, and it seemed to her that if she looked just once into that sunny face and met the glance of the dear blue eyes she loved so fondly, her composure would give way, and the pent-up grief she felt at leaving him burst forth with unmistakable evidence of the deep love she bore him. So, not many words were spoken amongst them till they reached the station; then Mrs. Parry hastily dried her eyes in order to attend to the safety of about twenty packages, large and small, containing all her worldly goods, with which she distracted the mind of the railway porter, till she had established herself in the centre of the platform, firmly seated on one box, with quite a flock of others surrounding her, over which she kept guard, as if she expected them to become animate and run away. Meantime, Bertrand drew Mary aside, and walked up and down the quietest part of the station while they waited for the train.

"I shall write to you often, dearest Mary," he said, "and you will do the same for me, will you not?"

"I will answer every letter you ever send me," she answered, in her low soft tone.

"Which means that you will not send me any spontaneous letters, does it not? How very careful you are not to offend the proprieties!" he answered, smiling.

"That is not the reason," she said, gently; "but when I receive a letter from you I shall be able to feel sure that you wish to hear from me."

"You may be sure of that at all times, child; but you remember how often we used to say long ago that there never was any one so afraid of being in the way as you were, little Mary, and it is the same spirit which animates you now I can see. Well, I shall secure frequent letters by writing often, and it will not be long before we meet again."

"You said in the spring; do you mean March or April?"

"Yes; I shall come again with the violets, like Napoleon. You know that is the reason why his followers use those humble little flowers as their badge—an incongruous one for the mighty Emperor. When he was in Elba they used to say, 'He will come again with the violets,' as he did, and I shall be like him in that respect."

"Oh, not like him, Bertrand!" exclaimed Mary; "for, you know, he came only to go away again for ever—he never touched the shores of France again."

"That is true. Well, I shall not imitate him beyond a return with the violets. He was no true Frenchman, but he had made France his own, and I pity him for never being allowed to look on her again. Oh, Mary, I like to think that I shall be on French soil to-night, though it will be but for a few hours."

"Yes, I am so glad you will have that pleasure at least on this sad day," she answered; for she knew and sympathised with his intense love for his country. But now the ringing of bells, and hurrying to and fro on the platform, announced that the train was at hand, and in another moment it came rushing in, and the moment of separation had indeed arrived. Bertrand found a comfortable seat for Mary in an empty carriage, and then looked round for Mrs. Parry that she might have a place beside her; but she was to be seen flying about the platform in that highly unnecessary state of excitement into which old ladies are apt to work themselves when they are making a railway journey, and he was obliged to go to her assistance in order to prevent such a catastrophe as that of her being left behind with Mary and one half of her luggage disappearing in the distance while she was left stranded on the platform with the other half; it was not an easy matter, even for Bertrand, nimble as he was, to capture the good woman, so wildly did she rush from side to side laden with bundles, and clinging convulsively to a cage containing a venerable cockatoo which had belonged to her husband, and was supposed to have commenced his career in the course of the last century. Bertrand at last succeeded in taking her into custody, and he came back holding tightly by her cloak to the door of the carriage where Mary was seated, and into which he hoisted her by a considerable exertion of manual force, and deposited the cockatoo on the seat beside her; she was still, however, in a cruel state of uncertainty as to whether one or two cherished carpet-bags and bonnet-boxes had been placed in the van. She vociferated inquiries on this subject to every porter who passed; and under cover of the outcry she made Bertrand bent forward to Mary, and whispered, "Have you got your white rose safe, dear, as I have mine?"

A soft smile gleamed for a moment on her sad lips. "Oh yes!" she whispered, and an involuntary movement, of which she was not conscious herself, but which Bertrand at once detected, showed him that the flower he had given her had found a resting place very near to her heart; he had no time to say more—the inexorable whistle sounded, the carriage door was locked, and as the train sped swiftly on, his bright face flashed away from her sight, and it seemed to Mary Trevelyan as if the light of the sun had suddenly faded out from the world.

(To be continued.)

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 24. St. Paul a Prisoner.

Chapter to be read—Acts xxiii.

INTRODUCTION. Ask who took Paul a prisoner. Out of whose hands did the chief captain rescue him? To whom did he deliver him? Why to the Council? Show the respect held for the Jewish Council by the Romans; besides, the captain was a little afraid of being called to account. What unlawful act had he done to Paul? (xxii. 29.) So would conciliate the Council, and not deliver Paul to Roman magistrates, by whom he himself would be blamed for the scourging.

I. Paul before the Council. (Read 1—10.) *The prisoner.* Perhaps children have seen a prisoner; how does he look? Why dejected? because of shame and disgrace of position. Still, if innocent, would have good conscience. What is he accused of? Look back at xxi. 28. Profaning the Temple. A very serious charge in eyes of the Council. Remind how charge against Christ was that He said He would destroy the Temple, and how the Temple was the centre of all Jewish religious rites and ceremonies. An offence against the Temple therefore one against God. Now listen to the prisoner. What does he say? (ver. 1.) Did he mean that he had done no sin? No; for see Rom. vii. 18, but outwardly had not offended in religious matters. What does the judge do? Just as Christ was struck. (John xviii. 22.) Describe the scene: the high priest, with his gorgeous robes of office, the seventy elders around, the prisoner now calmly making his defence, now indignantly rebuking the judge for his cruelty and wrong-doing in smiting the prisoner. What did the Council say, and how did Paul answer? Explain to the children that he was not really the high priest, but a usurper, and therefore St. Paul was not speaking evil of the ruler. (2) *The Council.* Who were the two leading parties? What were the opinions of the Sadducees? So Paul took advantage of the difference of opinion to help himself. What does he say about himself? (ver. 6.) Remind of previous lessons, how often apostles in trouble for preaching resurrection, *e.g.*, at Athens (Acts xvii. 32), now it helps him; so he showed the wisdom of a serpent (Matt. x. 16), and old promise fulfilled that wrath of man should praise God, for what was result? Division in council, great discussion, the two parties actually coming to blows. What did the chief captain do? Was anxious to save Paul, evidently much impressed by him, and anxious to help him all he could. So Paul was taken back into the castle.

Practical Lesson. *God's over-ruling Providence.* The same subject of resurrection, before a cause of offence, now a means of deliverance. Often thus. What seems most against us turns out for good, *e.g.*, Joseph's being sold proved salvation of his brethren, and many other instances. So with children. God can overrule all for good, therefore, like Paul, must just let our light shine, always speak and do what we know is right, and leave events with God.

II. Paul a Prisoner. (Read 11—22.) (1) *A midnight visit.* Describe St. Paul carried back into the castle by the soldiers, taken to his dark cell. His evening meal over, thinks over events of day, wondering what will happen to him next, remembering prophecy of Agabus, that Jews would bind him and deliver him to Gentiles (xxi. 11), then kneels down, commits himself to God's keeping, falls asleep. Who appears to him in the night? How does Jesus comfort him? Had gone through great trouble, been seized by mob, beaten by Romans, smitten by orders of high priest; still had borne witness of Christ. How? By his speech on stairs of castle, but more than all by his life, and the patience with which bore his sufferings. Had borne all for Christ. What a comfort to be assured by Christ himself that it had had effect! and now should do the same at Rome. Would sleep sweetly with such assurance (Ps. cxxi. 3). (2) *A conspiracy.* What are the Jews doing? Have been foiled so far by the breaking up of the Council, so they hatch a plot. How many of them? What is their plan, and what oath do they take? But so many being concerned, the plot oozes out. Who hears of it? So Paul's nephew tells him, and he sends him to his friend the chief captain, who devises a scheme to frustrate their plans, and save Paul. (3) *A midnight journey.* Whom does the captain send? Why two centurions, with their two hundred horsemen? Not merely because of the Jews in wait, but also because of the dangerous journey. At what time are they to start? Every precaution taken against surprise. So Paul, ready at nine o'clock, unable to take farewell of friends, starts with the military escort for Cæsarea. (4) *A letter.* Let the children notice the peculiarities of a Roman letter, the beginning and ending as compared with ours, and then see the same in the Epistles. To whom was it addressed? Of what was Felix the governor? Remind again of our Lord's trial, and how Christ was sent to Galilee to be tried by Herod. What does he leave out in his letter? What does he say about Paul? Nothing worthy of death or bonds, just as Pilate had said he found no fault with Christ. Of which of us could this be said? (5) *An arrival.* Now Cæsarea reached; the escort take Paul to the governor, and deliver the letter. To what city did

he belong? As Cilicia belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he was kept prisoner till he arrived.

PRACTICAL LESSON. *God's care of His people.* The captain's heart turned to Paul, the dissension in the Council causing his escape, the plot discovered, the midnight encouragement, the safe journey. Can trace God's care. So in our lives, though cannot always see God's care, may be assured of it. Gives angels charge over us, and orders all things for good of His people.

Questions to be answered.

1. How was Paul treated unfairly by the high priest?
2. Trace comparisons between his trial and that of Christ.
3. How did he escape from the Council?
4. How did God cheer him at night?
5. Who proved his friend, and how did he show his friendship for him?
6. What lessons may we learn from the story?

JULIA BRENT; OR, "HANDSOME IS THAT HANDSOME DOES."

"MAMMA, I shan't have Julia Brent at my birthday party," said Ada Graham, as she stood drawing on her gloves at the parlour fire one morning before going out to school.

"My dear, I thought you wished to have all your class-mates?" replied Mrs. Graham, looking up questioningly.

"Yes, of course—so I do; but I do not like Julia—she is so ugly," and Ada gave a glance at the fair rosy face and golden curls reflected in the mirror before her.

"But, my child, it is not Julia's fault that she is so plain; nor did she bring the cruel disease which has marked and scarred her face on herself. If God were to send some sickness to you which would mark and disfigure you, I know you would feel deeply if people slighted you. It is not right, Ada, to exclude Julia on that account."

"Perhaps not, mamma; but still I do not mean to ask her—all the girls say I ought not;" and Ada kissed her mother, and, taking up her books, set off for school.

"What taste the child has!" said Mrs. Graham, when her daughter was gone; "she cannot bear to look at anything which is not beautiful. I am sure she will make an artist. Don't you think she grows very pretty, John?"

Mr. Graham, buried in the *Times*, scarcely heard a word of the conversation, but answered, "Yes, very—very pretty," and gathering up his letters, set out for his office.

He was a wealthy merchant, living in one of the pleasantest suburbs of a large city, and Ada was his only child. Everything she could possibly wish for she had; and Mrs. Graham thought her the best and the most lovely child in the vicinity.

Beautiful she was, certainly, and every one kept telling her so, and praising and flattering her till her little brain was almost turned. Naturally vain and selfish, these faults were nourished to an alarming extent, quite unconsciously, by her mother and friends.

At school she was not either a diligent or clever child, but every one gave way to her, and made the best of what she did. It was an acknowledged fact that she was Madame Holman's favourite, but no one seemed to be jealous of her; for, though really very selfish, Ada had the name of being very generous. Her papa and mamma gave her plenty of money, and their visitors more *bon-bons* than she could by any possibility of a chance manage to eat, so that she liberally shared with her class-mates; but she never gave up her own pleasure for that of her friends, or denied herself the smallest gratification to oblige any one else.

Julia Brent, whom Ada did not like because she was "so ugly," lived with her uncle and aunt in a great square brick house not far from Mr. Graham's. She was the orphan daughter of the late rector of the parish, and quite homeless and friendless, except for her kind uncle and aunt.

Very plain-looking she was, with her sallow little face all seamed and scarred, and great gaunt eyes, but to those who looked beyond the mere surface there was much beauty to be seen in Julia Brent. Her cousins, Janie and Netta, both pretty children, loved her very dearly, for she was always ready to help them with their lessons, or romp in the nursery when the tasks were done. Her aunt found her always willing to do anything she desired her, at once, and her uncle called her his little secretary, so neat and tidy did she keep his study. But Julia was a very shy, sensitive child, and often when in her little bed she would cry herself to sleep because she was so ugly, and people looked at her so unkindly. But on the whole she was far from being unhappy, and when her music-teacher at Madame Holman's declared that she was the cleverest of all his pupils, and the drawing-master praised her before all the class, she really felt genuinely happy.

Ada Graham's birthday party was to take place in December, just a few days before closing up for the Christmas holidays. She was eleven years old, and her party was to be on a much larger and grander scale than it had ever been before. The invitations, written by Ada herself on perfumed pink paper, were sent out a week in advance; and when the dainty little note containing Janie and Netta's invitation

came, there was no mention of Julia. Mrs. Brent was very much surprised, but thinking that perhaps it was merely an oversight, said nothing about it. Every spare moment during the day Ada and her friends were chatting about what they should wear and what they should do, and in fact there was nothing thought of but the party. Lessons were neglected, and very many were the bad marks some of the children got.

Thursday was the evening of such importance in the eyes of a dozen young ladies, and on Monday, as Janie Brent was repeating over her morning lesson to her mamma, she said, suddenly, "I think, mamma, that Ada might have asked Julia; she will be so sorry and disappointed!"

"Did not Ada intend asking your cousin, dear, or was it a mistake?" asked Mrs. Brent.

"No, mamma, she said she would not ask Julia, because—because——"

"Well, darling, why?"

"I had rather not tell you, mamma, please," said Janie, blushing furiously, and looking very much put out.

"But, my child, it is very necessary that I should know why Julia has not been invited to Ada's party. If it is any fault of hers, I shall not blame Mrs. Graham, and let you and Netta go; but if not, you know Janie it would be very selfish of you and your sister to go without your cousin, who is so good and gentle and kind. Tell me, dear, the reason."

"Because, mamma, Ada says Julia is so ugly."

"Oh, Janie! how unkind, how wicked! Julia did not make those great marks on her face, nor is she to blame for being small and pale. Do you think, my child, you could go to Mrs. Graham's, and enjoy yourself—dance, laugh, sing, and be merry—knowing that your cousin was not asked because she is not fair and pretty to look at like Ada? My darling Janie, God looks at the heart, not the face; and if Julia is a good, obedient, patient child, He will love her, and never pass her over. I cannot let you and Netta go to Mrs. Graham's party; and I don't think my little girl will care to go, will she?"

"If you wish me to stay away, mamma, I'll try to be content; but I shall be disappointed; and Netta ——" here Janie's resolution gave way, and she burst into tears.

Mrs. Brent soothed her as well as she could, and when the sobbing-fit was over she set off to school not nearly so unhappy as she fancied she would be. Julia and Netta knew nothing of what occurred, and Janie was not to tell Ada anything about her determination, but write a polite note to her house, saying that she and her sister could not be present at the birthday party.

When the children got into school there was a great bustle amongst the girls in the senior class. Madame Holman was called away to Germany suddenly, to see a sick brother, and the examinations were to take place at once, and the prizes be awarded before she went. The eldest girls in the school were scarcely twelve, and there were only twenty-four altogether, so that it was not a very hard task to get through the examination. Subject after subject Julia Brent carried away the prizes in—drawing, music, reading, geography, and conduct. During the half-year not one single bad mark did she receive. After her came Janie, her cousin; for Julia taught her almost everything she knew herself. True, she could not make her play her musical exercises so well, or draw her figures so correctly, but she made her much better than she was in many things.

Last of all in everything was Ada Graham. Her party had driven all idea of her lessons out of her head, and, very much ashamed and very sullen, she stood at the bottom of her class.

The prize for drawing Ada had very much coveted, and when she saw it handed over to Julia she burst into tears. It was a beautifully-bound volume of natural history, with many fine pictures, and Ada had set her mind on having the book.

When school was dismissed, and the children, in twos and threes, were chatting over their answering, and examining their prizes, Julia came over to Ada's side, and, holding out the book, said, "I know you are fond of animals, and I have two natural histories already; take this, Ada, you see I have three other prizes. Do, please have it."

"Do you really mean to give it me, Julia?" asked Ada, opening her blue eyes wide in astonishment.

"Yes, dear, of course I do, as you seem to care for it," and, putting the book into her hand, Julia ran on to overtake her cousins.

Ada went home in high glee with the prize in her hand. When her mamma asked who else got prizes, she told her Julia Brent. "Indeed, mamma, she got this too, but she knew I set my heart on having the drawing prize, and I would have had it but my hand shook so to-day, so Julia very fairly gave it up to me." And Ada put the subject aside very lightly, but left the book on the drawing-room table, where every one could see it.

The next morning Mrs. Graham was surprised to see a note for Ada, more so when she learned that Netta and Janie Brent could not be at the party on Thursday night.

"I wonder why they are not coming. Does Janie say, dear?"

"No, mamma—only that she is very sorry that she and her sister cannot accept my invitation."

"And Julia?" said Mrs. Graham.

"Oh, mamma, I did not ask Julia; you know I said I would not."

At length the important Thursday arrived, and early in the morning Ada was bustling and fussing about the house till every one was worried to death. At last an idea struck her to go over to a cottage where a little girl lived, and bring her back to her

party. She was only the daughter of a poor seamstress, but sometimes Ada took a fancy to having her to play with, for she was a very sweet, pretty child, and as she was gentle and quiet Mrs. Graham did not object.

Putting on her hat and cloak, Ada started in haste to White Cottage, fully determined on having Mary Scott back with her.

"Be sure you do not go by the common, darling, as it is very wet after all this rain," said her mother.

"And, Miss Ada, take care you do not venture to cross the stepping-stones, as the stream is flooded," said the servant; and, promising to keep to the road, Ada started.

Now, to go by the common and over the stepping-stones was full half a mile shorter than round the road. So Ada, directly she got outside the gate, determined on going the nearest way. Properly it was not a common—only a piece of land which had been used as brick-fields, and was full of deep pits and muddy hollows; a little stream ran at one side, separating it from the farm and cottage Ada wanted to go to. In the summer the brook was almost dry, but in winter it was very much flooded, and a very strong current from a neighbouring mill-stream dashed past. But Ada, being in a wilful mood, and impatient, thought she could cross with perfect safety, and ventured boldly on the stones. Just then she heard a voice cry from the other side, "Don't! don't!" and looking up, she saw Julia Brent waving her arms, and making signs to her to turn back. Ada, however, took no notice; but when about in the middle of the stream she felt the stones slip from under her, and in another moment she was struggling in the water.

Julia stood for half an instant in dismay, then calling her dog Jasper, who was a long distance behind, she sprang forward, and without a moment's hesitation rushed into the stream, and seizing Ada by the cloak, tried to drag her into a part where they could get footing, calling all the time on Jasper to come and save them. Ada clung helplessly to Julia, a dead weight, and it would have gone very hard with both the children, for, despite all Julia's efforts, they were getting into the current, but at that moment the good dog bounded into the water, and seizing his young mistress by the arm, swam to land. It was not more than two yards, but still, without Jasper's assistance neither Julia or Ada would have ever reached the shore alive. Half dragging, half carrying her companion, Julia made her way to the first house in the vicinity, and making one great effort to knock, she dropped down insensible on the step, with Ada, scarcely more conscious, by her side. It happened that the gentleman at whose house they called knew both Mrs. Brent and Mrs. Graham, and sent at once for them and a doctor. His wife undressed the children, and putting them in a warm bed, used every means to restore them to consciousness. Ada was the first to speak, and looking round, she asked for Julia. "She saved me, mamma. I went over the stepping-stones, and Ju. and Jasper pulled me out. I must have been drowned but for her! Ask her to forgive me, mamma, and tell her she is a thousand times more beautiful than I am. She looked like an angel when she caught hold of me in the river."

Very many weeks passed before either of the children recovered their fright and wetting, but on one of them the lesson was not thrown away. There was no birthday party for Ada; and when in the New Year she had all her school-fellows to see her, one quiet evening, she humbly begged Julia's pardon for all the wrong she had ever done her, and declared her intention of trying to become more like in every respect the little girl she had thought "so ugly." Through all her life Ada Graham never forgot that Julia Brent saved her from a terrible death, and she learned the truth of the old saying, "Handsome is that handsome does." H. J. B.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

169. Who was reigning in Judæa when Joseph returned from Egypt with the infant Jesus?

170. What was the present sent to Saul, king of Israel, by Jesse, the Bethlehemite? Give passage.

171. What was the tribute paid yearly to the king of Israel by Mesha, king of Moab?

172. What was the subject upon which our Lord first began to preach?

173. By what name is the Mount of Olives called in the book of Kings?

174. Who is stated to have first discovered mules?

175. What was the other name given to the country of the Gergesenes?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 400.

155. He opposed Joash, the king, in his wickedness, for which he was stoned with stones at the commandment of the king (2 Chron. xxiv. 21).

156. Our Saviour. "From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple" (Luke xi. 51).

157. 2 Chronicles xxi. 12—16.

158. The wife of Pilate (Matt. xxvii. 19).

159. Huldah, the prophetess (2 Kings xxii. 14, and 2 Chron. xxxiv. 22).

160. Ornan and his four sons (1 Chron. xxi. 15—20).

161. Because in relating the incidents which occurred there, he says, "*We* endeavoured to go" (Acts xvi. 10).

162. "And Joseph bought *all* the land of *Egypt* for Pharaoh: for the Egyptians sold every man his field because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's" (Gen. xlvii. 20).



(*Drawn by* H. C. SELOUS.)

THE "STILL SMALL VOICE."

WRESTLING in direst agony,
Grief thrilling through my breast,
Hear me when, Lord, I cry to Thee,
And give me rest.

Help me, O Lord, the path to choose,
Guide Thou my steps aright,
Till, journeying on, my way I lose
'Mid realms of light!

And, lo! an answer swift I hear,
To help me in my choice;
For, whispers softly in my ear,
"A still small voice!"

Voice sweet, yet one that never yields
Bidding me choose aright!
To leave the bright and sun-lit fields
For shades of night!

To give up all that is most dear,
And bend 'neath load of woe;
To suffer many a sorrow here,
Much grief to know!

O Lord, guide Thou mine erring way,
Help me in this my choice;
That I, Thy messenger, obey
The "still small voice!"

G. W.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.—ROBINSON CRUSOE AND HIS MAN FRIDAY.

"NO, Dorothy, you foolish little maid, I never forgot you," he said, "though it was so long before I wrote;" and they walked on through the summer fields.

They were such happy days for her, those in which, for a little while, she lived within her dream-castle. She had forgotten her disappointment in not meeting him first, her half-unconscious jealousy of Netta, and her longings for beauty—forgotten everything save that Adrian Fuller had come home, and that he was her friend and companion again, just as in the happy days of old.

He was a handsome man, tall and fair and well made, with all the tone and colour which George Blakesley had lacked. Yes, decidedly a handsome man, an artist by profession, and full of vague ideas and indolent dreams. A man who was capable, and felt his capability, and so was satisfied. He could not rouse himself to do more than feel this; he so delighted in the summer and the long days of sunshine, and the evenings of shadow and twilight, and it was so pleasant to stroll about with Dorothy leaning on his arm, ready to talk or be silent, to walk long miles through the tall grass and flowery green lanes, or to sit under a tree, or linger about in the picturesque old garden, dreamily talking of books (poets and love stories usually) and trees, and all that appealed to his artist nature and the girl's love of beauty.

She never forgot those first days of his return, the days in which her father was at the office all day, for he was worried about matters there, and had little time for home; and Mrs. Woodward was away, for Colonel Wade was very ill, dangerously so, and had sent for his daughter at last; and Netta was a close prisoner to her grandfather's house. Tom went to his work, and Will and Sally to their lessons, so Dorothy had it all her own way. Adrian Fuller had finished his two years' work, and wanted a rest, he said, and was glad to return to his old haunt at Hampstead, and spend his days with his former playmate. No one interfered or considered for a single moment how dangerous it was for this girl, who could hardly be called a woman yet, to pass hour after hour in the society of a handsome fascinating man, who found time hang upon his hands. The end of it all, or that there would be anything to end, was a thing no one troubled about. Dorothy was always hanging about, reading books or sitting under trees, her mother said, and she saw no harm whatever in her doing so in company with Adrian Fuller; they had known each other for years, and he was like one of the family; besides, she was hardly aware, much less concerned, about the state of things, for she was at her father's house. As for Mr. Woodward, he was only too glad that there was some one who could talk to his daughter and direct her reading, and be there to discuss the affairs of the nation with him when he returned home of an evening.

"I thought you *had* forgotten me," she said, and added, half laughingly, for her jealousy had quite vanished, "you know I am not pretty like Netta, and you never drew my portrait."

"But I shall some day, when I want a womanly little face and a broad low brow like Dorothy's," he answered, looking into the clear brown eyes.

She was so happy as she walked beside him, swinging her hat, upon his arm, along the lonely picturesque paths that may even yet be found beyond Hampstead, that the expression upon her face made it one that might almost be called beautiful. He wondered at it, little realising how much he had to do with it.

"And if I did draw Netta's portrait, I have lost it, remember, but I took care of the rose. I, too, never let any one take Dorothy's place, remember, and she let Blakesley, or whatever his name was, take *my* place."

"Oh, I never did!" she answered, and her eyes filled with tears; "I never, never did, indeed, Mr. Fuller!" She had never called him by his Christian name in her whole life.

He sat lazily down under a tree, and motioned her to do the same, laughing the while at her vehemence. "I was only teasing you," he said. "Now sit here and tell me about him."

"No, not now," she pleaded; "let us read a little while."

He threw off his cap, and opened his book, and she hers, and so they sat silent, but contented and happy in the way they liked. He, because he was enjoying the summer and the sun and the freedom from work, which he had not known for two years past; yes, and he liked being with his old friends again, and to tease Dorothy—he was fond of Dorothy in his way, she was such a nice child, he thought, and such a pleasant companion, and he was so thoroughly at home with her. She was happy because Adrian Fuller was there; and the summer, and the sun, and the trees she loved, and the books she read, and all else that appealed to her were simply as the setting of a jewel, or the frame of a picture, or the landmarks of a garden in which those sweet June days were passed.

"Now tell me what the hero Blakesley was like," he said. This was in the evening time, when they were in the garden. Mr. Woodward was still at the office, but Tom was home, and sat trying to remember how many locks there were on the river between Oxford and London. Will and Sally were together, the former learning his lessons, the latter drawing grotesque figures, as usual. "First, what did he look like?"

"Washed out," said Tom, looking up.

"He didn't!" said Dorothy, indignantly.

She had a feeling of gratitude towards her old admirer; for had he not been the one person in the world who had told her in spoken words that he loved her?

"Yes, he did," persisted Tom, who had never cared about the interloper, in spite of what he had done for him. "He had a faded-looking beard, dull yellow hair, and a washed-out complexion."

"He was very clever, though," began Dorothy.

"That's right, Dorothy, stand up for him!" laughed Adrian Fuller, amused at the scene; but she moved away offended, and going to the end of the garden, stood looking over the fence at the hazy distance, as she had one night long ago. He soon followed her. "I like you for standing up for him, you silly child," he said; "you needn't get angry. Now tell me about him yourself."

"He was very clever."

"More so than I am?" he said.

"Oh no," she said, looking up quickly; "and he was very fond of work. Are you, Mr. Fuller?"

"No, I detest work. I like to dream my time away; and though I can conceive a dozen wonderful pictures and delight in beholding studies for them and in planning them, yet I hate the labour involved in painting them."

"I hate work too," she said, almost thankful to be able to express her views; "and I cannot always see the use of it."

"No, nor I," he answered. "If I had two hundred a year I would never do a stroke. I have no patience with men who go on earning money to supply themselves with luxuries. I'm thankful that I have simple tastes; and in the country, or by the sea, the common inheritance of all human beings, and a luxury for which none have to pay, I should be quite happy to read, and dream, and stroll, and so pass my life."

"Oh, so should I!" she said, feeling all her sympathies go out to him; for he had so exactly described the life she would have thought blissful beyond all other in this world. Poor, thoughtless little Dorothy!

"I think sometimes I shall work hard for a few years, in order to put by just enough to do this. Then I shall take a cottage somewhere, and live like Robinson Crusoe."

"Till Man Friday comes," she said, turning her face away; for this plan of his included no other human being, she thought.

"You shall be the Man Friday," he said, without for a single moment thinking of the light in which his words would be taken. Her head drooped a little lower as she bent over the fence, that was all. It seemed so natural that he should say this, and she did not dream of taking it in any other sense but one. It was what she had been waiting for since the morning that Venus was buried, the thing which she had felt would be, and which her mother and Netta had thought impossible. "You shall be the Man Friday, Dorothy," he repeated.

"Yes," she said, simply.

"Unless Blakesley cuts me out again," he laughed, little thinking that he was talking to a child and being listened to by a woman. "But I don't believe he will," he added, carelessly.

"No," she said. He went in soon afterwards; for Mr. Woodward came home, but Dorothy stayed there still, till looking round, she saw the sycamore-tree, and made her way to the rickety seat beneath it, then she put her hands over her eyes, and swayed to and fro in the twilight. "Oh, I am so happy!" she said, softly and gravely, to herself; "I am so very happy!"

(To be continued.)

CHRISTIAN GRACES.

BY THE REV. G. A. CHADWICK, M.A., RECTOR OF ARMAGH.

PRAYERFULNESS.

"Continuing instant in prayer."—Rom. xii. 12.

THIS paper is not concerned to deal with objections urged by sceptics against prayer. They bid us look at the firmly settled order of the universe, and blush for our belief that human prayers can alter the machinery of existence. We reply that we never ask to alter the machinery, but only the results of that machinery, only the train of events which is continually altered by requests made to our fellow-mortals. We grant that successful prayer would be impossible if it implied the conception of a God striking down upon His world at uncertain intervals from outside the universe, but if He is as much within His creation as He is without it, then we should rather blush for the suspicion that prayer to Him need be less effectual than prayer to parliament or to the sanitary commissioners. These can alter, very materially indeed, what some people think to be too regular for God to interfere with.

For Christians it is enough to find that two kinds of prayer are recommended and even commanded in Scripture. One is habitual prayerfulness, the other is the exercise of stated prayers. One is a feeling, a temper, a condition; the other is an action which comes natural and easy to that state of mind, and is indeed its voice, its certain result.

Thus, we are bidden to pray without ceasing, and to continue instant in prayer, and St. Paul speaks of himself as praying for Timothy "without ceasing night or day." But we are also bidden, when we pray, to enter into our closet, and even to use certain words.

Let us see (1) how it is possible to pray without ceasing; and (2) how far this is from setting aside the more occasional and formal action.

I. Some there are who smile at the bare notion of ceaseless, unbroken communion between man and God. And there are others who do not smile, but sigh at a command that seems so far above, out of reach of our fallen natures. They will say, "Look at our times of rest, of business, of eating, drinking, and sleep. See how hard it is to keep our attention fixed upon our wants, and upon God the supplier, even in the sanctuary, even when all disturbing thoughts are carefully screened out by the place, the service, and the day. How, then, do you expect us to do always, amid distraction and secularity, what we find it so hard to do at all? The commandment" (they urge) "must be a strong figure of speech, a somewhat exaggerated way of telling us that prayer should be very carefully and frequently attended to."

But no one who truly reverences the inspired Word of God will content himself with such paltry and dishonourable treatment of its deep and far-reaching words. We know a metaphor when we see it; and we know that this is not a metaphor. Pray without ceasing does not mean pray often, and cease to pray every time. It means, let your life itself be a ceaseless petition, not always spoken in words, but always plain and real to the eye, if not the ear, of our Father in heaven. And, mark, that what we are so unready to think possible of prayer, because our souls are unspiritual and dull, is no more than what we see every day in other temporal affairs. You will not believe that you can pray always, because you have to eat, drink, and sleep? Yet you cannot deny that shame or ambition, or selfishness, or love, can lay hold upon the mind with just that firm and unshaken grasp which you refuse to prayerfulness. A man meets you in the market-place and transacts business, upon whose reputation, twenty years ago, some great exposure burnt an ineffaceable brand. He makes his bargain, he discusses politics, he laughs loudly at every passing jest. And yet there is beside all this, and through it all, such uneasiness, such a daunted spirit, such a watchful and unquiet eye, such readiness to explode in unreasonable rage, as proves how that old exposure clings to his spirit, never to be overcome. He does not always think of it, but it always stings.

And here is a man who has one set strong purpose in his life—perhaps a low and selfish greed, perhaps a great and generous achievement. Now surely you can see that central idea colouring his decisions and his words, many a time and oft, when he himself has not the least remembrance of it. For in all he does there is a downright earnestness, decision, unity of purpose, and clearness of thought, that only come from a mind made up, a single eye.

And once more, here is a man whose delight and joy has been long since covered in the mould of the grave-yard. You can tell it—surely you who know him at all can tell it—not only in the still and sacred moments when all that is gone lives again to memory and to the true heart which conquers time and sorrow and death—not only then; it mingles with all his being; it changes the expression of his face even in sleep, and the very tone of his voice and cadence of his laughter have something in them of the sound of funeral bells. You

say, "He has never forgotten," not meaning, surely, that the buried face and silent voice are incessantly present to his eye and ear, nor even to his memory. But there is a place deeper down than memory; there is an unconscious and yet real communion, not of mind with mind, but of spirit with spirit, and soul with soul, while ear and eye and reason wander far enough—and there and thus the living is for ever in presence of the dead.

Or, take some simpler illustration. Look at the perfect confidence of a child's face when he is asleep in his mother's arms, and you will know that even slumber does not cut all communication between the soul and its experiences while awake. Look at the grandly calm expression on the slumbering face of some old saint an hour before his fading eyes open on the splendour of the great white throne, and then at the defiant scowl of the sleeping murderer, whose scaffold is already draped in black, and say whether these are alike, just because neither remembers or thinks of anything. They do not remember, but yet the taint or the glory is on their soul, and therefore one sleeps in the shadow of death and the other in God's marvellous light.

It is plain, therefore, that some things continue with us always, felt or unfelt, by night and day, in sorrow and mirth. They do not hold themselves aloof from our common life like oil from water, they blend with it like wine; and even when you pour in so much of the other element that neither taste nor colour betrays their presence any longer, they are there still. One question still remains. You ask, "Is prayer a thing which can thus mingle with our whole life?" and we can show you that it is. Consider what prayer means. Prayer is not the bended knee, nor the spoken word. It is not even, as the poet says, "the heaving of a sigh, the dropping of a tear, the upward glancing of an eye."

Wherever three things go together, there you have prayer—an acknowledgment of want, an acknowledgment of God's power to supply that want, and an appeal to Him, of any kind, to put forth that power to save.

And why may not the first of these, the sense of want and weakness, interweave itself in the very fibres of our being? Look at a blind man when he least thinks about his blindness, and you will see that every attitude is cautious, every movement guarded; even his sleeping face tells you that the habit of watchfulness, the sense of danger, is still alive. "His loss of sight is always there."

Look at one upon whom some heavy blow has just fallen suddenly, and even when Nature, drugged with woe, softly laps him in merciful oblivion, still an occasional sob will shake him, and an occasional tear steal down his face. The darkness of one, the misfortune of the other, is with him even when he forgets it. Yes! and be sure that when we have rightly and fully learned the lesson of our countless wants—when we have felt our blindness and our ruin—the effects will pass into our very being, will check our reckless self-reliance, will make us gentle to others even without having to pause to actually think of our own sins, and will give a certain child-like meekness and docility to the whole temper and tendency of our lives. And God will mark and requite this ceaseless confession of want, of weakness, exhaling like a perfume from the whole existence of a really humble heart.

The second thing in prayer is acknowledgment of God's power to supply this need. And who shall deny that this part also can go far beyond our feeling of it? In truth, no pious mind can ever exercise itself about any common thing except by means of this belief in God. Tell me, did you ever think of what you have lost—heaven! and of what you have earned—hell! and tremble to remember that God is holy, and that you are a sinner under His wrath and vengeance? And have you now regained your composure, and can you do your common duties in calmness and collectedness of heart? I say then, either of two things has happened. Either your heart has been hardened against the warnings of the Spirit of God, or else it has been composed by learning that God is love, and that your atoning Saviour, having washed you in His blood, wraps around you an all-sufficient righteousness. Surely if, without presumption, we venture at all into a world where every allurement tempts, and over which are spread the wings of fallen angels, of powerful cunning and innumerable foes, our doing so must be through faith in the guardianship of a stronger than they. Just as a good man is truthful from principle, even when he does not stop to think that lies are sins, so his very repose, even if he does not remind himself of it, will be really founded upon the Psalmist's principle—"I will lay me down in peace, and sleep; for it is thou Lord only that makest me to dwell in safety."

Thus his whole life confesses his wants, and leans on God for their supply. And do not these two things imply the third? do they not make up the most powerful of all prayers? The ashy pallor of the face of one who has swooned from weariness and hunger—does that make no appeal, because the lips are motionless? And if mine be the door where he pauses, if the starving wretch has fainted upon my steps, do I not find a special appeal to myself in the fact of his having tottered there?

Even so, Christian, when you are commanded

to continue instant in prayer, the meaning is this—make your life one unbroken appeal to God, by living humbly and by living trustfully, and by living upon the steps of the palace of the king.

Whoever can say, like Paul, "The life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God," that man's every breath is acknowledged as a prayer by God, that man prays without ceasing. And whoever adds to such a blessed frame the further blessedness of such a Christian love as counts the welfare of another equally dear to him with his own, he (like Paul again) maketh intercession for that other without ceasing, night and day.

II. No one who has any such habit of prayer will dream that it absolves him from regular seasons of deliberate approach to the mercy seat. No one reaches this rare height of Christian excellence who has not learned well the lesson of obedience, even to commandments wherein he can see no use. And the commandment to pray with shut doors and stated specified petitions is as clear as anything in the Word of Life. That alone is quite enough.

But, in fact, we can see the reason of so directing us. We compare unceasing prayerfulness to the perpetual remorse of a disgraced man, to the constant firmness of one who has an aim in life, and to the undying sorrow of a bereaved and faithful heart, all of which mix with their whole life. Well! but do you fancy these will endure unless there are seasons when they rise to the surface and come to the fore-front? How long would remorse last without seasons of agonised regret, self-reproach, and shame? How long would the heroic purpose live, unfed with careful plans and high and ardent aspirings? How long would lost love itself overshadow the life of one who did not, in many a lonesome hour, call back to memory the looks and tones of the departed? No longer will vague feelings of want and of reliance linger in that man's bosom who never reckons his wants upon his knees, never counts up some of the offences of the day, nor asks pardon from his God for his Redeemer's sake.

All thanks and blessing be to Him who lets us come before Him with our wants and cares and sorrows! All honour and praise be to Him who, with bleeding hands, tore down the veil that shut us out from the presence of the glory of the Lord!

See to it that you come with no plea but His merit. His suffering, and His priestly intercession. And see to it that through Him you *do* come, and that with boldness, thinking no care of yours too little to mention to your Father, none too heavy to be uplifted by a Divine Right Hand.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 25. Paul Before Felix.

Chapter to be read—Acts xxiv.

INTRODUCTION. We have now traced St. Paul to Cæsarea. He had left Jerusalem for ever. Whom had the city rejected and cast out before him? What warning did Christ utter? (Luke xiii. 34, 35.) Now left to its fate, was soon destroyed by Romans. Meanwhile Paul is a prisoner, waiting for his accusers. How glad he would be of the delay; not now have to make a defence unprepared, as at Jerusalem.

I. The Accusation. (Read 1—9.) Picture the scene: the judgment hall (xxiii. 35) or Prætorium, the residence of the governor, similar to the hall to which Christ was taken. The judge not the high priest but the Roman magistrate, who would be attended by officers, soldiers, &c. The whole appearance of the court more military than ecclesiastical, as at last trial at Jerusalem. Who are the accusers? Tertullus, a trained Roman advocate, instructed by high priest and elders, who are present to watch the case. How does the advocate begin? (ver. 2.) Hoping by flattery to win the ear of the magistrate. What are the three charges? (1) *Disloyalty* to the Roman empire. Let children see that he names this without attempting to prove it, and compare passages in Epistles, to show how St. Paul always taught obedience and respect to those in authority. (See Rom. xiii. 1—7; Titus iii. 1, &c.) (2) *Schism—i.e.*, that he was a ringleader of a new sect. But how would this affect the Romans, unless Christians were disturbers of the peace, which they were not? (3) *Sacrilege.* In what way? Before had accused of profaning Temple, now only allege that Paul was attempting to; he knew he could not prove that he had done so.

II. The Defence. (Read 10—21.) Why was St. Paul glad of Felix for judge? because acquainted with customs of Jewish religion, so takes up the three points:—(1) *Disloyalty.* How long had he been prisoner here? Add to these five days one for the journey, and only six days left of his visit to Jerusalem. Even in those days had not publicly taught or disputed anywhere (ver. 12). How contrary to his usual custom! Yes, but Jews, having hopelessly rejected Christ, were now for a time left to own ways. (2) *Schism, i.e.*, making a sect or follow-

ing for himself. How does he answer? that he believed in same God, same hope of Messiah, same resurrection as they did; and *because* believe in law and prophets, has been led to believe in Christ. (3) *Sacrilege.* What was one object of visit to Jerusalem? (ver. 11.) Besides coming to worship at Feast of Pentecost, came also to bring alms (see 1 Cor. xvi. 1) and offerings such as Moses' law required. Did this look like sacrilege? Then, as cannot prove these things, what does he suggest the elders should do? Did they hear him say anything wrong, unless a hope of the resurrection is an offence?

PRACTICAL LESSONS. Let the children notice, as before, the quiet dignity of St. Paul, as opposed to the noisy blustering of his enemies. What was the secret of it all? (*a*) *Communion with Christ.* The midnight visit would be fresh in his thoughts, and uphold him. How fervent his prayers would be after such a revelation! (*b*) *A conscience at rest.* (See ver. 16.) Trains himself to keep conscience clear. Had many temptations and trials, but overcame in strength greater than his own.

III. A RESPITE. (Read 22—27.) What did Felix determine? But Lysias never did come. What might he be afraid of? (xxii. 29.) So kept him in custody: for how long? (ver. 27.) Picture the apostle now in detention, probably in some private house, in charge of a centurion; friends allowed to visit and minister to his wants. Is there any change in his life? We shall see. One day Felix brings home a new wife; who is she, and what is her religion? With woman's curiosity, wants to hear the preacher of the new sect; so the prisoner comes in. Does he flatter the governor and his bride? does he plead for himself? No, appeals to their consciences, and warns of judgment. How did Felix take it? what did he say?

PRACTICAL LESSON. The danger of only hearing without acting. We are always hearing about God and Christ from parents, teachers, pastors, &c., in tracts, sermons, classes, &c., often are unpleasant, put away thought; delay. Show awful danger of delay; are nearing pit, being carried down stream, &c., yet delay to lay hold of safety. What is it? No other way — repentance towards God, faith in Jesus Christ. Who will begin to-day?

Questions to be answered.

1. What accusations were made by Tertullus?
2. How were they answered?
3. What was the secret of Paul's quiet calm?
4. When did he and Felix meet again?
5. What did St. Paul preach about there, and with what effect?
6. What does it teach us?

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ancient cockatoo was undoubtedly very dear to poor Mrs. Parry, as much from the associations connected with him as from his private virtues; but she turned a deaf ear to all his grumbling statements, that "cockie" did not approve of railway travelling, in order that she might bestow her entire attention on Mary Trevelyan, to whom all her warmest affections had long since been given.

The gleam of brightness which Bertrand's question as to the white rose had called forth soon passed from Mary's sweet face when she found herself being borne away from him to enter on her new strange life, knowing that even her kind old nurse would, in a very few hours, disappear altogether from her sight. There were two stout gentlemen at the other end of the carriage, one of whom was intent over a Conservative newspaper, and the other equally engrossed by a well-known organ of Liberal opinions, of which fact they had mutually become aware when, having entered the train as strangers to each other, they took a general survey of their position. The result was that they made no attempt at conversation, but simply glared upon one another when the process of turning the pages brought them face to face. Their presence, however, prevented the other occupants of the carriage from talking otherwise than in whispers, which was not of much avail in the rattling noise of the train, so after nurse Parry had assured her darling again and again that she should not submit to be parted from her long, and that if the Wyndhams were not kind to her she was "to come right away off to her old nurse that minute," they gradually subsided into silence, and Mary lay back with a passive sense of being borne away into unknown regions by that power of destiny which we are so utterly helpless to resist.

It was a long, somewhat tiresome journey, which had but one moment of painful excitement, when they reached the point where Mrs. Parry was to leave her in order to return on the route to London. Bertrand had discovered, by a skilful study of Bradshaw, that it would save the good woman many hours' travelling if she left Mary at the station immediately preceding that nearest to Chiverley itself; even Mrs. Parry was obliged to confess that no harm was likely to happen to her charge in the short

interval between the two stations, so she reluctantly consented to leave her at the first, and it was, perhaps, fortunate for them both that the time allowed for the stoppage of the train barely sufficed to land Mrs. Parry and the cockatoo and the multifarious packages in safety on the platform, so that one hurried embrace was all that could pass between her and her "precious treasure," as she called her nursling, in that last sad moment. Another instant, and Mary was speeding on alone, cut off finally, for the time at least, from all associations with the happy life of her youth. It was evening, but still daylight, when at last the train drew up at the little country station to which she was bound. It was a mere wooden shed, guarded by a single porter, and with a rustic gate leading out into what appeared to be a purely rural district. Mary looked round anxiously when she stepped from the carriage, having heard from Mr. Wyndham that she would be met at this point, although she did not know by whom.

One individual only was on the platform besides the solitary porter, this was a tall grey-haired man in the dress of a clergyman, who stooped very much, and had a careworn subdued expression of face, which did not light up into the smallest animation as the train came in. He moved with a slow languid step towards Mary, who was the only passenger that alighted at the little desolate place, and, lifting his hat, said, "Miss Trevelyan, no doubt. I am Mr. Wyndham."

"It is very kind of you to have come to meet me," she said.

"I have brought the basket-carriage to take you to Chiverley," he answered, in the same slow indifferent manner. "There is no other conveyance that could have taken you. I suppose you have luggage; it must be left to come by the carrier's cart," and he moved away to make arrangements with the porter, who was hastily disinterring Mary's boxes from the heap of luggage in the van in order to let the impatient guard carry on the train. While Mr. Wyndham was absent on this mission, Mary moved towards the little gate, through which egress was given to the road, and suddenly stopped, struck more than she had ever been in her life before by the appearance of a figure which suddenly presented itself before her eyes. An old shabby basket-carriage was standing near the gate, with a depressed-looking pony harnessed to it, and standing by the animal, with one hand on his shaggy mane, was the most beautiful young woman she had ever beheld. We have used the term beautiful, because the impression of beauty was distinctly that which was conveyed by the whole aspect of the singularly attractive person on whom Mary Trevelyan's eyes had now fallen for the first time in her life, but it would have been hard to have said in what the fascination of the bright piquant face consisted. It was evident that she was not in her first youth by any means. She had all the appearance of being seven or eight-and-twenty, and from the lightness and grace of her figure she probably looked younger than she really was; her features were not symmetrical, nor were her eyes remarkably large, but they were almost startling in their singular brightness, and full of a vivid light which seemed to flash from them whenever they moved. They had the power of giving intensity and meaning to their expression which, as Mary came to know later, never failed of its effect on those towards whom they were turned. Her complexion was dazzlingly fair, contrasting strongly with the lovely rose-tint on her cheek. Her hair, which was all drawn back from her face and left to fall in waving masses from the band of blue ribbon by which it was loosely tied together, was distinctly blonde, but with all sorts of capricious shades of gold and bronze running through it to give it colour and warmth, and there was a witchery impossible to describe in the curve of her softly smiling lips, in the gleam of her brightly glancing eyes, and the play of expression on her mobile face. She was not tall, but perfectly proportioned, with the daintiest little hands and feet and a lithe pliant figure, which looked peculiarly slight and delicate from the airy grace of her movements. She wore a hat coquettishly looped up on one side so as to display the exquisite contour of her cheek and the rings of burnished gold, into which the unrestrained naturally curling hair had formed itself round her slender throat; her short summer dress, freely displaying the miniature boots she wore on her pretty feet, was made of simple materials, but with such admirable taste that it enhanced in no small degree the singular attractiveness of her appearance. If she had been painted on an artist's canvas as she appeared before Mary at that moment, with every line faithfully rendered, it is probable that any one seeing the picture would have said there was nothing in her actual face or form to warrant the statement which, however, might be made with perfect truth, that she was one of the most fascinating-looking women it is possible to conceive; but no man ever met Laura Wyndham's speaking gaze, and saw the flash of her smile light up her bewitching face without being subjugated more or less by the charm she possessed, and which could not be described even by those who felt it.

For at least five minutes, while Mr. Wyndham was wearily instructing the porter what to do with the luggage, Mary Trevelyan stood and looked at this strangely beautiful vision in a sort of bewildered admiration, and it was not till the clergyman's slow approach roused her from her reverie, that she perceived how completely she herself had been scanned from head to foot by the far keener scrutiny of the bright piercing eyes that darted their glances full on her face.

The porter now came up and took her ticket—a



(*Drawn by* W. SMALL.)

"'My daughter!' he continued, waving his hand towards the pretty figure at the pony's head."—*p.* 442.

duty which he was very seldom called upon to perform at this retired station, and then Mr. Wyndham held the gate open for her, and she passed through towards the carriage.

"My daughter," he continued, waving his hand towards the pretty figure at the pony's head, and, with a light rapid step, Laura Wyndham came towards her, and held out her hand.

"I am very glad to see you, Miss Trevelyan; but it is hardly possible, for your own sake, to bid you welcome to Chiverley, considering what a doleful place it is."

Mr. Wyndham cast a deprecating glance at his daughter; but meeting the full gaze of her bright eyes in return, he apparently checked some expostulation he was about to utter, and turning to Mary he helped her into the little carriage, while Laura sprang lightly as a bird on to the step, and poised herself on a little seat at the back.

"I am afraid I have taken your place," said Mary, with her gentle courtesy. "I am so sorry; you will not be comfortable there."

"Oh dear yes! This elegant wooden seat is intended for the use of a foot-boy; but we do not possess so magnificent an appendage, therefore I may as well profit by the luxuries provided for him, and it has the advantage of enabling me to keep the station in sight as long as possible, which is decidedly desirable, as it is the only token we have that we are living in a peopled country at all."

Her light scoffing tone was very foreign to Mary's natural disposition, yet she was conscious that there was a certain charm in the outspoken recklessness of Laura's manner. They had started by this time, the pony going at a slow jog-trot, flinging his head from side to side all the way, as if he too were perfectly reckless and indifferent to all the vicissitudes of life. Mr. Wyndham held the reins, and gave them an occasional shake, of which the pony took not the slightest notice, while he himself sat silent, in a stooping posture, with his head bent down; once he seemed to make an effort to be polite, and, pointing to a little hamlet further on, through which the road would apparently lead them, told Mary it was Chiverley village.

"You have a population then," she said, with a smile, to Laura, who returned the glance, saying, "Yes, a population of aborigines, who might very well rank with the ancestral gorillas, from whom they are clearly descended."

"Laura, my dear," said Mr. Wyndham, timidly, "I fear you will prejudice Miss Trevelyan against Chiverley before she has even seen it."

"Perhaps you will try, then, whether your own private views respecting your cure of souls will prove more enlivening," said Laura, and, composedly turning her back on her father, she appeared to ignore his existence for the remainder of the drive.

"My daughter finds Chiverley very dull," said Mr. Wyndham, in a depressed tone, "and I am afraid you may feel the same, Miss Trevelyan."

"I like living in the country," she answered, "I have always been accustomed to it;" and very little more was said while they drove on through a tract of country which seemed certainly rather bleak and deserted, till they reached the village. It consisted of two or three rows of dilapidated-looking cottages, with untidy children, miserably clad, playing round the doors; there was no sign of church or schoolhouse in it. A sharp turn up a steep lane led them to a gate, leading into grounds that would have been pretty, shaded as they were by fine old trees, if they had not been in a state of complete neglect, and at a little distance within them, on a height, stood a substantial stone house, which Mr. Wyndham informed Mary was Chiverley Rectory, and her future home.

CHAPTER XII.

It was almost dark by the time Mr. Wyndham's pony-carriage stopped at the door of Chiverley Rectory, and the lamps were lit in the little hall and in the sitting-room, of which the door stood wide open. Laura Wyndham jumped down unaided, before her father had assisted Mary to alight, and, entering the house with her light quick step, she bounded away up the stairs, as if she had no concern whatever with the new guest or with the arrangements of any person but herself. Mr. Wyndham left the depressed pony standing unguarded at the door, while he led Mary into a small shabbily-furnished drawing-room, where an indolent-looking elderly lady was reclining in an easy chair, and introduced her as Mrs. Wyndham. She was not an attractive person certainly, either in appearance or manners, with heavy eyes and a faded meaningless face, which was only redeemed from being really unpleasant by its look of easy good-humour. She was carelessly and badly dressed, but she looked like a lady, and, having slowly reared herself out of her chair to greet Miss Trevelyan and asked her to sit down, she let herself sink back into it again, as if the exertion had been too much for her. A small table stood by her side, on which was a cup of tea and a plate of eatables of some kind, the consumption of which she resumed while she carelessly asked Mary a few questions as to her journey.

"I thought you would have waited tea for Miss Trevelyan, my dear," said Mr. Wyndham, uneasily.

"So I did," she answered; "do you not see it ready on the table there, and I told the young men they need not come in for it till nine o'clock, but I could not wait myself, that was quite impossible—where is Laura?" she continued, calling out to Mr. Wyndham as he was turning to leave the room with the air of a man who had accomplished an oppressive duty.

"Gone up-stairs I believe."

"Well, I do think she might have waited to take Miss Trevelyan to her room; but it is always the way, she pleased herself of course. Call Sally as you pass the kitchen stair, Mr. Wyndham; she must do it." He went out meekly to execute the order, and Mrs. Wyndham occupied herself with her tea till a red-cheeked country girl appeared, whom she desired to conduct the lady to her room.

"You will find tea ready when you have changed your dress," she added to Mary, and the visitor, feeling somewhat disconsolate at her reception, followed the servant along the passage and up the stairs to a small plainly-furnished bed-room, where her boxes had already been deposited. Her first impulse was to walk to the window, and she saw that it presented a wide landscape of moorland and hill, over which her thoughts flew fast to the distant train that was even then bearing her one love down to Dover, from whence he would soon place the sea between herself and him. A choking sensation in her throat warned her that she must not indulge in these reflections now if she wished to meet her new friends cheerfully, and, with the quiet strength which was one of her chief characteristics, she drove back all sad recollections or forebodings, and prepared to join the family of which she was to form a part henceforward.

No one came to conduct her down, and she made her way by herself to the sitting-room, in the course of a few minutes. She found the whole party assembled; Mrs. Wyndham retained her former place, and having finished her own meal, she sat, with half-shut eyes, watching the rest of the family engaged on theirs. Laura was placed at the head of the table pouring out the tea, and now that she had removed her hat, and the lamp-light fell on her bright animated face and the pretty disorder of her fair curling hair, she looked certainly one of the most charming visions it was possible to conceive. She seemed in gay spirits, talking in a caressing melodious tone to two young men who sat on each side of her, and darting the eloquent glances of her sparkling eyes from the one to the other with apparently very impartial coquetry.

Mr. Wyndham was seated at the other end of the table, taking his tea with as melancholy an air as if it were the last meal before his execution; but he rose to place a chair for Mary as she came in, and named the two young men to her as his pupils and the inmates of his house—Charles Davenant and John Pemberton.

The first-named seemed about one-and-twenty, rather under-sized, but with a well-knit, vigorous frame—a round good-humoured face, merry hazel eyes, and hair of a sufficiently ruddy tint to be called red by his enemies, if he had any, which seemed extremely unlikely. The other was a complete contrast to him, very tall and strongly-built, with a somewhat ungainly figure, large features, very black hair, which hung down over his low broad forehead, and bushy eyebrows, from under which his dark eyes looked out with somewhat of the wistful gaze we see in those of a Newfoundland dog; he was evidently at least two or three years older than his companion.

Mary Trevelyan became conscious, as she took her place quietly at the table, that she was the object of very keen scrutiny on the part of Mr. Davenant, who looked long at her sweet white face and deep grey eyes, with a gaze which was certainly not one of disapproval; but John Pemberton never so much as glanced towards her. With his whole soul in his eyes, he was entirely absorbed in watching Laura, whose every movement he followed with the same sort of adoring gaze with which the fire-worshipper traces the dazzling course of the sun through the Eastern heavens. Laura continued her conversation with them both so soon as the new-comer was seated, and supplied with tea; but it was with no small astonishment that Mary heard the familiar and endearing terms in which she addressed the young men, "dear Charlie" and "dearest John" being introduced into every sentence she spoke. Laura instantly detected Miss Trevelyan's look of surprise, and replied to it just as composedly as if her guest had spoken aloud.

"I am Charlie and John's adopted sister, Miss Trevelyan, and of course I treat them in every respect as my brothers."

"Yes, there are all sorts of curious relationships amongst us here, which it will take you some time to understand," said Charlie, looking across the table to Mary with a comical smile.

"Don't be mischievous, sir," said Laura, flashing round her brilliant eyes upon him. "Come, you have to tell me all you have been doing to-day while our miserable pony was dragging us at a snail's pace to and from the station."

"Where I suppose you dazzled that unfortunate porter into complete oblivion of his duties. The man always seems in a perfect maze when you are there; he watches you flitting about the platform as if you were some wonderful bird with beautiful plumage, who is just going to take wings and fly away. You will cause an accident to the train some of these days, Lurline, and then you will have men's lives as well as their souls to answer for."

"You don't know what you are saying, Charlie," said Laura, but without a shade of annoyance in her voice; and Pemberton broke in hastily, "You wished to know where we had been; we went to get those ferns from the other side of the river which you said you wished for."

"Yes, a six miles walk, and a bog at the end of it, in which John went up to his waist that he might reach a particular plant he thought you would fancy," said Charlie. "Oh, and by the way, Lurline, we came across a curious instance of that very dominion of yours over the souls of men of

which I have been speaking. You must know," he continued, courteously addressing Mary, "that Laura has a passion for flowers, and as it is not possible to obtain any new plants in these parts, except by begging and stealing, she goes into every cottage where she sees a scarlet geranium or a fuchsia, and so sweetly admires it and laments the impoverished state of the rectory garden, that she invariably comes away with the plant, eagerly bestowed as a gift by the charmed natives."

"It is a very good plan," said Laura, composedly; "but what is the instance you spoke of, Charlie?"

"You know that sulky old curmudgeon, Stephen Howlett, who lives in a lonely hut over the river?"

"Oh yes! and he actually has a red camellia which his son brought him as a present before he started on his last voyage, and the old monster will not give it to me."

"But he will," said Charlie, laughing; "that is just the point. He called us as we were passing at some distance, and told us that 'he had been worrited nohow' ever since Miss Lorelei had been there, because he had refused his plant to her. 'I never thought to part with it,' he said; 'but, pretty dear, her can have it, and you had best make off with it, young gentlemen, for fears I changes my mind.'"

"Oh, that is charming!" exclaimed Laura; "I am so glad!"

"Surely you will not take it!" said Mary, with a tone of surprise in her low voice.

"Why not? It will be better seen in our greenhouse than in Stephen's hut."

"It is in the hall," said Pemberton, quietly.

"Yes," said Charlie; "John actually carried it home all the way this hot day, hugging it to his bosom affectionately, as if it had been a baby."

"Dearest John, how sweet of you!" said Laura, with a winning smile, which made the honest fellow quiver with delight.

"Surely you have finished your tea, good people!" said Mrs. Wyndham, with a yawn. "I am tired to death; and I am sure that Mary must be the same; do let us have prayers and get to bed."

Laura shrugged her shoulders. "To bed at ten! primitive simplicity, indeed!" she said.

But Mrs. Wyndham had already rung the bell, and the servants came in—Sally and another country girl of the same type, followed by an awkward slouching youth, who acted as groom and gardener, and who, with the two women, constituted the whole establishment. They trooped out again as soon as their master had read a few prayers in a monotonous tone of voice, and then the family dispersed to bed.

When Mary went to bid her hostess good-night, Mrs. Wyndham looked for a few minutes kindly into the gentle face, and passed her hand over the sleeve of Mary's black dress, with an evident recollection of the cause of her deep mourning.

"I hope you will be happy here, my dear," she said; "but you must manage to find your own amusements and occupations; I am too much out of health to exert myself in any way, and my stepdaughter is always absorbed in her own concerns; if it suits her own self to make a friend of you she will, but not otherwise."

It was not a very cheering prospect, Mary thought, as she went up-stairs, but it did not trouble her, for her whole heart was so exclusively given up to one affection, that it made very little difference to her where she was or how she was treated, so long as she dwelt where the sound of Bertrand's voice could not reach her ear, nor the smile of his blue eyes make sunshine on her path. It was a warm summer night; she sat down by the open window, because she always felt nearer to her one love when she could look out to the skies that were arching over his head as well as her own; and she had just begun to comb out the long waving masses of her dusky hair, when there came a sharp quick knock at the door, followed at once by the entrance of Laura Wyndham, who took a chair, set it down opposite to Mary, and, planting her dainty little slippered feet on a stool, said, "I have come to talk to you; of course you do not want to go to bed yet."

(To be continued.)

CHRISTIAN TOLERANCE.

"For he that is not against us is on our part."—St. Mark ix. 40.
"He that is not with me is against me."—St. Matt. xii. 30.

THESE two verses express the tolerance and the intolerance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. According to the first, we should justly consider Christianity to be a tolerant religion; and many admirers of excessive toleration have based their arguments in favour of such upon these striking words. "He that is not against us is on our part," they say, clearly indicates that active zeal is not necessary in order that we should show ourselves to be on Christ's side; that He himself admits that we are His supporters if only we are not engaged in active hostility against His cause. On the other hand, those who could tolerate no opinion or system of religious thought different from their own, found in Christ's statement, "He that is not with me is against me," an argument in support of their own intolerance. Thus it is

that two extremely opposite views of the tolerative spirit of Christianity have found apparently opposite declarations to support them. I believe that every earnest student of Scripture must feel that the only satisfactory method of really arriving at the meaning of any part of our Lord's teaching, is to put ourselves as far as possible into the position of those to whom the words were addressed. However our Lord's teaching was intended, as undoubtedly it was, for the permanent enlightenment and instruction of the Church, we may be confident that its primary object was to instruct, in clear and simple language, those whom he addressed upon topics of which they as yet knew absolutely nothing.

Let us, therefore, set ourselves to examine under what circumstances Christ made the two apparently dissimilar statements which I have proposed for our consideration in this paper. I commence with that which expresses the intolerance of the religion of Christ—"He that is not with me is against me." Jesus of Nazareth had just performed a splendid miracle: a man who was at once both blind and dumb had suddenly the power given him to see and speak. Performed within sight of a crowd, the object of the miraculous cure living, there to be questioned by any who chose to interrogate Him, there was no gainsaying the fact. The only chance left to His enemies, therefore, was to explain it away. They must admit the cure, but the motive power which accomplished it they might be able to impugn. Thus they sought to persuade the people that Christ had cast out devils by the aid of Beelzebub, the chief of devils. To this Christ replies, "How can such a thing be? It is a contradiction in terms. Can Satan cast out Satan?" And then, having put them to shameful silence, He utters the great moral truth, "He that is not with me is against me." What those words meant then, and what, therefore, those words must mean now, I think there can be, when viewed in the light of surrounding circumstances, but little difficulty in understanding. They declare that in the kingdom of Christ there can be no neutrality, no half-heartedness, no innocent indifference. There are but two kingdoms—Christ's and Satan's—and if you belong not to the one, you must by necessity be a member of the other. Some people think that you may be inwardly indifferent to Christ, and so as you do not express that indifference in any overt act of opposition, you cannot be said to be against Christ. But let us remember that the only difference between an inward passive opposition and an outward active opposition is that the one is visible to man and the other is concealed. Therefore, when we come to deal with a matter in which God is concerned, this difference at once ceases, as the thought of the heart is as known to Him as the act of the life, and so the two becomes identical. Besides, let us refine and explain the matter away as you will, it is almost impossible for man to be really indifferent in regard to any matter. Man is not made to be indifferent. Everything which a man sees or hears must excite some kind of sentiment in him. Now, above and beyond all other objects, religion of any kind is calculated to excite some kind of emotion and sentiment in man, and it must be one of adhesion or opposition. The absence of the one implies the existence of the other. This, then, is the intolerance of the Gospel; it will accept no divided allegiance; it will allow no Laodicea where the lukewarm for Christ or Satan, for truth or falsehood, may abide in safety.

If, then, we look around us at the world and the Church of Christ, and look within us at our own lives, in public and in private, and examine the impulses and feelings of our own hearts, shall we not find many a man on whose lips there is the word of adoration and of praise, and who may be the enemy of Christ after all? There are few, indeed, who would be willing to confess themselves against Christ, but He tells us himself that all are against Him who are not acting earnestly, perseveringly, and lovingly for him. From this, which some seem to think a harsh intolerant view of Christ's religion, many turn aside to obtain some consolation from the more tolerant aspect of Christianity presented in the other passage which we have placed at the head of this paper. Here, it is thought, is some palliation and encouragement, inasmuch as those who are not against Christ are admitted by Him to be on His part. Judging from the immediate circumstances in connection with which these words were spoken, can we for a moment suppose them at all capable of such an interpretation as is often put upon them now? The circumstances were these: The disciples had come across some man who was casting out devils by the power of the name of Jesus. He was not one of the disciples regularly in attendance on our Lord, and consequently these disciples were indignant that any other than one of themselves should perform miracles or wonders in the name of Jesus. They therefore rebuked him for his presumption. They found fault with and silenced one who was doing good works in the name of Jesus. Self-confident in having done well, they make no secret of the matter. They go to their master, and boast of their zeal for His cause: "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us, and we forbade him because he followeth not us." These men knew nothing of the tolerance of Christianity, so their Lord had to explain it to them. "He that is not against me is on our part."

Now let us at the outset observe that there is nothing said here about being for or against Christ

Himself; it is all in the plural *us*. It refers to the corporate body—the Church of Christ, composed then of disciples, consisting now of the faithful in Christ Jesus wherever they are found. Here was a man doing works of great mercy, performing those blessed deeds in the name of Jesus alone, a true disciple of Christ, but doing good after his own fashion. The intolerant spirit in the disciples cannot brook this. It is particularly to be noticed what a strange complaint they made to Christ. "He was casting out devils indeed in Thy name, but (observe his terrible sin) he followeth not us." There was more zeal there for the dignity of their own position than for the honour of their Master. The Christ who will admit no toleration of lukewarmness as regards devotion to Himself, will, on the other hand, allow no intolerance on the part of some who bear His name towards others who bear it likewise. The charge the disciples brought against this worker in Jesus' name was, after all, to his honour, for what was the previous history of the disciples themselves, as contained in this very chapter? What would this man have been doing if he had been following with them instead of doing deeds of mercy in Jesus' name? They had been up on the top of Tabor; Christ had been transfigured before three of them; the body of His humanity had been lit up with a sudden burst of heavenly glory; the two departed heroes, Moses and Elias, representatives of the law and the prophets of the old dispensation, had appeared in glory conversing with the Son of God! Must not such a scene have called back to them all that was splendid in the history of the past, and all that was great in the promise of the future? Must not something of the glory of that scene have remained in their hearts, as the gold lingers upon the cloud after the sun has passed below, and stirred their souls with a wild enthusiasm for their Master? Fresh from such an ordination as that, one would have thought they might have absolved a world from its suffering, but their very first effort, owing to their want of faith, is a failure. They seek to cast out a devil, and they cannot; and when the father brings forward the dumb child, and tells Jesus how His disciples had failed to cast it out, as it were wearied with their want of spirituality and faith, He says, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?" And then, with Jesus, they set out upon a journey to Capernaum, and what is the conversation with which men, fresh from such a scene of splendour and from a rebuke so full of indignation and love, beguile the tedium of the way? A dispute as to which of them should be greatest! And Christ has to tell them that he who is most a servant, he who does most work for Christ and for His poor lowly ones, he alone shall be greatest. Fresh from such scenes and such teachings, these men come upon one working for Christ. He was doing what they had failed to do; he was, indeed, not following with them; he had no share in the failure to exorcise the dumb spirit; he had taken no part in the discussion as to who should be greatest; he had received no rebuke from the great Master's lips. Does it not strike us now what spirit it was that made the objection, and what it was that our Lord rebuked by His answer? The need for teaching such tolerance has not yet passed away, any more than the necessity for reiterating the other statement as regards the intolerance of the Gospel of Christ. There is a deal of spurious toleration and of unchristian intolerance in the present day. Men are extremely tolerant just where Christ would not be tolerant, and they are extremely intolerant where He would have them exercise the widest and largest toleration possible. There is a man, for instance, who, in the name of Jesus, has cast out of himself the devils of lust and pride, and who, by the same name, is seeking to cast these demons out of others. He is a peculiar man; he has certain oddities; he goes awkwardly through society; he is rather wild and extravagant in his religious belief; he is an extreme man, and to polite refined society extreme men are most objectionable. For such a man there is no toleration. He is in the wrong in many instances, no doubt, but his chiefest crime is his following not us. Therefore, for such a one some of us have no toleration to spare. Is not that the way too often with Christians, and is it not only a repetition of the old error for which the disciples were rebuked? Or, there is another man who differs very widely from some others in his religious opinions. Those others, perhaps, hold their religious opinions for no better reason than simply they happen to have been taught them when young. They hold them carelessly, faithlessly, coldly. And yet that man, in Christ's name, has cast out of himself all the prejudices and formalities with which he was imbued, and through toil and suffering has struggled towards the light, and striven, with every effort of his heart and soul, to find out the truth, at any painful cost, of dissevering old associations or renouncing old opinions, and drifting even for a while upon the bleak waves of doubt, the mad storm howling through the rigging, his sails and cordage torn, and no gleam of light to tell him he is nearing that towards which he struggles with such pain and sorrow and toil. For such a one too many Christians have no tolerance at all. Yet, depend upon it, it is for just such a one our Master would have had the largest, most loving, most patient toleration possible. Such may, indeed, not win the approbation of the baffled and rebuked disciple, but if only his work, of whatever kind it is, be

done in Christ's name and strength, and for Christ's honour and God's glory, it shall have the generous approval of the Lord. The great thing to make sure of is that we are ourselves following Christ. We may be of the company of the disciples, and yet spend our time in vain disputes regarding superiority, and be unable to cast out a single evil spirit that has laid hold of us. We may be following with the disciples, and yet all the while keeping the bag, and ready to barter Christ for thirty pieces of the silver it contains. What we want is not to be only with the disciples, but with Christ Himself.

The one thing which is to make us tolerant of others' opinions or practices is, if they are in sincerity and truth following Christ, working miracles of truth and love in His name, following Him after their own fashion, roughly, ruggedly, but yet following Him. That is to secure our tolerance. And, before concluding this brief paper, let us ask, so that there be no mistake, what is this following with Christ? We may follow Him by tolerating not even for a moment anything which is against Him, and reserving all our toleration for whatever is done in the Master's name and done for the Master's sake. Should it not be the earnest desire of our lives to strive not to be against Him who has done so much for us? Is there nothing in the memory of His life to stir us to energy? Does our hearts not kindle with an enthusiasm not of this world at the thought of following with Christ? or do we seem to be ashamed either of the leader or of the cause? I have seen the old soldier's withered cheek glow with a flush of rekindled life as he tells how he followed some great leader to victory. The Frenchman's failing eye lights up with a noble pride as he recounts how he went with the Corsican through the carnage and the roar of battle. And shall not Christian men and women feel their hearts throb with a prouder enthusiasm and their eye kindle with a brighter glory as they recall the bloodless victories won as they followed the red-cross banner of their Lord? In the whole range of human thought there is no more solemn truth than this—"He who is not with me is against me."

BRAVEST OF ALL.

A STORY FOR BOYS. IN THREE PARTS.

PART I.

OUTSIDE the gates of the old collegiate school of Winchbrook stood some ten or twelve boys who had just left their desks, and who were all eager to spend the remainder of their Saturday half-holiday to the best possible advantage without more delay than was positively necessary.

The afternoon was clear, cold, and sunny—just sufficiently crisp with the frost of January to make exercise not only a pleasure, but a delight to any healthy boy who had been hard at work over his books all the morning.

"Come round to the mill-pond!" exclaimed David Maxwell, with his usual burst of enthusiasm whenever a new thought entered his busy brain. "I think it is frozen pretty thickly, and if so, we might have a slide. Suppose we leave our books with old Gates at the lodge, and call for them as we come back?" and he looked inquiringly about him as he spoke, to see how his proposition was received.

Even if there was nothing in the prospect of visiting the mill-pond to captivate the boys, they would have felt almost compelled to follow David Maxwell, because, when he set his heart on doing a thing, he never rested until it was accomplished, and he threw so much energy into his pleasures, that he was generally the first to propose and the first to execute any game that was on foot.

Most of the boys assented, but two or three hung back irresolutely.

"Come along! it will not be wasting time, even if we do nothing when we get there," said one, and the majority were moving in the direction of the gate lodge, where they purposed leaving their books, when David Maxwell turned sharply round to the only dissentient, and said, "Are you going home, Nicholson?" His voice expressed disappointment and surprise, and the lad addressed as Nicholson grew crimson, as he replied, "Yes, I must go home."

"Are you afraid to go on the ice?"

"No, but I promised to get home as quickly after school as possible."

"That need not prevent your coming with us; you will still be going towards home. The longest way round is the shortest way home, you know. There will be no need for you to stop longer than you like; you needn't stop at all for that matter—only do come round with us!"

"I must not go, David," answered Bob Nicholson, with such evident embarrassment of manner, that David Maxwell put his own construction on the refusal, and said, with some annoyance, "Please yourself! I believe, if the truth was known, you're afraid to come, though," and David turned away with a gesture of contempt for any one not joining the expedition to the mill-pond.

Bob Nicholson tried to utter some words, as he stood looking at the group of boys who were clustering round the lodge, delivering up their books, but there was a sudden rising of grief and anger in his heart, which made it impossible for him to give utter-

ance to the thoughts in his mind. No boy of fourteen, who possesses the least sense of self-respect, likes to be thought a coward, and Bob Nicholson felt keenly the hasty remark of his companion, whose good opinion he esteemed, as did most of the scholars.

For a moment he was tempted to follow his companions, and prove, by his deeds, that he could be as brave as the best of them, but, even whilst he hesitated, a bright look came into his eyes, and saying to himself, "Never mind; let him think what he pleases!" he walked slowly, and almost sadly, down the road which led to his home.

As he came to a bend of the road he turned round to catch a last glimpse of his friends, but they had all disappeared, and he was left to his own reflections on the unfairness of being thought a coward because he was doing what he had promised to do, and what he knew was right to be done.

Then, as if a sudden thought came into his mind, he set off at full speed, and with the swiftness of a deer, ran until he reached his father's house, which was an old-fashioned square dwelling, standing in a tolerably large garden. To open the gate, and dash up the path was the work of a few seconds, but when he got as far as the hall-door he paused, and his manner became strangely subdued.

He knocked very gently, and, the door being opened, he walked on tip-toe into the hall and up the stairs. Without pausing, he went into a room which had the blinds drawn down to keep the strong sunlight out, and where stood two beds at opposite ends of the room. One bed was his own, and was of course empty now; but the other belonged to one who was very dear to him, and it was occupied at present.

Bob went over very softly, and stooped down to look at the white face which lay upon the pillow, motionless and sad. He had often looked at it of late, and always with a dread at his heart that the day might soon come when, to his softly-whispered inquiries there would be no response. His voice now was gentle and low, as he said, "I've come back to you, Ned."

The sufferer turned himself wearily round towards the light, and looked up at Bob with a faint smile of pleasure. "I knew you would not be late, Bob; I've been expecting you ever so long!" he said, as he put out a thin white hand over the coverlet to touch his brother's. There was a strong contrast between the strong brown hand of the elder brother and the delicate wasted hand of the invalid, and Bob seemed to feel the great difference as he took the outstretched hand in his, patting it gently the while with the other.

"Is it a fine day, Bob?" asked the little sufferer.

"It's a glorious day! David Maxwell and most of the other boys have gone round to the mill-pond in hope of having a slide."

"I thought it must be freezing, I feel so cold here," sighed Ned, as he closed his eyes wearily, for the changes of weather were only noticed with pleasure when they brought ease to his aching body or warmth to his chill blood.

A bright fire was burning in the room, and Mrs. Nicholson was sitting by it knitting. She noticed the tone in which Bob spoke of the party that had gone to the mill-pond, and she said, "I want you to call at Doctor Bolton's for some medicine for Ned; perhaps you could do that and visit the mill-pond as well, Robert."

A bright look of pleasure beamed in Bob's face as he said, "I think I might do that. Ned wouldn't mind my being away for a couple of hours—would you, Ned?"

"No, Bob; but you won't be longer than you can help?"

"I need not go at all if you feel lonely, Ned; the medicine can wait."

"I would rather you went," his brother said, with some anxiety lest Bob should lose the pleasure of the afternoon; and with a promise to be back early Bob left him, creeping out of the house almost noiselessly, and then dashing down the road which led in the direction of the pond, with an eagerness in his flight which told how heartily he enjoyed the prospect of meeting his companions, from whom he had been obliged to part, in order that he might fulfil his promise to the sick lad at home.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

176. Of what king, only eight years old, is it stated in the Bible "he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord?"

177. What passage in St. Paul's writings tells us that Timothy was once in prison?

178. By what means did Michal, the daughter of Saul, deceive her father as to the absence of David?

179. Quote a passage which shows that the Oriental manner of washing hands, by pouring water on them, was practised in ancient times.

180. In mentioning the various sins which had brought down God's displeasure upon the Jews, what sin do the prophets and rulers say especially caused this?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 416.

163. At Antioch in Pisidia (Acts xiii. 14—51).

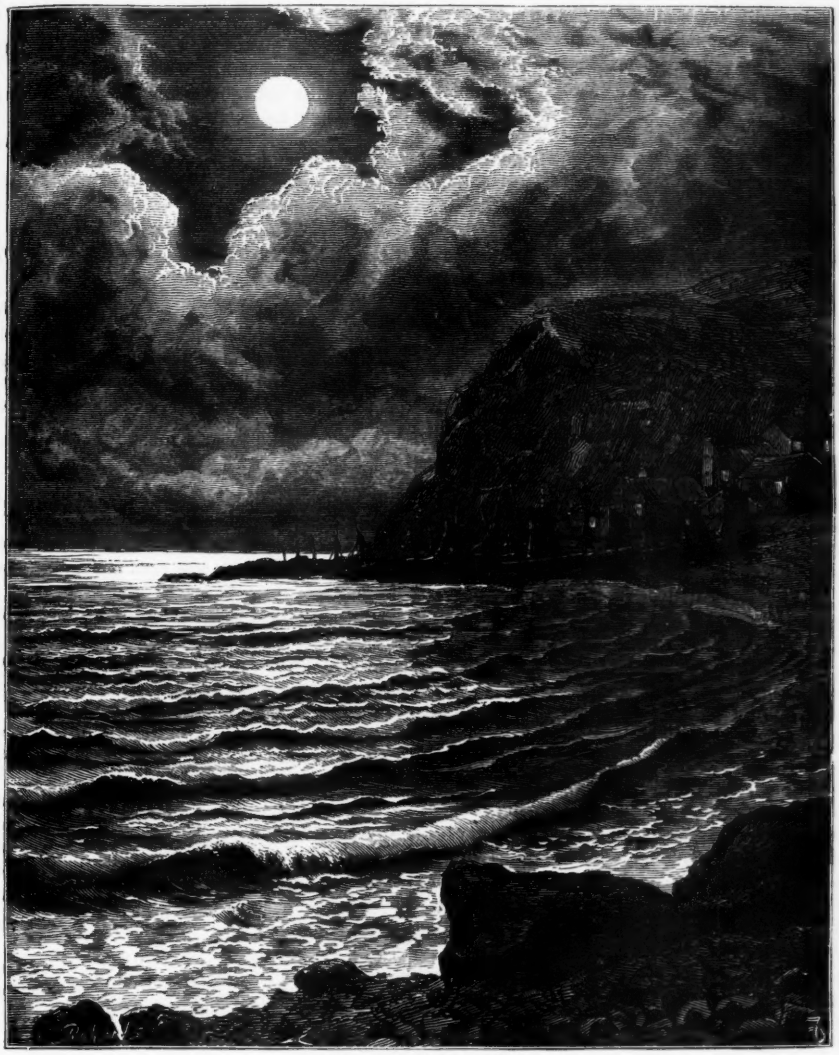
164. Nebuzar-adan (Jer. xxxix. 11—14).

165. Agabus (Acts xi. 28).

166. By not being able to pronounce the *h* in the word "Shibboleth" (Judges xii. 6).

167. "And of the children of Issachar which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do" (1 Chron. xii. 32).

168. "I will bring him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans: yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there" (Ezekiel xiii. 3).



(*Drawn by* F. CARLESS.)

AT REST.

SWEET is the silent night when day is done;
Sweet is the starlight, sweeter than the sun;
And sweet in death the dreamless slumber deep:
"For so He giveth His beloved sleep."

Our eyes wax weary when the daylight dies;
And sweet is slumber to our weary eyes;
And softly do the shadows round us creep:
"For so He giveth His beloved sleep."

The landscape, lovely with the light of spring,
No blessedness to broken hearts can bring,
In which the anguish only wakes to weep:
Wherefore, "He giveth His beloved sleep."

The vain delight, with canker at the core,
The sharp distress, shall visit them no more;
To joy or grief no more their pulses leap:
"For so He giveth His beloved sleep."

In place of pain He giveth perfect ease;
A restful haven after raging seas,
Where angry waves and winds no longer sweep:
"For so He giveth His beloved sleep."

Sweet is their sleep beneath the summer skies;
Sweet is their sleep when storms of winter rise;
And sweet the watch which guardian angels keep:
"For so He giveth His beloved sleep."

But He who gives them sleep shall give them grace
To rise in rapture and behold His face,
When that last trumpet echoes loud and deep:
Till *then*, "He giveth His beloved sleep."

J. R. Eastwood.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.—COLONEL WADE'S WILL.

THE next morning Dorothy and Tom and Sally and Will were all sent for. Their grandfather was dying, and wished to see his daughter's children once before he departed. So, with grave face, and soft steps, they crept into his sick-room, and stood around his death-bed, and took their first and last look of the grandfather of whom they had often heard but never seen; and when the evening came, Colonel Wade was dead. Tom and Will and Sally went back to Hampstead, but Dorothy stayed with Netta, who was fretting, and afraid to be alone. It seemed so strange for those sisters, together for the first time in their lives for three consecutive days. Netta made Dorothy wait upon her, and Dorothy, who could not sorrow much for a relative she had only seen once, and was secretly happy in her own life, was only too ready to do her sister's bidding.

"I don't know what I shall do!" sobbed the Beauty. "No one will ever be like grandpapa to me; and now I shall have to come to that shabby house at Hampstead, unless grandpapa has left me some money!"

"But, Netta, surely you are more grieved to lose grandpapa than your home!"

"Yes, of course I am; but I shall so hate always being there; and it will ruin all my prospects, unless I let my friends visit me there, and then I shall be so ashamed!"

"Netta, you ought to be ashamed of yourself!" said Dolly, indignantly. "You ought only to think of grandpapa."

"So I do; but he is dead, and I live after him, and I must think of my life. If he has left me some money, of course it will alter things, then I could go and live somewhere."

"And not come home to us?" Dorothy didn't want her, but she was indignant.

When Colonel Wade's will was opened, it was found that he had left his grandchildren, Robert and Netta Woodward, each £1,000, to his daughter Mrs. Woodward, £2,000 (which no one ever expected) and his household furniture, and the residue of his property to his sons. So the Woodwards were suddenly rich (as it seemed to them), and their shabbiness could vanish for ever.

CHAPTER XV.—A FAMILY FIGHT.

"It has saved us from ruin," Mr. Woodward said, when he heard of his father-in-law's legacy. "The paper was going to the dogs. Now that we can put this money into it it will take out a new lease of life."

"We are not likely to lose it?" his wife asked, anxiously.

"Oh no," he answered hopefully, and so the money was invested. Netta's money was settled so that she could only touch the interest, but Mrs. Woodward had absolute control over hers, and so, as confident in her husband as he was in himself, she placed it all at his disposal.

After the funeral and all the necessary arrangements were over, Dorothy returned to Hampstead again, and Netta with her; for when the Beauty found that her parents' circumstances were improved, and that all the belongings of her old home were to be used in making the shabby house smart, she ceased to demur.

"I shall invite all my friends to come and see me," she said; "and, of course, I shall marry soon; I dare say Sir George Finch would have proposed before this but for poor grandpapa's illness. I shall miss a great deal, of course, and shall have to dress myself, and all that, instead of having a maid."

"Dorothy must wait on you, dear," her mother said; but Dorothy's eyes flashed. She would do anything in reason, she thought, but she did not intend to be her sister's servant.

They hardly knew the old house when it was covered with Colonel Wade's carpets, and decorated

with his furniture. It seemed another place altogether, all but the study, and that Mr. Woodward refused to have touched, so the cosy room and the faded chintz were left undisturbed.

"The garden must be done up," said Nettc, "then the place will be much more presentable. I should like all that tall staring grass and rubbish at the end taken away, and the grass plot in the centre might have some more beds about it."

"It will spoil the place. I would not have the underwood cut away for the world!" said Dorothy.

"Your sister knows much better about these things than you do, Dorothy," Mrs. Woodward said, reprovingly.

"But it would never be the same if once a horrid gardener came and fiddled about in it. I should never care about reading there."

"You read too much, Dorothy, and get all sorts of notions into your head; why don't you do something more feminine, some pretty fancy work, for instance?" but the tears were in Dorothy's eyes, and she could not answer. Tom did for her.

"Now you look here, Netta," he said, "if you think you are going to interfere here and make the place hot for Dolly, you'll find out your mistake. You may do fancy work yourself, but she isn't the sort of girl to make holes in a bit of rag and sew away at them, and call it embroidering."

"Much better than reading love-stories, Tom, dear," said the Beauty, in her softest tones; "they only put stupid notions into one's head, and make her think she's in love with Mr. Fuller, or he with her, which is *so* absurd."

"I believe he is much more in love with Netta," said Mrs. Woodward.

"In love with Netta!" exclaimed Tom, scornfully. "In love with a kangaroo, more likely!" For one minute the colour rushed to the Beauty's face, but she said nothing.

Dorothy carried the day with regard to the garden.

"Your sister may make the house look as gimcracky as she likes," Mr. Woodward said, when she appealed to him, "but she shan't poach on the study or the garden. What has become of Fuller, Dorothy?"

"I suppose he has heard of our trouble, and has not liked to come yet," she answered. "I dare say he will soon."

CHAPTER XVI.—IN THE TWILIGHT.

Mr. Woodward became part proprietor as well as editor, on the strength of the money he invested in the paper. Another servant was added to the establishment at Hampstead, and Netta invited her friends to call, and persuaded her mamma to be at home one day a week, and fixed the dinner-hour at a later and more fashionable one than previously, and tried to polish up the family generally.

"We will have some musical parties in time, and Dorothy might learn to accompany me, or to play one or two nice pieces."

"I hate pieces one has to learn!" said Dorothy, rebellious.

"So do I," said Tom. "I hate people who go twiddle, twiddle, twiddling all over the piano, and making it sound as if it were a monster rattling its teeth."

"Tom!"

"So I do. Just as I hate people who think it so fine to get up to a certain note, and scream then. What is the use of it? It is not pretty, and it is not meritorious—— "

"What is not?" asked Adrian Fuller, suddenly appearing in the doorway.

"Tom is so absurd, Mr. Fuller, and will talk about things he cannot understand. We were saying that some day, when we are happier, you know"—and she glanced down at her black dress and up at him, with a grave expression on her sweet face, for it was very sweet—"we might have some music."

"You were talking of parties," said Tom, bluntly, "only you didn't like to own it so soon after a funeral."

"Tom, you uncouth rascal, when will you learn manners?" asked Mr. Fuller, laughing.

"I thought you were never coming again," Dorothy said, her heart beating, and her voice choked with shyness, for she felt that since that evening before Colonel Wade's death, she and Adrian Fuller had been on a different footing, but he answered quite unconstrainedly, "I did not like to come before, knowing you were in trouble. I have brought you 'Schiller,' Miss Netta."

"What for?" asked Dorothy.

"Why, to read, of course, you silly child."

"Let's come into the garden," said Tom, who seldom spent an evening off the river, and was impatient of any roof but the sky above his head.

"I don't think I can read it," said Netta, turning over the leaves of the book. "I shall want a dictionary."

"Yes, let's go into the garden," assented Dorothy. "Won't you come, Mr. Fuller?" but he was answering Netta.

"I'll bring you a dictionary to-morrow," he said, "and to night you must use me as one. Yes, I'll come, Dorothy. Miss Netta, shall I get you a shawl?"

"No," she answered, gently, "I am not very strong just now. I shall go into the study, and read."

"'Schiller?' Then let me come and be dictionary." She looked up at him for a moment. He was very handsome she thought. She did not wonder Dorothy liked him, and there was something sympathetic in his manner. She wished Sir George Finch had been more like him; and she wondered if she should ever care much for any one. Perhaps circumstances had been a little hard on her. She had been taught

to think of herself and care for herself; even her grandfather, who had indulged her in every way, had yet been a selfish man, and unconsciously she knew it, and he had taught her to be selfish too. She had been brought up to think money and position everything, and she did think them everything, and yet for one moment, as she looked up at the artist, she understood her sister Dorothy for the first time in her life. "But it would never do for her to marry into poverty," she thought, "especially if Mr. Blakesley will have her."

"Don't you want to go with the others?" she asked; her voice was low, and graver than usual.

"No," he said.

"Tom, we will go into the garden together." said Dorothy; and she took her brother's hand, and they went out. "I wish I had something to care for very very much," she said, as they went down the pathway—that moss-grown pathway which Netta's influence was never to make neat and tidy. "I don't mean a human being, but something that never changed, and one could be quite certain of, you know."

"Why don't you keep a boat?"

"How can you be so absurd, Tom; I haven't any money."

"I'll treat you."

"Oh no, Tom dear, a girl couldn't keep a boat. She might as well keep a white elephant;" and she laughed, with a touch of the old fun which used to be one of the secrets of her popularity with the boys.

"Then keep a cat or a parrot!" But she was looking back at the house, and saw that Netta and Adrian Fuller had entered the study, and were sitting by the window reading the German poet.

They came sauntering out into the garden an hour later, Netta with a shawl wrapped round her, and speaking in low tones to her companion. Dorothy did not hear what they were saying till they stopped in front of her.

"We are talking about the artist-folk, Dorothy," her sister said. "Why is it, I wonder, that, as a rule, they have such beautiful wives? One seldom sees an artist with an ugly one."

"I can understand it," Adrian Fuller answered. "They have a greater love of beauty than the majority of other men; don't you remember Keats' celebrated line— "'A thing of beauty is a joy for ever?'"

"But human beauty soon fades," Dorothy said, gently. "There are a hundred things that have many summers—the simplest trees live and bloom, and are young with every year that comes; but human beings have only one youth, and then their beauty goes for ever." Netta shivered a little, and turned away with a touch of something vibrating through her that was almost feeling.

"It must be dreadful to outlive one's beauty in the eyes of those we love," she said.

"Love blinds our eyes," he answered; "besides, it is something to create a picture for the memory of others, as beauty does."

"Must *your* wife be beautiful?" she asked. She drew her shawl round her, and waited for his answer; and Dorothy stood still, her hands folded almost like one waiting to hear her fate.

He looked at the two girls before him for a moment—at Dorothy, with her black dress hard and grim, and her pale face set and grave, and at Netta, with the white clinging drapery she loved hiding her sombre attire, and twisted round about her graceful figure, and with the golden brown hair forming something that looked in the dim light almost like a halo round her shapely head.

"Yes," he answered, "above all things she must be beautiful!" *(To be continued.)*

THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF THE LORD JESUS.

BY THE REV. T. M. MORRIS, IPSWICH.

VI.—THE WORD OF VICTORY.

"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished."—St. John xix. 30.

WE have now come to the consideration of the sixth word uttered by Christ from the cross—*the word of victory*—of all single words ever spoken the most significant. These three last utterances seemed to have followed one another in swift succession. We remarked, in respect of the previous word spoken by Christ, that it was not to be regarded as an indication of any new heightening of His agony, but rather as a proof that the worst had been endured, and that, as triumphant, he was just entering upon the festal rest of victory.

Here we have the word that announces victory—a word declarative not of the mere fact of *termination*, but of *completion—perfection*. All that Christ came to do and to suffer, has been done and endured—suffering, life, work—all is finished. The work which had been given Him to do, and to the doing of which he makes such frequent reference, is now brought to a conclusion. The full meaning of this word, "*It is finished*," we

cannot fathom; eternity itself will be required to unfold its significance. It declares that all things were actually or potentially accomplished. Christ, the great Captain of our salvation, feels that He has now gloriously triumphed over all His foes and ours, and has wrought deliverance for His people. He reviews His life, and compares it with all that had been spoken concerning it; the life is complete, answering perfectly to the will of God and the predictions of His prophets; it is the one perfect finished life which has been lived in this world. Hanging there upon the tree, about to pour out His soul unto death, to commit His spirit to the hands of His Heavenly Father, all the sufferings of life, now culminating in a cruel and shameful death, pass before Him; and, as he reviews the course which He has pursued from the stable of Bethlehem to the cross of Calvary, He can think of no humiliation to which He has not been ready to submit, no suffering which He has not been ready to endure, in doing that work which He came to accomplish. The waves and the billows have rolled over Him, and that bitter cup which had been given Him to drink is drained to the very dregs. All is finished—He can think of nothing more to be done or endured. And the work itself that He came to perform presents itself to the view of the dying Saviour as a finished work—the head of the great adversary is crushed; the power of hell is broken; the law is magnified and made honourable; the claims of justice are satisfied; the gates of the kingdom of heaven are thrown open; the sacrifice is offered, the atonement is made; the conflicting claims of justice and mercy are harmonised; and God can declare His righteousness in the very act of forgiveness. Of this work, on which all our hopes depend, Christ can say "It is finished." Though the actual crisis of death was not yet passed; though the burial, the resurrection, the ascension, and the "all things" extending on to the end of time, were waiting their accomplishment, Christ regarded them all as completely and certainly involved in what was already done, that looking forward to the future, as well as backward upon the past, of all things gathered into a glorious unity, He can say "*It is finished*"—all is done, all is secured, all is finished, if not actually, yet potentially, virtually.

We are here presented with a subject of contemplation with which we are quite incompetent adequately to deal. Such knowledge is too wonderful for us; it is high, we cannot attain unto it, and the instinct of our hearts prompts us to say, "Come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Saviour."

As we listen to this word, we feel that its vast significance stretches far beyond the reach of human thought—beyond the sublimest flight of the imagination. "It is much too little to say that 'the whole history of the Passion, the entire scope of the life of Jesus Christ, yea, even the whole Bible' is included in it; we must add all the whole history of the world, and of the kingdom of God. *Till* the last day? Oh no, it stretches farther than that! there is nothing lying beyond the reach of this word, not even in eternity, for it speaks of a real τέλος. Here is the centre of the history of the world and the kingdom; this is the expressed idea and substance of time and eternity.

We might, in connection with a subject like this, allow ourselves the luxury of unfettered meditation, being sure that by whatever road our thoughts might choose to travel it would be a pleasant and not unprofitable one. But it will, perhaps, be better for us to confine our thoughts within narrower compass, and consider only two or three of the main ideas expressed by this word, and the more important of the practical lessons taught by it.

I. Then let us consider *What this word declares.* This word, "*It is finished,*" declares *the termination of Christ's life*—the conclusion, the completion of that life which had been visibly lived on earth and among men by the manifested Deity—the model life of the world, the only specimen of perfected and finished life the world had ever witnessed. We may conclude this fact to be unique—that which distinguishes our world from all other worlds, our race from all other races—that here the incarnate God lived and died. Other worlds may have wonders and splendour which ours cannot emulate, but no wonder like the great mystery of godliness, no splendour like the brightness of the Father's glory. It is this which awakens the astonishment of angels, who

> "See in the face
> Of Adam's race
> The nature God doth share."

But in what way are we to regard this life which is now brought to a close and declared to be finished? The life which Christ lived on earth He lived for us. He was made of a woman, made under the law, that He might redeem us who were under the law, and give unto us the adoption of children. He was made under the law that He might obey it, and by the obedience He rendered make manifest its purity and perfectness, and work out a practical righteousness for His people. All human life presents a twofold aspect—has its manward and its God-ward side. So was it with the life of Christ, for though He was Lord of all, He took upon Himself the form of a servant and a Son. He gives us a summary of human obligation under two heads—our duty to God and to our neighbour. We are to love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and strength, and our neighbour as ourself. This is the whole duty of man, and Christ not only tells us, but shows us in

what the perfection of human life consists. Look at His life in these respects. What love had He for His Father! what reverence for His will! His entire life may be regarded as one practical endeavour to do the will of His Father, and to finish the work which had been given Him to do. And if we regard that life on its man-ward side, what do we see? What, but the faithful and practical carrying out of His own great law of love? He was ever going about doing good, denying Himself that He might serve others; feeding the hungry, healing the sick, raising the dead. And in the death of Christ we meet with the highest expression of that love which in so many different ways had declared itself during life—for greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. This life, in which He has fulfilled all righteousness, is brought by the will of Christ Himself to a close, and if it can be said, what has never been said truthfully of any other life, *It is finished*—finished, not merely in the sense of its being terminated, brought to a conclusion, but in the sense of its being *completed*. It is the one life answering perfectly to the mind and will of God—the one life presenting upon review no defect to be supplied, no blemish to be mourned over; it is the one "*finished*" life.

This word declares *that Christ's work—His work of redemption—is now finished. His work is finished, because His life and sufferings are.* The work of human redemption only becomes intelligible when viewed in relation to, and is dependent on, the life sufferings of Christ.

That the work of redemption *could be only accomplished* by the life, sufferings, and death of Christ, we may safely and confidently conclude from the circumstance *that it was thus accomplished.*

Looking upon any human work, we can have no certainty that it might not have been effected in some more simple and less costly way. In the history of applied science we see man gradually feeling his way towards greater and greater simplicity of method, and, consequently, towards increased effectiveness; we see cumbersome and complex arrangements giving place to others simpler and truer.

But when we turn from the works of man to a contemplation of the works of God, we find something altogether different; and in respect of any work of God we are sure not only that it is well done, but that it is perfectly done—that it cannot be better done. We meet with perfect adaptation of the means employed to the end to be secured, and so we have the largest results with the least possible expenditure. We can point to nothing which has been done by God which could have been more simply done. We may apply this principle very confidently in judging of the Gospel scheme of salvation. From the mere fact of God's having delivered up His only and well-beloved Son to suffer and to die, we may conclude that no less costly sacrifice would have sufficed, and we cannot conceive of any more costly sacrifice being offered.

The necessity, the "needs be" of those sufferings and of that death, is constantly insisted on by Christ Himself. This, then, we regard as the great idea which is expressed by this word, that of the work of redemption which had been entrusted to Him by the Father to be wrought out by us, He could regard and speak of it as *absolutely complete and finished*; for everything which was to follow was regarded as summed up and included in this central fact: "By the one offering He perfected for ever them that are sanctified;" and to the completion of this work Christ refers when He says to His Father, "I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." All is now finished. Sin is made an end of, death destroyed, hell is conquered, the power of Satan is broken, God is honoured, man is saved. It is *finished!—all is finished!* All the purposes of God are actually or virtually accomplished; all the prophecies and predictions having reference to the life, sufferings, and death of the Messiah, are now fulfilled. The Old Testament dispensation, with its types and shadows, its law of carnal commandments contained in ordinances, and which was in every particular a figure of good things to come, this has now answered its purpose, and is ready to pass away and give place to something greater and better than itself. No further need for sacrifice now that the one sacrifice has been offered once for all; and the symbolical priesthood may well retire before the presence of Him who is made a priest, not according to the law of a carnal commandment, but according to the power of an endless life—a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Yes, all is done—perfectly done; and the day of Christ has indeed come, to which, for ages and generations, so many events pointed, and for which patriarchs and prophets, kings and priests, waited and longed.

II. Let us notice now *what practical lessons this word teaches.*

It teaches us something as to *the exclusive ground of our faith.* Of the work which Christ came to perform, and on which our hopes for time and eternity exclusively repose, He declares absolutely and emphatically *that it is finished.* By this we are to understand not merely that Christ has come to the end of His work, but that He has brought His work—the work that He came to do—to a successful termination: the work itself is done—is finished.

What a good foundation have we here to build upon! When we look to ourselves and to our doings, we meet with nothing but incompleteness, imperfection; there is nothing to which we can point which in itself is fit to be presented unto God. If the ground of our acceptance were to be found in our obedience, what would become of us? How pleasant, then, is it for us to be able to look away from our miserably defective and imperfect doings to the absolutely perfect work of Christ! Here have we what we could never have wrought out for ourselves—a complete and perfect righteousness, in which an omniscient and infinitely holy God can discover no defect. Should not this work of Christ, which He with His dying breath declared to be finished, satisfy us? May we not rest here in perfect peace? We must rest simply on this work of Christ for our justification before God, or not at all. If Christ have actually done the work and declared it to be finished, what greater indignity can we offer to Him than to act as though His work were not a finished work? Yet thus do some treat the work of Christ; they would add to it, or take away from it; exaggerate here, attenuate there; but Christ will not be a Saviour upon such terms. He will be accepted as altogether our Saviour, or not at all.

From the perfection of Christ's work for us, we may safely conclude that He will finish His work in us. He who hath begun a good work in us will not leave it incomplete; He will prosper that which concerneth us and not forsake the work of His own hands.

Herein, however, have we no encouragement for indolence or indifference. Some would say, "If Christ have done all, what is there for us to do? May we not fold our hands in idleness and sit still?" It is not so. This very word which sets before us the exclusive ground of our faith, sets before us also, in the finished life and work of Christ, a pattern for our imitation. We are not to earn life by working for it, but in the energy of a life freely given we are with all freedom and diligence to serve God. Let it be our aim, when life shall come to a close, not only to be found resting on the finished work of Christ, but found there as faithful servants, who, having finished the work which has been given them to do, have nothing more to do than, at their Master's bidding, cease from their labours and enter into rest.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 26. Paul and Festus.

Chapter to be read—Acts xxv.

INTRODUCTION. We left St. Paul bound at Cæsarea, by whose orders? How long was he a prisoner there? Now a new governor sent to the province. Perhaps he may be more fair than the last, for were the charges against him proved? Then what should have been done to him? Why was he not set free? (xxiv. 27.) Hence, show the character of Felix. What did he do when Paul preached to him? trembled, but did not repent. Now, to please the Jews, wrongs a prisoner. Perhaps the new governor will be different.

I. Paul Accused. (Read xxv. 1—12.) Where did Festus go after three days? Who immediately go to him? How long had high priest been cherishing angry feelings against Paul? Might have thought that the two years' patient imprisonment would have calmed down his malice; but not so. Let children see how unforgiving malice and anger is; here was no great cause of offence, and the person offending was far away, still the high priest and chief of Jews full of rage against Paul. Notice their plan—that he should be brought back to Jerusalem, and an ambush laid to kill him on the road. What was the office of the high priest? To offer the most solemn sacrifices for the sins of himself and the people. Yet this same man is found plotting the death of an innocent man! What answer did Festus make? (ver. 4—5.) So, after ten days, he goes to Cæsarea. Again, the prisoner brought forth, wearing a chain. Signs of two years' imprisonment upon him. Looks feeble and careworn, but still full of vigour in his self-defence. Now the same charges made against him as before. What were they? Can they be proved now, after two years of getting up evidence? Hear his simple and manly answer (ver. 8.) What ought Festus to have done? Surely, if he found him guilty, to punish him; if innocent, to release him. What did he do? Offer him to go back to Jerusalem to be judged. Why would the Jews like that? but would St. Paul like it? Would be putting his head into a lion's mouth. So he does a very wise thing. As a Roman citizen he appeals to the Roman emperor. See the dignity of his answer: he is not afraid of death, he had often faced it. Remind of his being stoned and left for dead at Lystra (xix. 19), and all his persecutions (2 Cor. xi. 25); but if innocent he ought to be set free. As he cannot have a fair trial from the governor, he appeals to the governor's master. Festus, after conferring with his council (not the Jewish Council) is obliged to grant his request.

XUM

PRACTICAL LESSONS. (1) *The benefit of good government.* Let the children contrast these rulers with their own. What have we found them doing? (*a*) *Keeping a prisoner untried for two years.* This impossible in England, where must be tried as soon as possible. (*b*) *Hearing a case and not giving sentence.* This also impossible. If an English jury are disagreed as to a prisoner's guilt, he must be released. (*c*) *Conspiring against a prisoner's life.* In this happy country the worst man has every possible loophole of escape allowed him, and such a conspiracy, were it possible, would load a judge with disgrace. Still, after all, mistakes may occur. Innocent persons have suffered, even in happy England. But can look up to another court. Who presides over that as the great judge? How does He judge? (Ps. ix. 8; x. 17, 18.) And who is our advocate (1 John ii. 1), always making intercession? (Heb. vii. 25.) Yes; and now God is the righteous judge. The wicked may prosper for a time, and the righteous suffer, but all will yet come right, and the future happiness is secure.

II. FESTUS AND AGRIPPA. (Read 13—27.) Paul again sent back to custody. Still in bonds, waiting till it pleases Festus to send him to Cæsar. Where did the emperor live? So has prospect of long journey to Rome. Now he is to have some other visitors, who are they? Herod Agrippa, the son of the Herod who put James to death, and his wife, Bernice. So, one day, during the king's stay at Cæsarea, Festus tells the tale of the Jewish prisoner. See what he says: he had expected accusations of plots and treason against the government, but what was the only real charge Paul's accusers made against him? (ver. 19.) How lightly he speaks of Christ's resurrection! How little could realise what it was to Paul and all Christians! Then he glosses over his own conduct in not giving a decision, by stating doubts as to his power to try such a case. Agrippa's curiosity being excited, what would he wish to do? So arrangements are made for Paul to be brought before him. This interview will form the subject for next lesson.

PRACTICAL LESSON. How does the resurrection of Christ affect us? As Paul was prepared to meet his earthly judge, so must all be to meet a heavenly one. Only one way, conscience clear of offence, because sins washed in cleansing blood of Christ, and heart cleansed by His Spirit. Then can calmly await resurrection and judgment.

Questions to be answered.

1. Who was Paul's next judge, and what do you know of him?
2. What plot did the high priest lay against Paul?
3. What was the result of his trial by Festus?
4. What practical lessons may we learn?
5. Before whom was Paul next brought?
6. What lesson may we learn from Festus' description of the resurrection?

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE moonlight gleamed on Laura's face, on the clear shining eyes, the red arch lips, the rippling curls tossed back, unbound and falling to her waist, while the fairness of her complexion was enhanced by the scarlet colour of the loose dressing-gown she had thrown round her shoulders.

"Well, Mary Trevelyan, I have come to tell you that I pity you very much," said Laura, leaning back in her chair with her arms folded.

"Why so?" asked Mary, half laughing at the quaint address.

"Because you have come to Chiverley, the most dull, hopeless, detestable place in the whole wide world. I wish I could sink it in the depths of the sea. I hate it, I hate it!"

She spoke with a vehemence which almost frightened gentle Mary.

"But is it not your home? you have lived here always, have you not? It seems a pretty country and a nice place," said Mary, "and you have got the poor people in the village to interest you, and schools, no doubt, for the children; if there are no other resident gentry near, you must have the entire care of them, and I should think it gave you plenty to do."

Laura made an expressive little grimace. "Bah! that is not at all my line, if it is yours. There are but two things which I can even feel that I like in this odious place—flowers and music, and there is not much good in cultivating flowers which no one sees, or in singing songs with nobody to admire them but John and Charlie, who have heard all I know a hundred times already."

"I am glad you sing," said Mary. "Music is almost a passion with me; but I do not quite understand about the village, are you not obliged to visit the people as the clergyman's daughter?"

"Who is there to oblige me?" asked Laura. "Duty," thought Mary, as she looked at Laura with her soft dark eyes, but she did not say the word



(*Drawn by* W. SMALL.)

"'You are hardly *her* guest,' said Charlie."—*p.* 460.

aloud, for she was much too meek and gentle ever to reprove others, or to feel that it could be her place to do so.

Laura went on. "Wait till you have tried the life a few weeks, and you will understand it, you are not so badly off as I am, you are only here for one year, I believe."

"Yes; dear Mr. Lisle only made arrangements for the first year after his death."

"And where are you to go when you leave us?"

"I have not the slightest idea, I have no relations, you know."

"But have you no one to help or advise you?" asked Laura.

"No one excepting——" Mary stopped, for an indefinable sensation of shrinking dread made it unspeakably repugnant to her to utter the one beloved name to Laura Wyndham.

"Excepting who?" said Laura, impatiently.

Then in a low tremulous tone Mary answered, "Bertrand."

"Bertrand, Mr. Lisle's only son? I have heard that he had one; tell me about him, Mary," she continued, eagerly, "I want to know everything. Where is he? what is his profession?"

"He is travelling back to his post at this moment, after having attended his father's death-bed and funeral; he is *chargé d'affaires* in one of the Continental towns."

"In the diplomatic service? Oh, that is charming for him! Then he will always be in the way of the very best society, and the gayest brightest life the world has to offer. How I envy him! How I should like to know him! Is there any chance of it, Mary? Could you not write and ask him to come and advise you about the future?"

"He does intend to come here," said Mary.

"Oh, when?" exclaimed Laura, her eyes dancing with excitement; "soon?"

"In the spring—when the violets come," she added, so low that Laura did not hear the last sentence.

"In the spring? that is a long time hence, six months at least; still the weeks will pass; it is something new to look forward to." Laura was silent for a few minutes, then she said, looking keenly at Mary, "I suppose you are very fond of him?"

Even in the moonlight the vivid colour that mounted to Mary's temples could be distinguished.

"I have known him all my life, and he has always been kind to me," she answered.

"Yes, and you look upon him quite as a brother, of course," and the sparkling eyes were bent with intense scrutiny on the pure still face.

"He is not my brother," said Mary, very quietly.

"No, not in blood, I know; but you were like a daughter to Mr. Lisle, and you lived in Bertrand's home. You must have adopted each other as brother and sister, I am sure?"

"I should never wish to establish an unreal relationship with any one," said Mary. "I think that in such matters one must follow God's appointment, and that alone; any attempt to interfere with it I feel sure would be both unwise and dangerous."

"Well, I don't agree with you at all," said Laura; "I have acted on a totally different principle all my life, so you are hitting me pretty hard in saying that."

"I did not mean to do so; I beg your pardon," said gentle Mary.

"Oh I am not offended, neither am I converted; I shall go on just the same in that respect. However, I hope you will hold Mr. Bertrand Lisle to his promise of coming; he will bring us a breath of life from the outside world, and I shall look forward to it immensely."

Mary did not speak, and after a minute's silence Laura rose.

"I suppose you are growing sleepy? Well, I will go and leave you to repose. I advise you to sleep as late as you can in the morning; the days are decidedly too long at Chiverley."

Mary rose to bid her good-night, and Laura put her pretty bright face against hers, and kissed her.

"We had better be friends, anyhow, Mary Trevelyan, since we are thrown together in this forlorn place. Do you think you can like me?"

"I am sure I can," said Mary, warmly, as she returned the embrace; and it was true, that absolutely different as Laura was from herself in thought and feeling and manner, she yet had not escaped the fascination which this strange being had power to exercise over every one who approached her. And here we may briefly say that Laura Wyndham is not a fictitious character; and that if all we have to record of her in the future appears exaggerated or unnatural, we have simply to answer that herself and her proceedings are drawn from the life.

She left the room at last, and closed the door. What was it that caused Mary Trevelyan, so soon as she was left alone, to sink on her knees and bury her face on her hands, while she cried out, almost with an agony of fear, "Oh, my God, I am afraid—afraid!—take pity upon me! I am full of terror—save me—save me?"

We know a case in real life, of a human soul, on a fair summer morning, when the sunny world without was not brighter than the hopes it held within, when life seemed to be securely fixed in a haven of perfect peace and joy, when to the future had been given the promise, and, in a sense, the certainty of all that poor blind soul most ardently desired, and yet to whom in that calm bright hour, sudden as a black thunder-cloud swooping down upon a cloudless sky, there came an awful inexplicable terror of the very sources of its joy and hope, a terror so unendurable that for the moment the impulse to fly then and there away from all it most loved and valued, could scarcely be repressed, even by the very power of its passionate attach-

ment to that which it seemed goaded by this mysterious dread to leave for ever. Well had it been for that soul if it had accepted the warning and obeyed the impulse! but it cast it off as a delusion, and a temptation, and went on gaily over the sunshiny path it might in that hour still have quitted if it would, and it was so, that long years after, the black terrible reality of which the shadow had been projected on it then—a reality which it could never, by any conceivable process, have foreseen, came down upon it with a fell power which crushed the very life well-nigh out of it, and wrecked it fatally for time and almost for eternity.

CHAPTER XIV.

Mr. Wyndham was a striking instance of the fatal power which adverse circumstances can have upon a weak and timid nature: he had a fair amount of intellectual capacity, and had pursued his studies in the days of his youth with a degree of plodding perseverance which had made him no mean scholar; he had always, however, been of a retiring disposition, and was absolutely deficient in moral courage or manliness; if, in the earlier stages of his career, he had been thrown with men of his own age, who would have shamed him out of his want of energy and spirit, his subsequent history might have been very different, but from the first the conditions of his existence were against him.

He was the only son of a widow, who had him educated at home under a private tutor, and who died soon after he came of age, leaving him with so small an amount of capital that it was necessary for him to adopt a profession. He decided at once to become a clergyman; but his choice was dictated by the hope that in this position he could lead a quiet and peaceful life, rather than by the zeal for religion which alone can make a man fit to enter on that holy calling. Francis Wyndham was not insincere, however, though he was morally feeble, and his religious principles were perhaps the strongest elements of motive power which he possessed; but they were not strong enough to withstand the opposing tide of external influences, which soon set in after such a fashion as to reduce him finally to a state of spiritual helplessness and inertness.

Immediately after his ordination, he had the misfortune to marry a silly, frivolous, very beautiful girl, whose sole desire was to enjoy society and amusement wherever she could find it. She swayed her husband so completely, that he was indeed a "reed shaken by the wind," and as he had no settled home when they first married, she compelled him practically to ignore his sacred calling, while she dragged him about from one watering-place to another—chiefly on the Continent—till she finally succeeded in quite exhausting their pecuniary resources. It then became a necessity for him to take a curacy, and to the supreme discontent of his wife, he found himself relegated to that of Chiverley in the Yorkshire wolds. Undoubtedly it was an uncivilised place, very much cut off from the outer world, but the clergyman to whose care its humble poverty-stricken inhabitants were committed might have found ample occupation and interest in watching over their spiritual and temporal welfare, had he been reasonably determined in the performance of his duties.

Although Mr. Wyndham was only curate in charge, he had full authority in the parish, as the real rector was a paralytic invalid, who lived at a distance, and took no further interest in the living than was involved in the appropriation of the income.

The stipend allowed to Mr. Wyndham was very small, and his wife absorbed the whole of it, so that he felt ashamed to go amongst the poor people without being able to help them at all in their great necessities, and his wife did her best to hold him back from all but the barest performance of absolutely imperative obligations. She was utterly without sense of duty, and thoroughly discontented with her position.

When she was at Chiverley her husband was her only companion, and she grudged every moment he spent away from her, but she had an outlet from the dulness of her home, as her sister was married to a wealthy merchant in London, and the Wyndhams could go to stay with her whenever they pleased. So, as often as they could manage, by the payment of some guineas, spared with difficulty, to get a stray clergyman to take the Sunday duty at Chiverley, they started off for London, and remained there as long as they could.

Gradually the feeble remonstrances of Francis Wyndham's conscience succumbed to the mighty power of habit, and when his wife died, leaving him with his one child, Laura, at the age of sixteen, he found that her influence was not only quite as systematically adverse to his profession as her mother's had been, but greatly stronger, inasmuch as she was a far more powerful character.

For her, too, the only outlet from the dreary monotony of Chiverley was the London home of her rich aunt, and she made her father take her there as often as possible, until the death of this desirable relation consigned Laura finally to the narrow sphere where she felt like a bird in a cage.

Her expensive tastes so far outran her father's means that he found himself constrained to take pupils, in order to supplement them; and it was chiefly to make his house a suitable home for them that he married the second Mrs. Wyndham. It was almost as unfortunate a choice as his first, although she did not crave for amusement in the same way as her predecessor; she was indolent and selfish; good-humoured, when to be so did not interfere with her

own interests, but with a mind so restricted and commonplace that she seemed incapable of rising above the consideration of her personal ease and comfort from day to day.

Of course such an helpmeet did but confirm Mr. Wyndham in his hopeless apathy and listlessness, and the only change which her advent made in the household was the excitement of the combat which straightway set in between her step-daughter and herself, but which had not resulted in many passages of arms before Laura established her position so triumphantly as the conqueror, that there was never again a question of interference with her perfect independence of action on the part of either her father or his wife. In fact, perfect freedom of action was the rule for all the inmates at Chiverley Rectory; and Mary Trevelyan soon found that whatever she might have lost by becoming one of this peculiar household, she had at least attained her most entire liberty. She was left completely to her own resources; every one went their own way, and left her to take hers, according as it might please her; and as her natural instincts led her strongly to the wish that she might in some manner be useful to her fellow-creatures, it was not long before she made her way into the village, and began to cultivate the acquaintance of the neglected little children, and, as a sure result, of the parents also.

Up to the late dinner-hour, Mary was always left to herself. Mrs. Wyndham invariably spent the day taking her ease in her arm-chair, diversified by instructions to Sally as to the cooking of various dainties which she afterwards consumed in solitary enjoyment. Laura was generally occupied in her own room with a most voluminous correspondence, which seemed to form the chief interest of her life; and the young men were out of doors or at their studies. But in the evening the heterogeneous elements of which the family was composed seemed to be driven together by the force of circumstances, and the young people would take long walks, or roam about the garden in each others' company. On these occasions John Pemberton always followed Laura like her shadow, so that Mary generally fell to the lot of frank boyish Charlie Davenant, and by the time she had been a week or so at Chiverley he seemed to be the one of the whole party with whom she felt herself least a stranger.

One evening that they had gone rather further than usual, Laura and her companion had turned unperceived into a different path from that by which they had come, and Mary found herself under the necessity of walking home alone with Mr. Davenant.

"This is an excellent opportunity!" exclaimed Charlie, when they had realised that they were really left alone. "I have been wishing so much, Miss Trevelyan, to know what you think of us all. Now do tell me, in confidence!"

"I think you are all very kind," she answered, with her quiet smile.

"Do you, indeed? It is more than I do! There may be some of the outward semblance of kindness at Chiverley, but there is not much of the actual reality. However, what I want to know above all is your opinion of Lurline. I am most curious to know the impression she has made upon you."

"Tell me first why you call her Lurline."

"Do you not know what it means?" he asked.

"Not at all," answered Mary.

"Lurline or Lorelei is the syren witch of the Rhine, who allures men to their death by the entrancing sweetness of her songs. The name is exactly appropriate to Laura Wyndham, and she knows it. I have made no secret of my reason for giving it to her."

"I suppose you mean that she exercises a singular fascination on all who come in contact with her. I have felt it myself."

"Yes; but it is not only an involuntary fascination, though she has that too in her appearance and manner. The witch of the Rhine does not set herself more deliberately to entrance her victims than does our Lurline."

"Victims, that is a strong word!" said Mary.

"Not too strong for the occasion. I know what I am saying very well. Miss Trevelyan, I will tell you frankly that I have a reason for wishing you to understand Lurline which I do not like to explain to you, at least at present; you must let me give you some insight into her character and history."

"If it does not involve my being told anything which I ought not to hear of a lady whose guest I am," said Mary, gently.

"You are hardly *her* guest," said Charlie, with a boyish laugh. "She did not at all want you to come here, I can tell you; though she is rather glad of it now, when she sees what it is likely to involve. However, I do not want to enter into all those mysterious under-currents at present. I simply desire that you should know the truth about Lurline as much as any human being can know it, which is probably not to any very great extent, after all."

Mary turned and looked at the open face and the truthful eyes that met her own so frankly. The boy was speaking with a serious earnestness, which was very unusual with him. He was about the same age as herself, and therefore not really any longer a boy, but he was so young-looking, so almost child-like sometimes in his gaiety, that she instinctively thought of him as one much younger than herself.

Mary had discovered that with all Charlie Davenant's mirth and boyishness, he was both shrewd and right-minded, so she said, gravely, at last, "If there is anything you think I ought to know, Mr. Davenant, you can tell it to me, but I trust you not to bid me listen to anything which it would not be right for me to hear."

(*To be continued.*)

ENGLISH SACRED POETRY.—IV.

THE ELIZABETHAN PERIOD.

WE have now brought our sketch of the history of English sacred poetry to a point where we may well pause. We have arrived at the most brilliant epoch in the literature of the world—an epoch which has no parallel either in ancient or in modern times. The dazzling galaxy of genius which surrounded Pericles in Greece, Augustus in Rome, the Medici in Renaissant Italy, must pale before that which flung its radiance over the thrones of Elizabeth and James. We dwell with astonishment and almost awe on an era which witnessed the contemporaneous appearance of Shakespeare, Bacon, Spenser, Raleigh, Hooker, which produced such men as the Elizabethan dramatists, the least of whom were giants; which gave us that grandest of our national treasures, our matchless, our noble translation of the Bible; which laid the foundation of our literature in almost all its branches—theology, criticism, fiction, biography, history.

In treating of the sacred poetry of this era, it will be well to do as we have done before—to deal first with the sacred poems scattered among the works of secular poets, to proceed then to the sacred poets proper; though, as the materials are so much more abundant, our selections must be more confined and less exhaustive than they have hitherto aimed at being.

Had time been kind to us, the first poet on our list would have been Edmund Spenser, but the fate which has, if report say true, deprived us of the last six books of the "Faerie Queen," has deprived us of a series of no less than five sacred poems, a poetical translation of "Ecclesiasticus," and of the "Song of Songs," the "Hours of our Lord," the "Sacrifice of a Sinner," and the "Seven Psalms;" and of all the many losses literature has sustained, this may rank among the greatest. One of the most beautiful of our early dramas is a sort of semi-sacred interlude, entitled, "David and Bethsabe with the Tragedy of Absalom," a very charming dramatic poem, written by George Peile, and published in 1599. David in one place is made to say, with exquisite feeling:—

> "Thou power,
> That now art framing of the future world,
> Know'st all to come, not by the course of Heaven,
> By frail conjectures of inferior signs,
> But by a true and natural presage,
> Laying the ground and perfect architecture
> Of all our actions before thine eyes.
> * * * * * *
> Transform me from this flesh, that I may live
> Before my death regenerate with me;
> That when I think thy thoughts may be my guide,
> And when I speak I may be made by choice
> The perfect echo of thy heavenly voice."

The subject of the work is a painful one, but the tone of it is singularly pure and dignified.

Ben Jonson has written a few sacred poems, and among them the well-known "Hymn to God the Father," beginning:—

> "Hear me, O God!
> A broken heart
> Is my best part."

The three poems entitled, "The Sinner's Sacrifice" and the verses "To Heaven," are well worth perusal, and prove what a sterling vein of deep religious feeling underlay that great but somewhat coarse man.

Scattered too up and down the pages of the dramatists are little passages which rank among the choicest gems of the sacred muse. Who feels not better after reading those sweet verses of old Dekker?—

> "Patience! why 'tis the soul of peace;
> Of all the virtues, 'tis nearest kin to heaven:
> It makes men look like gods. The best of men
> That e'er worth earth about Him was a sufferer;
> A soft, meek, patient, humble, tranquil spirit,
> The first true Gentleman that ever breath'd."

George Chapman, who is so celebrated for his grand translation of "Homer," has left us a translation of Petrarch's "Seven Penitential Psalms," and a "Hymn to our Saviour on the Cross," but they are, we must honestly confess, rather heavy.

Passing by the various poetical miscellanies of this marvellously prolific age, we come to a great name, which calls up a vision of mingled melancholy and gratitude. There are few sadder pages in biography than those which record the life and the sufferings of one of the greatest of our sacred poets—Robert Southwell. He was born of a good family about the year 1562, and while a mere baby was stolen by a gipsy, who, however, was soon discovered, and compelled to restore the poor child to its parents. Southwell has left a considerable number of poems—the largest of them is entitled "St. Peter's Complaint," and is a lament supposed to be spoken by the apostle, after he had denied Jesus; the versification is sweet and flowing, many of the stanzas are singularly eloquent, and the tone of the whole piece is fervid and intense. His other poems consist of short lyrics, moral and religious. They are all well worth reading, though "Loss in Delay," "I Die Alive," "Life is but Loss," "Times go by Turns," "Mary Magdalene's Complaint," of the "Blessed Sacrament," "Scorn not the Least," "The Image of Death," "I Die without Desert," "Decease, Release," may rank among the best. As we must give selections from rarer volumes, two stanzas from

Southwell must suffice—they are from "Loss in Delay":—

"Shun delays, they breed remorse!
Take thy time while time is lent thee;
Creeping snails have weakest force,
Fly their fault, lest thou repent thee;
Good is best when soonest wrought,
Linger'd labour comes to nought.

"Hoist up sail while gale doth last,
Tide and wind stay no man's leisure;
Seek not time when time is past,
Sober speed is wisdom's leisure;
Afterwits are dearly bought,
Let thy forewit guide thy thought."

In quitting Southwell, we may observe that his prose, of which there is but little, is solid and elegant.

The next poet on our list is Francis Davidson, son of Queen Elizabeth's unfortunate secretary, whose tale we know from history. Of Davidson's life very little is known. In 1593 he was a member of Gray's Inn, and in 1595 he was on the Continent, and there all knowledge of him ends; but it is pretty certain that, like many of the poets who were his contemporaries, he died in poverty. He is principally known as being the first editor of a collection of poems, entitled, "The Poetical Rhapsody," published in 1602. He published, however, a small collection of sacred poems, principally paraphrases of the Psalms, in conjunction with a brother and some other contributors. They have not very much merit, though a version of the twenty-third Psalm is pretty, and may be compared with Addison's.

Contemporary with Davidson, but of a different order of genius, lived Barnaby Barnes, son of the Bishop of Dublin. He was born in Yorkshire, 1569, became a student of Brasenose College, Oxford, but left the University, like many other brother bards, without taking a degree. In 1591 he joined the expedition which was sent by Queen Elizabeth, under the command of Essex, into Normandy, to aid the King of France against the Prince of Parma. On his return to England he became involved in the literary brawls between Thomas Nash and Gabriel Harvey, and has been roughly dealt with in the prose satires of the former. He interests us as being the author of a "Divine Centurie of Spiritual Sonnets, to the Honour of God and His Saints." This very rare volume has only been reprinted once, in a volume now almost as rare as the original. It consists of a hundred sonnets, addressed chiefly to God and to our Lord. These sonnets are written with extraordinary vigour; are full of genuine feeling, and the intensest religious fervour. The following is a fair and typical specimen of the rest; it is addressed to our Saviour:—

"Fountain of life and endless happiness,
Oh, quench these worldly sparks of Satan's fire,
Enkindled in my fancies and desire!
Rock of salvation and all blessedness,
Defend me, charg'd with sinful wickedness,
Spirit of comfort, let thy breath inspire
My soul infected, ready to retire,
And carnal notions striving to repress;
I thirst, clear fountain, for the stream of life.
I fall, far set from my salvation's rock,
And Satan with my spirit is at strife,
Urging that I am sever'd from thy flock;
Yet my dear Saviour, strong rock, and sweet spirit,
Through mercy my poor soul shall heav'n inherit."

But the greatest of the Elizabethan sacred poets was Giles Fletcher, author of "Christ's Victory." He was the brother of Phineas Fletcher, well known to the admirers of our old writersfor his allegorical poem. "The Purple Island." The date of his birth is not known, but he was educated at Westminster School, and at Trinity College, Cambridge. Some time afterwards he entered into holy orders, and was presented in 1612 with the Rectory of Alderton, in Suffolk. There, surrounded by uncongenial companions, in an unhealthy district, but conscientiously fulfilling his duties as a parish pastor, he seems to have pined away, but the actual year of his death has not been accurately ascertained. "Christ's Triumph" is a poem which even Milton might not have blushed to own—grave, lofty, spirited, eloquent; stiff with gorgeous embroidery of classical ornament, rich with variegated diction, but chaste and sustained. It is divided into four cantos: I. "Christ's Victory in Heaven." II. "Christ's Victory on Earth." III. "Christ's Triumph over Death." IV. "Christ's Triumph after Death." In the first canto we would particularly instance the passage where Mercy is represented as pleading with Justice for the redemption of man. The stanza, which describes the effect of the address to Justice, is sublime:—

"She ended, and the heavenly hierarchies
Burning in zeal, thickly embranded, were
Like to an army that alarum cries,
And every one shakes his dreaded spear,
And th' Almighty's self, as he would tear
The earth, and her firm basis quite in sunder,
Flamed all in just revenge and mighty thunder,
Heaven stole itself from earth by clouds that moisten'd under."

Then follows a brilliant description of the charms of Mercy. The first canto concludes with the birth of Christ. In the second canto we have an account of the Temptation in the Wilderness, Satan coming to our Lord in the likeness of an old palmer, "footing slowly." Wandering along together they arrive at the Cave of Despair, which is painted in terrific colours, and with some touches borrowed from Spenser. Our Lord is next transported to a high mountain, where the pavilion of Presumption is spread, thence he is described in a splendid passage as beholding the empires of the world, and the glory of them. Presumption, however, fails to seduce the Divine spectator, and a choir of angels bear Him away to another "airy mountain," where is situated the

Bower of Vain Delight, but Vain Delight is as unsuccessful as Presumption. There is almost oriental magnificence about this part of the poem, which, if it reminds us of Spenser, proves also the richness of Fletcher's genius. We cannot spare room for more than a few lines:—

"And here she shed
Blue violets, and there came roses red,
And every sight the yielding sense as captive led;
The garden, like a lady fair, was cut,
That lay as if she slumbered in delight,
And to the open skies her eyes did shut.
The azure fields of heaven were sembled right
In a large round, set with the flowers of light,
The fleur de luys and the round sparks of dew
That hung upon their azure leaves, did show
Like twinkling stars that sparkle in the evening blue."

Canto III. describes the Crucifixion, with the incidents which preceded and attended it. The description of the horrors of conscience which torture Judas, is scarcely excelled by Juvenal or Shakespeare, who have both dealt with the same subject at length and elaborately; we give a few lines from this passage:—

"Yet oft he snatched and started as he hung,
So when the senses half enslumbered lie,
The headlong body, ready to be flung
By the deluding fancy from some high
And craggy rock, recovers greedily,
And clasps the yielding pillow half asleep."

We now reluctantly leave Fletcher, at the same time cordially recommending him to our readers, many of whom have, perhaps, never so much as heard of his name, for this true poet has somehow or other quite escaped the notice of critics and popular commentators.

BRAVEST OF ALL.

A STORY FOR BOYS. IN THREE PARTS.

PART II.

WHEN Bob Nicholson came in sight of the pond, he stopped to draw breath, for his pace had been so swift that he found himself panting almost as if he had been running a race. He had been running up hill too; but now, as he reached the summit of the incline, he could see all that was going on below him. He stopped short for an instant, to watch the progress of the fun. Was it fun, or something more serious that was going on? The boys were grouped together, but there were others there besides the Winchbrook College boys, and there was a swaying backwards and forwards of the crowd which sorely puzzled Bob to understand. Waiting only to recover his breath, he dashed down the road, and was soon in the midst of the noisy concourse, which seemed too completely absorbed in its own affairs to notice Bob's arrival. The moment he reached the spot he understood what had taken place. A neighbouring school had also come to enjoy the ice of the mill-pond, and there being an old existing feud between the scholars, it had broken out upon the question of priority of claim to a certain favourite spot on the ice, which was most favourable for a slide. David Maxwell had come out as the champion of Winchbrook College, and had challenged the biggest boy on the other side to fight him. The noisy swaying crowd which Bob Nicholson could not understand, proved to be the united schools collected round the two champions. There was nothing unfair or unmanly in what had taken place, and when Bob had thrust himself into the crowd, and elbowed his way to the centre, and then interposed himself between the combatants, he did so altogether with the desire to see fair play. He happened to be a little taller and heavier than David Maxwell, and he could not bear the thought of allowing his brave friend to take the position that was his by right of age and strength.

"Davie, you must let me settle this," he said, coming between the two boys, and stopping the fight.

David Maxwell was astonished at the presence of his companion, but doubly so at the very unexpected manner in which the contest was interrupted. It would have provoked a smile on any face but a boy's to see the well-arranged and unexcited manner in which the two champions were fulfilling their parts. Neither of them entertained the least ill-will towards the other, and it was purely for the honour of the school, as they thought, that they had accepted their positions. Up to this point, indeed, no blows had been struck, the contest having been a very elaborate and scientific match at sparring, in which art both schools prided themselves.

As soon as Bob Nicholson interposed himself, the boys seemed heartily glad to escape from any further display of their boxing powers, although David Maxwell said, "I have begun this affair, and I intend to see it out."

Bob turned round to Dashford, who was the rival champion, and said, "Do you really wish to fight this out?"

"Oh, I have no ill-will one way or the other," answered young Dashford, good-humouredly.

"Then I don't think there is any need to fight it out. Will you two shake hands?" Bob asked turning, with a smile, from one to the other.

"I don't mind in the least," said David.

"Nor I," said Dashford; so the champions shook hands warmly, and the fray ended.

Until it was all over Bob did not stop to consider what he had been doing, but when peace had been made, and he looked round him, he could not refrain from a merry laugh. "I think it's just as well I went home," he said to David, "although you did taunt me with being a coward!"

"Bob, I didn't mean it," said David, in his impetuous way; "I'm sorry if I hurt your feelings; but I was annoyed to think you were not coming with us."

"I promised Ned when I came away this morning that I would get back as soon as school was over, and I could not break my word, Davie."

David Maxwell looked at his companion with an expression in his face which seemed to show how much he felt his unworthiness in misjudging the motives that had influenced Bob. "What a thoughtless fool I am!" he said, with self-reproach in his voice; "I am ashamed of myself!"

"Nonsense, Davie. But you can understand how lonely Ned feels up in that room all day!"

"Indeed I can. How is he, Bob?"

"Poor old fellow, he is very weak. I sometimes think, Davie, that he'll never be strong again," said Bob, lowering his voice, and speaking sadly.

"Bob, don't say that! surely he is not so bad as you imagine?"

"I hope not; but if you saw his face sometimes when he is asleep, you would think so too."

It was only a few words which passed between them, but they were sufficient to make a deep impression on David Maxwell, who had a very tender heart, although he was often betrayed into doing and saying things which seemed heartless.

Peace having been restored, the lads fell to with hearty good-will, and were soon enjoying their healthy recreation with all the spirit and energy of youth. The difference between the schools proved to be no deeper than such differences usually are, and the boys' enjoyment was all the greater from knowing that the breach had been healed. In the midst of their enjoyment there was a cry of terror raised, which caused them all to look to one corner of the pond, where an indiscreet boy had ventured on the thin ice, and had fallen through into the water. There were shouts for help as the boys rushed headlong towards the spot, and a serious accident might have happened had not Bob shouted out, "Run to the bank!" Springing forward himself, he led the boys from the ice, and with movements as swift as thought, he soon reached the bank nearest to where the boy had fallen into the water. "Davie, give me your hand! Hold me tight! Catch Dashford's hand, and hold on to him! Now then, there is no fear!" and Bob sprang into the water, and soon succeeded in rescuing the unconscious form of the unfortunate boy who had fallen in.

The little fellow was more frightened than hurt, and with the energetic help of the boys, was soon restored to consciousness. He cried a great deal, but David Maxwell wisely said, "You must get home at once, and you must run every step of the way; don't stop for anything, and get into bed as quickly as possible."

Then he turned to Bob Nicholson. "Bob, you're shivering. Let us get home at once."

"I feel cold, but I will soon run myself warm again. I must call at the doctor's for Ned's medicine as I go along."

The boys quickly dispersed after this, Bob and David running off together at a brisk pace towards home, whilst the boy who had suffered involuntary submersion went home under the care of Dashford. Bob had to wait a short time at the doctor's until the medicine was got ready, and he felt the cold from his wet clothing.

"I wish you would go on, and let me bring the medicine, Bob; you are chattering with the cold!" David said.

"I feel very cold," said Bob; "I think I must do as you say," and with shivering limbs and chattering teeth, Bob went homeward as quickly as he could, feeling a strange uncomfortable sensation of inward chill upon him, which made him look and feel extremely ill. *(To be continued.)*

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

181. In Mark ii. 21, it says, "No man also seweth a piece of *new* cloth on an *old* garment . . . else the rent is made worse." Why was this?

182. What relation was David to Joab?

183. Where do we find an account of *an army* being sent to take *one* man?

184. Where does it state that our Saviour spent some time with the "wild beasts?"

185. Why were not the Jews permitted to sell their land for more than a certain number of years?

186. Which of the Evangelists is it who states that when the soldiers came to the Garden of Gethsemane to take Jesus, "They went backward and fell to the ground?"

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 432.

169. Archelaus (Matt. ii. 22).

170. "And Jesse took an ass laden with bread, and a bottle of wine, and a kid, and sent them by David his son unto Saul" (1 Sam. xvi. 20).

171. "Mesha king of Moab was a sheepmaster, and rendered unto the king of Israel an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams with the wool" (2 Kings iii. 4).

172. "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. iv. 17).

173. Mount of Corruption (2 Kings xxiii. 13).

174. Anah (Genesis xxxvi. 24).

175. Gadarenes (compare Matt. viii. 28—34 with Mark v. 1—17).



(*Drawn by* CAROLINE SLADER.)

LITTLE SAMMY.

"WHAT'S the use of baby, Nelly,
Five months old, and oh so small?
What's he come for? do we want him?
Is he any use at all?

"Do you think your little brother
Can be any good to us?
Crying, sleeping—sleeping, eating;
Are you glad to have him thus?"

"Yes, mamma, I think he's useful;
Soft and warm, like Janie's dove;
And though weak and brown and tiny,
He's a deal of use *to love!*"

"From the mouths of babes and sucklings,"
Perfect love and praise are taught;
Nelly, dear, thy two-year wisdom
Is with Truth eternal fraught.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.—"GOOD-BYE."

ANOTHER six weeks, and only the beginning of August! What a long summer it seemed to Dorothy! and yet in all previous years she had so delighted in the sunshine, and missed and mourned for every flower when its day was over.

"How happy I was last year!" she said to herself; "and yet I was impatient, and wished the time away."

And they had been happy days, too, though in them, as in all others, she felt as she felt now, waiting for something—for some life or some world she had not seen as yet, and the key to which she thought Adrian Fuller held.

Colonel Wade had been but little missed. Before the summer waned Netta filled the house with guests; and Sir George Finch and Major Henty, and all her admirers, came to her, bringing her books and flowers, and making water-parties and pic-nics; and elderly ladies, who like the *éclat* of having a pretty girl under their wing, called to take her for drives, "and to brighten her up a little, for she has had a sad loss, you know." Netta was always ready, and pretty, and well-dressed; it seemed to Dorothy that if she were to put on a sack, or dress herself in a blanket, she would do it gracefully, and she did not wonder that she was admired. There was a grave side to Netta's character, too, there were many sides, in fact, that fascinated even Dorothy—a time when she could, gravely and sweetly, in a low, almost sad voice, talk of her grandfather and by-gone days, or even of the poetry and the stories that Dorothy herself loved, and she would sing (in the twilight usually) wild weird songs generally, with some dreary refrain, or simple old ones, in a way that none who heard her could forget. There were days in which Dorothy almost loved her beautiful sister; there were others in which she tried hard not to hate her. Netta fascinated Adrian Fuller completely, and roused his sluggish nature as Dorothy never could have done. He was always by her side, reading or walking, or hanging over her chair while she flirted with her crowd of admirers at her mother's "at home," and when she sang he chose her songs, and pleaded for his favourite ones, and afterwards, on the clear summer nights, he would wrap her in one of her favourite wraps, lingering to put the folds in some way grateful to his artist eyes, and then they betook themselves to the garden.

"They might have left me the garden!" Dorothy sighed once.

Poor Dorothy! it was a dreary summer for her. She hated strange people and visitors, and when they came hid herself, or if she appeared, was shy and awkward, and so allowed to remain unnoticed. She hated the smart rooms, too, all loaded with gimcracks, and kept neat and tidy; and the only one in the house untouched—the study—Netta and Adrian Fuller occupied all the morning, for the Beauty was sitting to the artist, and in the evening Mr. Woodward, if at home, sat there busy with his writing.

Mrs. Woodward's money had all been risked in the paper, and Mr. Woodward was busy and anxious. He was almost angry at the difference made in the household. "We must be careful for a time," he said, "for remember we have to wait till the paper has had a little run before we can launch out;" but Netta and Mrs. Woodward laughed at him.

"We must keep up an appearance," Netta said, "and live in a well-bred manner."

"Of course we must," assented Mrs. Woodward, ready to agree to everything, provided she was not troubled.

"Mamma," said the Beauty, later in the day, "don't you think papa could manage to send Sally to a boarding-school for a year? Sir George was saying yesterday that my sisters were more picturesque than beautiful."

"And exceedingly rude and ungentlemanlike it was of Sir George then!" exclaimed Dorothy. "Papa can't afford to send Sally to school; and, besides, I should be miserable, and Sally learns at home and at the School of Art well enough. You have taken Mr. Fuller from me, and now you want to take Sally!"

"Mr. Fuller, I want you to go and talk to my little sister Dorothy," the Beauty said, when he came. "She says I have taken you from her."

He went over to his old playmate, but both their tongues seemed tied. The old footing had gone for ever.

"So you are jealous of Netta," he said.

The colour rushed to her face.

"We never talk of books or anything now," she said; "you make Netta your friend."

"But she is sitting for me, remember."

"Yes, but not all day."

"And we are learning German together. You are such a foolish child," he added, his eyes turning restlessly in search of Netta. Hers filled with tears.

"I am not a child!" she said, passionately; "you always forget that."

"But, Dorothy, you *must* be a child," he answered; "I have always considered you one;" and he put his hand on hers.

The colour left her face, and then rushed back in a torrent. There seemed something terrible in his words, something that struck despair into her heart, while her cheeks burnt with shame. Yet still she struggled against his words.

"But I am not a child," she repeated, helplessly. "Why, Netta does not think me one."

"Think you what?" asked the Beauty, coming to the rescue.

"A child."

"No, of course I don't. By the way, I have written to ask your dear Mr. Blakesley here this evening."

"Mr. Blakesley!"

"Yes; so cheer up, Dorothy. *He* does not think you a child either, I dare say."

"Netta is always thinking of marrying," Dorothy said, without meaning it, as her sister went into the next room.

"So are most young ladies," and he tried to laugh. "We will all come to your wedding, Dorothy," he added.

Then she burst fairly into tears.

"How can you say such things, Mr. Fuller! I shall never be married—never! and *you* want to get rid of me, I believe, and do not care for me any more than any one else does; for you know if I married we should never be friends again."

"Why shouldn't we?" he answered; "I hope we should, if I liked your husband and he me." Then he looked at her; she was trembling with excitement, and she tried to return his gaze, but her eyes drooped and fell, and her lips quivered. "My dear child," he said, kindly, and quietly taking her hands, "there is something the matter with you to-day: go and lie down a little while, and remember there is no reason why we should not always be friends, and you must not let any foolish notions get into your silly little head." He let go her hands, and they dropped nervously to her side.

"Yes, I will go and lie down for a little while," she said. "Good-bye."

He did not know how much there was in her "good-bye"; and she went. She met her mother on her way up-stairs, and she stopped and put her arms round her neck.

"Mamma," she said, "do kiss me. If you would only love me as you do Netta, and be proud of me!"

"Of course I love you," Mrs. Woodward answered; "but take away your arms, you crumple me so." The words were only said as a matter of course, and the girl felt it, and went up to her room. Once there, she locked her door, and threw herself, face downwards, on the bed; she did not cry or grieve, or even feel very wretched—only thought, in a dazed sort of way, of all the happy by-gone hours she had spent in the garden with Mr. Fuller, and of his words when he wished her good-bye, and those few cloudless days after his return. She could not believe that this was the end; through all the time that Netta had taken her place, she had yet thought that he was true to her, and she could not believe that he meant what he had said, only that perhaps he was afraid of making Netta angry, as every one else was. How she hated Netta, and how she envied her—her beauty, and brightness, and self-possession, and everything else; and then she tried to remember his words again, and could not. But she remembered his look when he told her that she "*must* be a child," and her face burnt with shame.

Presently a knock came to the door—it was Netta.

"Let me in, Dorothy," she said. "I have come to tell you we all think you are lost; it is nearly seven o'clock;" this was all she had to say; and then Dorothy rose and smoothed her hair, and bathed her face, while the Beauty sat and watched. "I wonder if Mr. Blakesley will come," she said; "you know he is an excellent match." Somehow Netta's manner was soft and kind that evening. But the tears swelled up into Dorothy's brown eyes again.

"Oh, Netta," she said, "I could not marry for money's sake!"

Her sister made no answer till she had finished her toilette, and was ready to go down-stairs, then she turned round and kissed her—she, Netta, who was usually so cold, did!

"Love is not all, Dorothy dear," she said; "perhaps it would be a good thing if it were;" and they went down-stairs.

Dorothy felt afraid and ashamed to enter the room where Mr. Fuller was; but when she did, he only looked up for a moment, and then went on with the German book he was skimming over before reading it with Netta. He never forgot Dorothy that evening though, there was such a strange look upon the girl's face—a dazed, worn, and weary look, and yet she was evidently keeping a strong control over herself.

"Your faithless knight is not coming, I fear," Netta said, when the daylight faded and there were no signs of George Blakesley.

"He has forgotten me," Dorothy thought. "Even he does not care for me now!" and then she went to the piano, and, unasked, began to play.

She did not know *what* she played, but she kept on and on—she could play well when she liked—putting all her soul into her music without knowing it, asking herself all the time, in the bitterness of her

heart, what she could be living for *now*, and for what reason life was given to her, and trying to answer her own question in the sounds her own hands made. Then presently, with a start, she came to a standstill.

"Come and sing, Netta," she said; and rose abruptly; and when they were all listening to Netta's sweet voice, she stole softly from the room, and out into the garden, and on to the sycamore-tree. She stopped beneath its shady branches, and looked up at the sky, and back at the house, almost hidden now by the darkness, and stood on the grave of Venus, and thought of all the hopes and dreams she had had on that very spot. Then she went and looked over the low fence (that bounded the garden) at the dim distance, and somehow crept along the fence till she stood almost behind the sycamore-tree, but yet was hidden from sight by the darkness, and the underwood, and the tall nodding grass and weeds, then she put her face down into her hands, and was quiet for a little while. It was such a blessing to be alone there where no one could find her. It was not for long though; she heard voices soon, Netta's and Mr. Fuller's, and they came and stood behind her under the sycamore, little thinking how near she was, but she kept quite still, and made no sign.

"Do you remember the day you came here, just after your return, Adrian?" she heard Netta say. Dorothy winced beneath the last word. She had never called him Adrian in her life!

"Yes, and found you in your white dress sitting here waiting for me."

"I wonder if it was chance or Providence," she said, in a low voice. "I see you do remember."

"Oh, my darling!" he answered, fervently, "is there anything in the world connected with you that I could forget?" and arm-in-arm they sauntered back down the garden path.

(*To be continued.*)

DAVID IN THE WILDERNESS.—I.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM HANNA, D.D., LL.D., EDINBURGH.

SAUL'S persecution of David was as bitter and relentless as it was unjust and ungenerous: he tried to justify it to others—perhaps, even to himself—by alleging that David and his men were engaged in a conspiracy aiming at his life, or, at least, seeking to dispossess him of his throne. It was a baseless calumny. David knew, indeed, that he was Saul's destined successor, but till the way was opened by God's own hand to that succession, he would do nothing to force his passage to it.

Treated as he had been, many in like circumstances would have counted themselves relieved from its obligations, and renounced their allegiance. The band that gathered round him were not indisposed to raise the standard of revolt, but neither by word or deed did he, through all these years of persecution, countenance the slightest opposition to Saul's kingly authority. There was much of the outlaw in the kind of life which Saul's violence had forced on him, but there was nothing of the rebel. How sacred the king's person was in his sight, the two occasions on which Saul's life was in his hands gave striking proof. It was no unguided chance that turned Saul's footsteps that day into the cave and put him within David's easy reach. To the eyes of his rough followers it seemed as if the occasion had been ordered of Heaven. One thrust of his sword, one stroke of his javelin, and David had eased himself of an adversary who would not have hesitated for a moment had a like advantage been given him. But all that David did was to "cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily." And even for doing that his "heart smote him." The men around him felt no such restraint. They wondered at it as a piece of egregious folly when their leader did no more than cut off the skirt of the robe. They wondered more when he said to them, "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch forth my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord."

There was not another man within the cave, perhaps within the country, who had any such feeling as to the divinity that hedged round such kingship as that of Saul. Seeing the fastidiousness of their leader, his followers would have taken the matter into their own hands, and made a quick end of Saul and of his persecuting violence. But a hand was laid upon them, whose power to smite they had often witnessed, but of whose power generously to forbear they had never seen such a token. Nor has the world witnessed many exhibitions of a loyalty equally devout and equally chivalrous.

It failed, however, in producing anything but a temporary impression. For the moment Saul's fitful and passionate temper was overwhelmed with remorse, and melted into tenderness. But it was like the thaw that visits the surface of the ice-bound lake beneath the few warm sunbeams of the winter's day, hardening ere nightfall into a thicker coat of ice than ever. Softened for the moment, Saul's spirit hardened ere many weeks went by into an intenser hatred than before. The faithless Ziphites send him word that David is hiding in the hill of Hachilah, a place easier of access than the

fastness of Engedi. With three thousand chosen men, Saul sets off in pursuit. He had not yet reached the place the Ziphite spies had indicated, when one night he lay down, in fancied security, to sleep; his cousin and chief captain by his side, his men stretched in a circle round him.

Skilful leader as he was, David had been watching the approach of this formidable foe. From some unseen post of observation his quick eye had scrutinised the royal ranks, and marked especially the careless manner in which the night-watch was set and kept. Stealing into the camp at midnight, he and Abishai made their silent way unnoticed to the spot where the king was lying asleep, his javelin stuck in the ground at his bolster, and a cruse of water by his side.

Abishai had seen before how tender David was of lifting his hand against Saul; he would relieve him of the task. "Let me," he said, as, whispering together, they stooped over the prostrate figure, "let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear, even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him a second time"—a second stroke will not be needed. "Destroy him not," said David; "for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed and be guiltless?" The sleeping monarch is suffered to sleep on untouched. But they drew the spear out from the ground, and lifted up the pitcher from his side—to be borne away, and lifted up next day from the top of a distant hill in proof of how absolutely Saul's life had been once more at David's disposal.

The magnanimous forbearance displayed by David in his conduct towards Saul was shown on a lesser scale in the two incidents of the water brought to him from the well of Bethlehem, and of the treatment of the churl Nabal. Never was the proverb, that "the discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to pass over a transgression," more signally and picturesquely verified than when David said to Abigail, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me, and blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou which has kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand."

All through his life in the wilderness, David's bearing towards those he led, and towards all with whom he was thrown into contact, wins our warmest admiration. Our only regret is that its closing period should have so dark a cloud resting upon it. He had the distinct assurance of Divine protection. He had the evidence of many years, and of singular deliverances, that God could and would make that protection good. Yet now, almost at the last, his faith apparently gives way, and he says in his heart, what has found its way into the record of his life, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: there is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me to seek me any more in any coast of Israel; so shall I escape out of his hand"—words scarcely worthy either of his wisdom, his courage, or his faith. Unwarned by what had happened years before, David threw himself into the arms of Achish, King of Gath. Moved, perhaps, by what he saw and heard of the strength and prowess of David's following, and of the persecutions to which they had been exposed, the Philistine king assigned him the frontier town of Ziklag as his place of residence. Here, in a position secure by its remoteness from the attacks of Saul, David dwelt for a "full year and four months." At first, in the wilderness, when sudden shiftings and rapid marches had to be made, David's band had not numbered more than four hundred men. As its power to protect and provide for itself became apparent, it got continually accessions of great strength. Eleven "men of might, fit for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and who were swift as the roes upon the mountains," came to him from the tribe of Gad, beyond the Jordan, crossing the river when at top flood, and scattering on every side all who opposed their march. Twenty-three men, whose names are also given, joined him from Saul's own tribe, "mighty men, helpers of the war, who could use both the right hand and the left in hurling stones and shooting arrows." Judah and Manasseh sent others, who were made "captains of the band," which had now swelled out into more than six hundred fighting men. And now that a settled habitation had been found for them, every man gathered his household round him, so that it was nothing short of a small tribe over which David ruled at Ziklag. But if he felt the growing extent of his power, he must have felt still more the peculiar restraints of his position. He had to find employment for a numerous company of warlike, if not unruly men, who had their families around them to support. True, they were well placed; Ziklag was a good centre from which raids might be made out upon the Geshurites and the Gezrites, and the Amalekites, the aboriginal tribes inhabiting the south. But then it was a condition of his alliance with Achish that a certain portion of the booty thus acquired was to be carried to Gath, and unfortunately, on one occasion at least, when David went up to Achish to fulfil this condition, and was asked by the king, "Whither have ye made a road to-day?" he told Achish that it was from the south of Judah, and not from the native tribes, that the prey had been gathered; still worse, afraid "lest they should tell on him," when he smote "the old inhabitants of the land as thou goest to Shur, he left neither man nor woman alive." A heavy price in deception and in cruelty to pay for the gaining

and keeping of such protection as the Philistine afforded. But still worse lay behind. Another condition of this ill-omened connection was that, when required, David should take service in the Philistine army, and aid it in any war wherein it was embarked. David could scarcely have been unaware that in the event of a war breaking out between the Philistines and Saul, he had bound himself by this engagement to take part in it against his own countrymen. But he hoped that the occasion would not arise, or if it did, he trusted that some method might be found of escaping out of the painful and perilous dilemma in which it would place him. And for sixteen months his hopes were verified. But at last the occasion came. The Philistines gathered their armies together to fight with Israel. "And Achish said unto David, Know thou assuredly that thou shalt go out with me to battle, thou and thy men. And David said to Achish, Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do." What he would have done had things taken their natural course we cannot say. He must either have proved false to Achish or have fought against Saul. Never was interference more opportune, never escape more welcome, than when the lords of the Philistines insisted that David and his men should go back before the battle to Ziklag. He had made himself the difficulty, and had no right to look for such a singular deliverance, but when it came, how glad, how grateful, must he have felt! He returned to Ziklag, to find it burned with fire, and all their wives and their children carried off. For the moment there was a look of mutiny among his men. They even spake of stoning him. But he "encouraged himself in the Lord his God"—that God who had so recently and so wonderfully extricated him from a still greater danger. The pursuit of the Amalekites was undertaken, and successful. All that had been carried away from Ziklag was recovered, and so much rich booty besides, that David was able to send presents to the men of all the cities of Judah, whom he and his men had been wont to haunt. It was on the third day after his return to Ziklag that David heard of the death of Saul. The weary days of his persecution were ended, the way at last was opened for him to the throne of Israel.

(To be concluded.)

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER XV.

CHARLES DAVENANT walked on in silence for a few minutes, and then looked round at Mary with a quiet unshrinking gaze.

"You may trust me, certainly, Miss Trevelyan; my wish is to do you a service, and some day I may be able to explain it to you, but not now. I shall tell you nothing of Lurline which she has not herself made patent to all who know her, and which most persons inhabiting Chiverley Rectory could hardly fail to learn; but I do not think you will." He respected Mary too much to add what was indeed his thought, that he believed her to be too pure and high-minded to be able even to conceive such a character as Laura's.

"You have," he continued, "felt the Lorelei's fascination in some slight degree, but you have very little idea of the power she really possesses in that respect, or with what consummate and unscrupulous art she uses it. She is perfectly aware of her gifts, and of the wonderful charm she can exercise over her fellow-creatures, and she is absolutely selfish in the manner in which she avails herself of it to gain her ends. To minister to her own self-love is the sole object of all her actions; but she clothes her intense egotism and real coldness of heart with the alluring semblance of a disposition so loving and tender, that she deceives the most astute, and wins from them a sort of compassionate affection which she knows how to foster into an ungovernable passion. Lurline's proceedings are never the result of impulse or natural temperament, though they always appear to be so because she is so exceedingly outspoken and free in her speech and manners. She establishes it as a settled fact that she is thoroughly unconventional, and does not choose to be bound by the customs of society, and this, of course, gives her great facility in her dealings with men; but, as a matter of fact, all she does is done with perfect consciousness and calculation of its import and results. She has two very distinct motives, which, however, work admirably together in the exercise of her great gift of fascination. The first is the intense self-love which makes her wish to draw to herself and entirely engross the affections of every person she meets; and the second, which is by far the strongest, is her imperious desire to make some marriage which shall carry her away out of this dull life, and bring her into a sphere where she can enjoy the world and its attractions."

"I have often wondered that she has not been married already," said Mary. "She is, outwardly at least, so very charming, that I should have thought

many would have sought her long before this time!"

"And so, more or less, they have," said Charlie; "but there have been many causes for her failure, the chief of which has undoubtedly been that she has so frequently overshot her mark. She has led men on to a certain point, and then, in her eagerness to secure them, she has made her purpose so plain, that she has completely disgusted them, and they have backed out as ignominiously for themselves as for her. Then—although I think now, when she is verging on thirty, she would marry almost any one—in her earlier days she was disposed to fly too high, and aimed at those who could give her wealth and station. She has more than once come to grief, moreover, by trying to have too many strings to her bow, and has played off two or three individuals upon each other, till she has lost them all."

"How is that possible?" said Mary; "how could more than one stand on such ground of intimacy with her, at least at the same time, as to lead to the probability of marriage?"

"Oh, Lurline has a capital device for holding them all on a special footing of familiarity with her," answered Charlie, laughing; "she elects them to be her adopted brothers, and treats them with the familiar tenderness of a most affectionate sister, till such time as she thinks a revelation may be made that their mutual affection has passed the fraternal limits, and ought to be otherwise consolidated."

"But she calls you and Mr. Pemberton her brothers," said Mary, turning upon him a look of innocent bewilderment.

"Precisely," laughed Charlie; "and I think if I were simply to tell you the history of her proceedings with us two, you would better understand what the syren Lorelei of Chiverley is, than by any amount of general descriptions."

"But ought I to hear all this, Mr. Davenant?" said Mary, shrinkingly; "it is very painful to me"— and in truth her pure crystalline nature was cruelly jarred by these revelations of a scheming worldliness, which she had never before so much as dreamt of, and which was utterly distasteful to her.

"Oh, Lurline is certain to tell you all about it herself, the first day she can spare time from more important matters to give you her confidence; there is nothing she likes so much as talking of her various adopted relationships; besides, Miss Trevelyan, as I said before, I have a reason for speaking to you on this subject, and you have promised to trust me."

Gentle Mary said no more, and he went on.

"To begin with myself. When I came here two years ago, I was but a boy, I believe you think I am not much more now, and any idea of marriage for me would have been preposterous, especially with a woman nearly ten years older than myself; moreover, I am the youngest son of a country gentleman who has a small property and a large family, so that he has often told me he can do no more for me than give me a good education, and then leave me to shift for myself and make a living as best I can. I have some thoughts of trying my luck in the Australian bush, if anybody can be found to pay my passage out, but as a rule I am seldom possessed of any capital to an amount higher than three-and-sixpence; and I came to read with Mr. Wyndham because he takes us on very low terms, and my father could not afford to send me to the University; well, all this being made known to Lurline, she decided at once, of course, that I was not worth powder and shot so far as marriage was concerned, but at the same time it was quite impossible for her not to try to make me like her better than any one else in the world, and she succeeded. I was as much fascinated by her as every one else, and, having arrived at a mutual explanation, she adopted me as her brother, and I adored her as a species of goddess. A few months after my advent, John Pemberton came. Now, his position was in all respects different from mine; he was the only child of a man who had been very extravagant, and who had mortgaged his property to such an extent that it was quite certain his son would inherit nothing at his death but heavy pecuniary obligations; he has, however, an immensely rich uncle, and it is generally supposed that he will succeed to his great wealth. Lurline was under the impression that this was certain when he first came, and she marked him at once as her own; her enchantments took effect on him with much greater power than on me; he is two or three years older than I am, and far deeper and more solid in his natural qualities. When John Pemberton, on whom Lurline put forth the utmost power of her fascination, finally delivered up his heart and soul to love for her, he did it for his life, he will never more love any one on earth but her, be the end what it may."

"I can understand that," said Mary, quietly.

"This being the case, you can see how fearfully hard upon him is his present position. Of course, when she had brought him to this pass he asked her to marry him; then the fact came out, which he, poor fellow, had never had any intention of concealing, that his chances of succeeding to his uncle were extremely problematical; the old gentleman was very eccentric, he had distinctly told John not to count on his inheritance, and many persons thought that he would build a church or a hospital with his great wealth. It became necessary, therefore, that Lurline should make an ingenious little arrangement, by which she could save herself from any risk of losing John if he ever should become wealthy, and yet which should enable her to escape from him if any better marriage were offered to her, or if he remained poor. She persuaded him that she loved him as tenderly as he loved her, but that as it was impossible they could be united, at least at present, they would adopt each other as brother and sister, only in a far deeper sense than in her similar arrangement with me. John and

she would be all in all to each other; they would enjoy the fullest confidence and friendship in the meantime, and if ever marriage became possible for them, their bliss would be supreme; at the same time it was best they should both consider themselves free, simply to continue the fraternal relation always, and to ally themselves matrimonially otherwise, if it should be desirable. Poor John told me all this himself, and it was with the saddest smile that he spoke of his dearest Laura's generous thoughtfulness in having wished to leave him free, while he knew well, and never dreamt that she did too, that he had bound himself to her with an adamantine chain which he would drag with him to the grave. Poor, dear, honest fellow! it is a most cruel fate for him in every way; ruin and destruction to all his hopes and prospects. He looks upon it simply as an engagement, and whether she married him or not, he could never give a thought to any other woman to the end of his days; while she is prepared to throw him over the very first moment she can meet with any one who will marry her, and can afford it."

"Oh, impossible!" exclaimed Mary.

"It is perfectly certain, Miss Trevelyan, for she says so herself. She will tell you that dearest John would wish her to be happy with some one else if she cannot be his wife, and that she will make it a condition with any one she marries that the fraternal attachment between John and herself is to be continued."

"But no one would marry her under the circumstances, on such conditions."

"No; and therefore she will drop all mention of it the moment there is any question of another marriage; in the meantime it satisfies poor John that in no case will he be altogether separated from her, and, as a matter of fact, he does not realise the possibility of her marrying any one but himself, or of her failing to be as faithful to him as he will be to her if their union is never possible. He believes that her affection for him is as true as his own; and how he is deceived!—for his is the noble unchanging love of a loyal heart!"

"But there is a chance that they may be married some day," said Mary, "and if so, all will be well for him, no less than for her."

"I cannot think that; her conduct with regard to John Pemberton, whom I love and revere with all my heart, has opened my eyes as to what Lurline really is; she is in no sense worthy of him, and we have the proof of it in the fact that good, and in some respects even saintly, as John still is, he has yet experienced a certain amount of spiritual deterioration by his intercourse with her. He has always been a man of strong religious principles, but the death of his mother, and other circumstances, so deepened his devotional feelings, that he determined to devote himself entirely to the service of God, and to take holy orders so soon as he was able to pass the necessary examinations; he has not abandoned this intention, because Lurline has not in so many words asked him to do so. But she has said plainly that nothing would induce her to be a clergyman's wife, and he has agreed to postpone any step which would finally bind him to that profession; I much fear if it were a choice between Lurline and the holy calling to which he so ardently aspired, there is little question which would carry the day. Am I wrong in saying that she is fearfully cruel thus to drive him from a high and worthy aim, to lower his standard, and weaken his principle, and then when it suits her to desert him, leave him stranded in a wrecked existence?"

"But, Mr. Davenant," exclaimed Mary, earnestly, "why should you blame her for what she may never deserve; surely, you are specially hard judging to-night, you always seem to like her very much yourself."

"I like her society because she is in every way attractive, and very good-tempered in a general way, but she is essentially dangerous, Miss Trevelyan, and so you will find."

CHAPTER XVI.

Mary Trevelyan made no answer, for she could not bear to prolong a conversation in which so much that was absolutely abhorrent to herself was attributed to one of whom personally she knew no evil; but could she have guessed what kind-hearted Charles Davenant's motive had really been for being so persistently determined to make these revelations to her, how would her serene spirit have been troubled, and her deep tender heart pierced with an anguish of terror!

The true state of the case was simply this, one morning, a day or two previously, Charlie Davenant had been sitting reading in the bow window of the drawing-room, where Mrs. Wyndham was also established in her easy chair, when Laura came in with a piece of embroidery in her hand, an art in which she had exquisite skill, in addition to her other accomplishments. She took a low chair, and sat down opposite to her step-mother, nodding to Charlie to show that she was cognisant of his presence, and said, "I have come to have a chat with you, Mrs. Wyndham."

"Indeed!" said the lady. And to what am I indebted for so unusual a favour?" There was never the smallest pretence of affection between these two; and it was one of the strange contradictions of Laura's very singular character, that with all her artfulness she was recklessly outspoken whenever it did not interfere with her schemes that she should be so; her answer was prompt, and to the point.

"Because I want you to tell me all about Mary Trevelyan."

"What is there to tell?" said Mrs. Wyndham, indolently; "you know her history as well as I do;



(*Drawn by* W. SMALL.)

"I have come to have a chat with you, Mrs. Wyndham."—*p.* 475.

she is a friendless orphan, and Mr. Lisle's adopted daughter."

"Yes; but I want to know what her history is in connection with Bertrand Lisle."

"Simply that in all probability she will become his wife."

"What ground have you for saying that?"

"Mr. Lisle's letter to myself," said Mrs. Wyndham, yawning. It was less trouble to answer her step-daughter's sharp questions with a direct reply, than to make any attempt at holding back what she saw no reason for concealing.

"What did he say? tell me exactly," said her imperious questioner.

"Oh dear me, Laura, how can I remember all he said; and I destroyed the letter."

"That was just as well perhaps; but tell me what was in it. You cannot have forgotten how you got the impression that Mary was to be Bertrand's wife."

"Mr. Lisle said that he had reasons for wishing such a union above everything in the world, that he intended to make it his dying request to his son that he should marry her, and that he had not the slightest doubt it would be Bertrand's own desire, as he was convinced they were mutually attached to each other."

"Did he say if there was any engagement between them?" asked Laura, eagerly.

"He distinctly said there was not, and that he knew the subject had not then been approached by them."

"And they can scarcely have engaged themselves since, over the old man's new-made grave," said Laura.

"No; I can tell you that they have not, for I wanted to know what was to become of Mary after her year with us was out, and I asked her in so many words if she was engaged to Bertrand, and she told me she was not."

"Yes, and she told me she had not the remotest idea where she was to go after she left us," said Laura. "That is all right; I quite understand the whole affair; it is one of those family arrangements that will never take place."

"Why should it never take place?" said Mrs. Wyndham, looking at her inquiringly, out of her sleepy eyes.

"I do not feel called upon to reveal all the mysteries of my prophetic soul," said Laura, laughing, as she rose, and folded up her work, having ascertained all she desired; "only I can tell you this, Mrs. Wyndham, that Bertrand Lisle will never engage himself to Mary Trevelyan!" and she walked out of the room with the light of triumph in her gleaming eyes.

Charlie Davenant listened in perfect silence to this conversation; and now he said quietly to Mrs. Wyndham, "Do you expect Mr. Bertrand Lisle here at any time, Mrs. Wyndham?"

"Yes; he has written to tell me that he hopes to pay us a visit in the spring in order to see Mary Trevelyan. I think it is rather cool on his part, considering that I had not invited him; but he is my cousin, of course."

"Then you have agreed to receive him?"

"Oh yes; I could not do otherwise. He will be here some weeks."

"And Laura knows it?"

"Of course!" and she turned round, apparently with the determined purpose of going to sleep in her chair.

"Just so!" said Charlie to himself, as he left the room. "I see it all. Bertrand Lisle, the diplomatist, living in gay Italy, a man in the first society, is the very *beau ideal* of a husband for Lurline. She has made up her mind to win him, and she will succeed, I fear; and if Mary Trevelyan loves him, as no doubt she does, it will go far to crush the life out of her, for she is not one to love lightly or to change, I am very sure. Poor, sweet Mary! so still, so pure, so white! She always reminds me of the sculptured angels in the cathedral at home. I cannot bear to think of her being made to suffer, perhaps to the death, by our unscrupulous syren. I will try to warn her. Perhaps, if she knew what Lurline really is, she could put her lover on his guard, or prevent him coming here at all, which would be wisest. At least, I will try what I can do."

And Charlie did his best, as we have seen. He was exceedingly shrewd and observant, and he had been very much struck by the beauty of Mary Trevelyan's character, even during the short time he had known her. He had penetrated to the depths which lay beneath her stillness of manner, and had recognised the noble self-devotion, the pure truthfulness, the sweetness of charity which were hidden there; and although she seemed too far above himself for him to dream of falling in love with her, he was yet rapidly drifting into a feeling of most deep and sincere friendship for her, which made him intensely anxious to save her from future suffering.

Nevertheless, his well-intentioned effort had not proved very successful: one of Mary Trevelyan's most amiable qualities was her complete possession of that special element of heavenly charity which "thinketh no evil." It was almost impossible for her to harbour an uncharitable thought of any one. She had the most generous trust in the goodness of her fellow-creatures, and it was unendurable to her to believe that Laura could really be such a character as Charlie had represented her.

Charlie Davenant made one more attempt to show her that at least there was deep design hidden under most of Laura's actions. He had noticed, with his usual shrewdness, that, for some reason or other, Laura persistently resisted all Miss Trevelyan's entreaties that she would let her hear her sing.

Mary herself sang charmingly, with a low rich contralto voice singularly touching and pathetic in its tone, and it had been one of her chief attractions to Bertrand, who was passionately fond of music—a fact which Laura had succeeded in drawing from her on one of the many occasions when she questioned her guest as to Mr. Lisle's tastes and fancies.

But it was quite in vain that Mary asked for the pleasure of hearing her, which John Pemberton owned to her was often bestowed on him when she was out of the way. Laura had always some convenient excuse for putting it off to another day, which never came.

One evening, when it was dusk, Mary was coming home from the village, where she had soon made her way both into the hearts and homes of the neglected people, when she found Charlie Davenant waiting for her at the gate.

"Come round with me this way if you are not in a hurry, Miss Trevelyan," he said, pointing to the gravel path which led round to the back of the house. "I have a pleasure in store for you, and I have been waiting to waylay you before you got into the house."

She followed him at once with a smile, thinking that in his good-nature he had prepared some pleasant surprise for her. He led her round to a part of the shrubbery near the open window of a little room which was used by Pemberton and himself as a study. As they drew near it there suddenly fell on Mary Trevelyan's ears a sound which she could scarce believe belonged to this gross lower earth at all. It was a voice of melody so wildly sweet, so exquisitely soft and thrilling, that a tremor ran through all her frame as the celestial harmony rose and fell upon the dying night breeze like the harmonious echoes of heavenly strains. Never in her life had Mary Trevelyan heard or imagined anything equal to the beauty of this wondrous singing. It seemed hardly possible it could come from a human voice, and it was unlike any style of music she had ever known. There was no accompaniment of an instrument; yet it seemed almost impossible that a single voice could produce all the marvellous effects which floated on the air—now sounding like the sweetest wail of sorrow, now like a joyous bird carolling among the trees, now like an echo giving back the perfect notes with the most ethereal delicacy of tone.

"What is it? where does it come from?" asked Mary, quite bewildered.

Charlie drew her to the open window, and there within the room sat Laura, looking more like the lovely witch of the Rhine than ever, with her gleaming eyes and flowing hair, while John Pemberton, flung on the ground at her feet, was gazing up into her beautiful face with enraptured eyes.

(To be continued.)

"ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."

BY THOMAS ARCHER.

WITH THE POOR AND NEEDY.

"ABANDON hope all ye who enter here," would, as we might almost fancy, be an appropriate inscription for many a wretched court and alley in the greatest and most opulent city in the world—a city distinguished for its claims to be regarded as the centre of civilisation; as the exemplar of benevolence, and of active Christianity. It is one of the marvellous results of the vast extent of this metropolis of England that there are whole districts of foul dwellings crowded with a poverty-stricken population, which yet are almost ignored, so far as public recognition of their existence is concerned. Legislation itself does not reach them, in the sense of compelling the strict observance of Acts of Parliament framed and presumably enforced for the purpose of maintaining sanitary conditions; philanthropy almost stands appalled at the difficulty of dealing with a chronic necessity, so widely spread, a misery and ignorance so deep and apparently impregnable; sentimentalism sighs and turns away with a shiver, or is touched to the extent of relieving its overcharged susceptibilities by the comfortable expedient of the smallest subscription to some association in the neighbourhood. True, active, practical religion alone, of all the agencies that have operated in these places, gains ground inch by inch, and at last exercises a definite and beneficial influence, by taking hold of the hearts and consciences of the people themselves, and working from within the area of vice and misery, till the law of love, beginning to operate where the law of force had no influence, a change, gradual but sure, here a little and there a little, is effected.

We are continually hearing of the "dwellings of the poor;" and can scarcely take up a newspaper without noting the phrase, "one of the worst neighbourhoods in London" connected with some report of crime, outrage, or suffering; yet how few of us are really familiar with the actual abodes of the more degraded and miserable of our fellow-citizens! how quickly, how gladly, we dismiss from our memory the account of an inquest where the evidence of the cause of death of some unfortunate man, woman, or child, without a natural share

of light, air, food, and water, reveals hideous details of want and wretchedness, which we might witness only a few streets off, and yet are unconscious of their nearness to us in mere physical yards and furlongs, because they are so far from us spiritually, in our lack of sympathy and compassion.

Even at the time that these lines are being written I have before me a report of an examination by the coroner into the circumstances attending the death of a woman of seventy years old, who obtained a miserable and precarious living by stay-making, and who was found dead in the back kitchen of a house. Her death was alleged to have been brought about by the unhealthiness of the house in which she lived, although the landlord was a medical officer of health for one of the metropolitan districts.

In this case the alleged landlord, who was actually a medical officer of health, answered the charge made against him by the statement that he had only just come into possession of the property, and had at once set about putting it in repair. It is to be hoped that this was the case, and, indeed, the evidence of the sanitary inspector went to show that it was so; but the question remains: How is it that dwellings are permitted to be thus overcrowded, and to become actual centres of pestilence in the midst of entire neighbourhoods, where, for one foul tenement to have an infamous reputation amidst such general filth and dilapidation, it must indeed be, as one member of the jury said this place was, "so bad, that no gentleman would keep his dog there?"

Keep his dog indeed! Why I know whole rows and congeries of intersecting courts and alleys where a country squire would no more think of kenneling his hounds than he would dream of stabling his horses! There has during the past few years been a tolerably determined stand made against the introduction of pigstyes into the backyards of some of the hovels about Mile End and Bethnal Green; and though cow-sheds are not altogether abolished everywhere in close and overbuilt localities, there are some precautions taken to diminish the sale of infected milk by an inspection of the laystalls, and the enforcement of limewhiting and ventilation in the sheds. Costermongers' donkeys are the only animals besides dogs and cats which are commonly to be found in London slums now, and as these can be stowed in any shanty just outside the back door, or can be littered down in a spare corner of a cellar, they remain, in costermongering districts, without much opposition on the part of the local authorities. For, after all, what can these authorities do? Under the 35th section of the Sanitary Act, power was given to them to register all houses let out by non-resident landlords, who were under a penalty of forty shillings for not keeping their houses in repair, well supplied with water, drainage clear, &c. To those who have an intimate acquaintance with the density of population in whole acreages of London slums, there is something almost ludicrous in these words, especially when they are read in the light of the fact that the landlords of such places are frequently parochial magnates or officials, who know how to make things pleasant with subordinate sanitary inspectors.

What may be the ultimate result of an Act of Parliament "for improving the dwellings of the poor" it is not at present easy to say; but assuredly any plan which commences by a general and imperfectly discriminative destruction of existing houses, hovels though they may be, will only have the effect of crowding more closely the already fœtid and swarming tenements where, for half-a-crown a week, eight or ten people eat, live, and sleep in a single apartment. It was only the other day, in a district of which I shall presently speak more definitely, that a "mission woman" was called in to the aid of a family, consisting of a man, his wife, his wife's brother—who was there as a lodger—and five or six children, all of whom occupied one room, where the poor woman had just given birth to an infant. The place was almost destitute of furniture; beds of straw and shavings, coverlets of old coats and such ragged clothing as could be spared; little fire and little food. Such destitution demanded that the "maternity box," or a suddenly-extemporised bag of baby-clothing and blankets, should be fetched at once; and though the mission there is a poor one, with terrible needs to mitigate, a constant demand for personal work and noble self-sacrifice, such cases are everyday events, such demands always to be answered by some kind of helpful sympathy, even though the amount of relief afforded is necessarily small and temporary in character.

Not in one quarter of London alone, but dotted here and there throughout its vastly-extending length and breadth—from St. Pancras, and further away northward, to Bethnal Green and all that great series of poverty-stricken townships and colonies of casual labour, on the east; from the terrible purlieus of Southwark, the districts where long rows of silent houses, in interminable streets, chill the unaccustomed wayfarer with vague apprehensions, where "Little Hell" and the knots and tangles of that "Thief-London" which has found a deplorable Alsatia in the purlieus of the Borough and of Bermondsey; and so round the metropolitan circle, westward to the neighbourhood of aristocratic mansions and quiet suburban retreats, where the garotter skulks and the burglar finds a refuge; further towards the centre of the town, in Westminster, not a stone's-throw from the great

legislative assembly, which, while it debates in St. Stephen's on sanitation and the improvement of dwellings, scarcely remembers all that may be seen in St. Peter's, about Pye Street, and remembers Seven Dials and St. Giles's only as traditional places, where "modern improvements" have made a clean sweep, just as the Holborn Viaduct and the Metropolitan Railway swept away Field Lane, and the new meat market at Smithfield put an end for ever to the horrible selvage of Cloth Fair—are to all but the legends of Jonathan Wild's rookery and the "blood-bowl house."

But the very mention of these places, and the reflection that not in outlying districts, but in the very heart of London, in the core of the great city itself, the canker of misery, poverty, and vice is festering still. What is the use of eviction, when the law punishes houselessness, and the *Poor* Law cannot meet any sudden demand, nor maintain any continuous claim on the part of the houseless? Summarily to thrust a score or so of wretched families into the streets is to make them either criminals or paupers. They must find some place of shelter; and if they are to live by their labour they must live near their labour, the wages of which are, at best, only just sufficient to procure for them necessary food and covering for their bodies.

In the neighbourhood to which I have already referred, four thousand evictions have taken place, or, at any rate, the population has diminished from 22,000 to 18,000, because of a small section of a large puzzle map of courts and alleys having been taken down in order to build great blocks of warehouses. The consequence is, that in the remaining tangle of slums the people herd closer, and that a large number of poor lodgers have gone to crowd other tenements not far distant, and which were already peopled beyond legal measure.

For this acreage of vice and wretchedness of which I speak is close to the great City thoroughfares—almost within sound of Bow bells. It is about a quarter of a mile in extent each way, lying between the Charterhouse and St. Luke's, close to the new meat market at Smithfield on one side, and Finsbury Square on the other. One entrance to it is directly through Golden Lane, Barbican; the other close to Bunhill Fields burial-ground, along a passage which bears the significant name of "Chequer Alley." It is a maze of intersecting and interlocking courts, streets, and alleys, some of them without any thoroughfare, some reached by ascending or descending steps, many of them mere tanks, the walls of which are represented by hovels inhabited by costermongers, French-polishers, dock-labourers, chair-makers, workers at all kinds of underpaid labour and poor handicrafts. Many of the women go out to work at factories, or at charing, and the children are—or at least were—left to the evil influences of the streets, till another and a more powerful influence began to operate, slowly, but with the impetus of faith and love, to touch even this neglected and miserable quarter of London with "the light that lighteth every man."

In this square quarter of a mile—which, starting from the edge of Aldersgate, stretches to the further main thoroughfare abutting on the pleasant border of the City Road, and includes the northern end of Whitecross Street—there are eighty public-houses and beer-shops!

I tell you this much, as we stand here at the entrance of Golden Lane, but I have no intention just now to take you on a casual visit either to the dens of wretchedness and infamy, or to the homes where poverty abides. I must try to let you see what has been done, and is still doing, to bring to both that Gospel which is alone efficient to change the conditions, by changing the hearts and motives of men. I may well avoid any description of the places which lie on either hand, for, in fact, there is nothing picturesque in such misery, nothing specially sensational in such crime. It is all of a sordid, miserable sort; all on a dreary dead-level of wretchedness and poverty, full of poor shifts and expedients, or of mean brutality and indifference. There is no show-place to which you could be taken, as it is said curious gentlemen were at one time conducted to the dens of the mendicants, thieves, and highwaymen of old London. Even in the tramps' kitchen the orgies, if there are any, are of so low a kind that they would be depressing in their monotonous degradation.

Let us go farther, and enter this strange wilderness by its fitting passage of Chequer Alley, so that we may, as it were, see the beginning of the work that has been going on with more or less power for more than thirty years.

I think I have some acquaintance with what are the worst neighbourhoods of London. I have made many a journey down East; have studied some of the strange varieties of life on the shore amidst the water-side population; have lived amidst the slums of Spitalfields, and passed nights "Whitechapel way;" but never in any unbroken area of such extent have I seen so much that is suggestive of utter poverty, so much privation of the ordinary means of health and decency, as on a journey about this district which I long ago named "The Chequers." Each court and blind alley has the same characteristics—the same look of utter poverty, the same want of air and light, the same blank aspect of dingy wall and sunken doorsteps, the same square areas surrounded by hovels with clothes'-lines stretched from house to house, almost unstirred by any breeze that blows, shut in as they are in close caverns, only to be entered by

narrow passages between blank walls. It is the extent of this one solid district, almost in the very centre of City life, that is so bewildering, and wherein lies its terrible distraction.

The labour of reformation has begun, but the labourers are few. For more than thirty years some efforts have been going on to redeem this neglected and unnoticed neighbourhood, which lies so near to, and yet so far from London's heart.

Let it be noted that this moral effort had gone on for nearly twenty-nine years before any very definite attempt was made to improve the physical condition of the places.

In 1841 a tract distributor, Miss Macarthy, began an organised endeavour to teach the depraved inhabitants of Chequer Alley. In 1869, a sanitary surveyor, reporting on *one* of the courts of this foul district, recommended that the premises there should be demolished under the "Artisans' and Labourers' Dwelling Act," because the floors and ceilings were considerably out of level, some of the walls saturated with filth and water, the others broken and falling down, doors, window-sashes and frames rotten, stairs dilapidated and dangerous, roof leaky and admitting the rain, no provisions for decency, and a foul and failing water-supply.

The "pulling-down" remedy, without any simultaneous building up, has been extended since then in a locality where a model lodging-house, which has been erected, has stood for years almost unoccupied, because, like all model lodging-houses in such neighbourhoods, neither the provisions nor the rentals are adapted to meet the wants and the means of the poorest, of whom, as I have already said, a whole family cannot afford to pay more than the rental for a single room, or two rooms at the utmost.

But we are wandering away from the work that we came to see. Look at that wistful young native, standing there quite close to the mouth of Chequer Alley. Ask him what is that sound of children's voices from a casually-opened doorway, and he will tell you, "It's our school; yer kin go in, sir, if yer like—anybody kin." As the name of the institution is "Hope Schools for All," his invitation is doubtless authorised, and we may well feel that we have made a mistake in thinking of the Italian poet's hopeless life, for out of the doorway there comes a sound of singing, and inside the doorway is a room containing fifty or sixty "infants," seated on low forms, and many of them such bright, rosy—yes, rosy—clean—yes, comparatively, if not superlatively clean—little creatures, that hope itself springs to fresh life in their presence. It is thirty-four years since Miss Macarthy, with an earnest desire to initiate some work of charity and mercy, resolved to become a distributor of tracts, and the district she chose was this same foul tangle to which I have asked you to accompany me. Bad as the whole neighbourhood is now, it was worse then. It was never what is called a thief-quarter, but many juvenile thieves haunted it; and the men were as ruffianly and abusive, the women as violent and evil-tongued, as any who could be found in all London. Instead of being paved, and partially and insufficiently drained, it was a fœtid swamp, with here and there a pool where ducks swam, while the foul odours of the place were suffocating. No constable dare venture far into the maze without a companion. But the tract distributor ventured. In the midst of an epidemic of typhus, or what is known as "poverty" fever, she went about among the people, and strove to fix their attention on the message that she carried. The religious services commenced in a rat-catcher's "front parlour," and at first the congregation broke into the hymns with scraps and choruses of songs. The crowd which collected outside not only interrupted the proceedings, but threatened those who conducted them with personal violence, and even assaulted them, and heaped insult upon them; but the lady who had put her hand to the plough would not turn back. In the midst of her patient and difficult work she herself was stricken down with fever. She had visited and tended those who were suffering. When the question was asked what had become of her, the barbarous people learnt that she was like to die. Perhaps this touched the hearts of some of them, for she had begun to live down the brutal opposition of those who could not believe in unselfish endeavours to benefit them. She recovered, however; and, supported by others, who gave both money and personal effort, the beneficent work went on.

In this large room where the infants are singing we have an example of what has been effected. Some of the little creatures are pale, and have that wistful look that goes to the heart; but there are few of them that have not clean faces, and who do not show in the poor scanty little dresses some attempt at decent preparation for meeting "the guv'ness."

There is a school for elder children also; and in the ramshackle old house where the classes are held there are appliances which mark the wide application of the beneficent effort that has grown slowly but surely, not only in scope, but in its quiet influence upon the people amidst whom it was inaugurated. Yonder, in a kind of covered yard, is a huge copper, the honoured source of those "penny dinners," and those quarts and gallons of soup which have been such a boon to the neighbourhood, where food is scarce and dear. Then there was the Christmas dinner, at which some hundreds of little guests were supplied with roast meat and pudding, evidences of how much

may be effected within a very small space. Indeed, this Hope School, with its two or three rooms, is at work day and night; for not only are the children taught—children not eligible for those Board schools which, unless the Board itself mitigate its technical demands, will shut up this and similar institutions before any provision is made for transferring the children to the care of a Government department—but there are "mothers' meetings," sewing classes, where poor women can obtain materials at cost price, and be taught to make them into articles of clothing. There are also adult classes, and Sunday evening services for those who would never appear at church or chapel but for such an easy transition from their poor homes to the plain neighbourly congregation assembled there. There are evenings, too, when lectures, dissolving views, social teas, and pleasant friendly meetings bring the people together with humanising influences. I have even heard that there is a flower-show in the summer—fancy a flower-show in Chequer Alley!—and I know that there is a summer excursion for the poor little denizens of this dread district, where the poor and the needy are at last hearing the voice that calls them to Divine grace and tender loving-kindness.

But here is a youthful guide—a shambling, shock-headed lad, with only three-quarters of a pair of shoes, and without a cap, who is to be our guide to another great work, on the Golden Lane side of this great zigzag, to the "Costermongers' Mission," in fact. You may follow him with confidence, for he is a Hope School boy—and that means something, even in Chequer Alley.

BRAVEST OF ALL.

A STORY FOR BOYS. IN THREE PARTS.

PART III.

MANY days passed, and Robert Nicholson lay in bed, seriously ill. He had taken a severe cold from standing so long in wet clothes, and the doctor in attendance expressed grave fears as to the result of the attack, although comforting the boy's parents by assuring them that his constitution was naturally very strong.

David Maxwell was a daily visitor, but he had been obliged to content himself with sending messages of sympathy to his friend, for he was not permitted to enter the sick lad's room at present. Young Dashford had called several times, having heard that the accident on the mill-pond had resulted in serious consequences to Robert.

The very first day the invalid was strong enough to speak a little, he asked to be allowed to see David Maxwell, who had sent up a message by Mrs. Nicholson.

David was permitted to come up-stairs to see his friend for a short time; and the impetuous fellow was almost overpowered with grief when he saw how ill Robert looked. He had never before seen any one so seriously ill, and the thought immediately came into his mind that his friend must be dying; but had he considered for a moment, he might have understood that his presence in the room was a proof that his friend was improving.

Robert put his hand out, saying very feebly, "Davie, I'm glad to see you!"

David could not speak for a moment, his heart was so full; but presently he answered, "I wanted to come up long ago, Bob, but the doctor would not hear of it. Are you better?"

"A little better, Davie," said Robert, feebly.

Then David's tongue was loosed, and he said, "That young scamp who brought all this about was at school next day as well as ever. I only wish he was ill instead of you! He richly deserved to be ill."

A faint smile on Robert's face showed that he understood the nature of David Maxwell's good-will towards himself, although it was expressed in such extraordinary language.

"Don't say that, Davie! Poor little Briscoe might have died!" he said.

"And so might you have died, Bob!"

"Yes, I might have died, David," said the sick boy, slowly and seriously, but without any fear in his voice, as he looked steadily into his friend's face and repeated the words again as if to himself, "I might have died!"

Whether he intended his words to make any impression on his companion or not, they seemed for a short time to create a silence between them, which was broken presently by David asking, "Weren't you afraid, Bob?"

"Of what, Davie?"

"Why, afraid of what we were talking about a moment ago."

"Dying, do you mean?"

"Yes, weren't you afraid that you might die?"

A moisture seemed to dim the sick boy's eyes for a brief moment, but his tears gave place to a pleasant smile.

"Yes, Davie, I *was* afraid at first," he said.

"And you're not afraid now, I suppose, the danger is over?" inquired David.

"The doctor doesn't think me out of danger yet; but I'm not afraid."

"I'd be in a dreadful fright if I were in your place then," said David, candidly.

"Why should you be afraid? you must die one day, David."

"Yes, of course we must all die; but I think if I knew I was in danger I should be frightened."

"My mother explained to me about God, and about Jesus dying for me on the cross. I wasn't afraid when I knew that there was nothing to fear, David."

David had often heard these things before from his own parents, but they never seemed to have arrested his attention particularly until now, when Robert Nicholson used them. The near approach of death is a very solemn time for all, but especially solemn for a bright eager thoughtless boy, who finds for the first time in his life that it is a terrible reality. He left his friend after a little, wondering much to himself what secret power it was that had removed Bob Nicholson's fear, and made him brave, even in the face of death itself.

He came to see his friend almost daily, but strange to say he carefully avoided all reference to the subject that had occupied their attention on the occasion of his first visit. Bob often wondered whether David had forgotten all about the matter, but people do not necessarily forget because they do not give expression to their thoughts.

As the early spring approached Bob regained strength rapidly, whilst poor Ned, who had all this time been a patient sufferer, grew weaker and weaker. Long before this the doctor had whispered to Mr. and Mrs. Nicholson that their youngest son would not again be strong, and that his stay amongst them might now be counted by days. Very tenderly and lovingly was the poor sufferer watched and tended, Robert devoting his days of convalescence to cheering him by reading and conversation.

One bright April day, long to be remembered, David Maxwell had come to spend the afternoon with his friends, for Ned looked for his cheerful face now almost as eagerly as Bob did, and welcomed his coming with as much glee. But this day Ned was too weak to do more than welcome him with a smile, and so the boys sat close to the bed and talked to each other in whispers, until Ned went off asleep. By-and-by he woke with a start, and tried to sit up, as if he wished to look about him. His brother was bending over him in an instant, soothing him.

"Have you been dreaming, Ned?" he inquired.

"No, Bob, not dreaming! I saw the angels beckoning me to come up hither."

"Lie down and rest, Ned; you were dreaming," said his brother.

But the sick boy protested, as well as his failing strength would permit, that he had seen God's angels calling him, and that he would soon be with them himself.

"Davie, won't you come and live with God?" he asked, turning to where David Maxwell sat, and putting his thin cold hands on his. "I'll be thinking of you in heaven, Davie, and wishing to have you there—won't you come?"

"I'll try, Ned—indeed I'll try!" answered David, with tears in his eyes.

Ned looked with pleasure at him, saying, "Jesus will take you, Davie, if you ask Him. You'll never be able to get there by yourself—won't you ask Jesus?"

"Yes, Ned, I will—indeed I will!" said David, fervently!

Ned passed away quietly to his rest on the following day, and the vision he had seen of God's angels was not perhaps a dream after all—who shall say?

There is in Winchbrook churchyard a quiet grave, beneath a spreading chestnut-tree, where in the summer-time two lads are fond of spending many an hour together in earnest conversation. They are both healthy and strong, but always when they enter this quiet retreat a sense of deep solemnity appears to make them more thoughtful than lads of their age usually are; and one, who is easily recognised by his bright eager face as David Maxwell, not unfrequently lays his hands on his companion's shoulder when they approach the small grave, saying, "You and I remember our promise to Ned, Bob! I understand now what made you so brave in the very presence of death."

C. F. H.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

187. What was to have been the sum of money paid by Haman for the destruction of the Jews?

188. Quote a passage which would show that, after his conversion, it was *three* years before St. Paul knew any of the apostles.

189. What governor of Damascus endeavoured to take St. Paul, and make him a prisoner?

190. It is said of the ostrich that she lays her eggs in the sand to be hatched by the heat thereof. Mention any place in the Book of Job where this is stated.

191. What is mentioned in the Gospels as signs of the coming of rain?

192. What was the origin of the two days of Purim, kept as days of feasting and joy by the Jews?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 448.

176. Jehoiachin (2 Chron. xxxvi. 9).

177. "Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty" (Heb. xiii. 23).

178. By putting an image in the bed with a pillow of goat's hair for his bolster (1 Sam. xix. 13).

179. "And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, Here is Elisha the son of Shaphat which *poured water on the hands* of Elijah" (2 Kings iii. 11).

180. Profaning the Sabbath (Neh. xiii. 18, Jer. xvii. 27, and Ezekiel xx. 24).



(*Drawn by* M. E. EDWARDS.)

SUMMER MORNING.

TO wake of summer morn, and from the grey
Warm roof of slumb'rous vapour, soft and low,
Hear music coming from the quiet bay—
Ethereal beauty, sweetest far away,

Upon the glimmering waters brood and flow;
Divine as is a rose in fullest blow,
With cool dews of the happy dusk of May,
Still dreaming on its leaves, in the first glow;

And listening, deem it half a dream, the while
'Tis lost beyond the headland; and in lieu,
From the open casement where the lilacs smile,
Be visited by airs from beds of blue
Violets and heath. Then rise and walk a mile
By hedges, with the wave-lights dazzling through.

T. C. I.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVIII.—BENEATH THE SUMMER SKY.

THE grasshopper sang its love song to the summer night, the stars came out and stared blindly down at her, and a gentle breeze rose and rustled among the tall grass and the tangled underwood; but still she did not move or stir. Dorothy understood it all now. For the past two years, nay, all her life it seemed to her, she had been dreaming, but now she was wide awake, and would never dream again. Yet she could not realise, after all, the time he had known her, and all he had said, and after those happy days just before her grandfather died, that he did not love her more than Netta. She had not scrupled too to let him see her own feelings, she had been too much of a child, and too innocent, to hide them, but now that she understood that her own heart and its knowledge had chased her out of her Eden into the world's beaten track, the remembrance of all she had said and done flashed upon her. And so, suddenly, pride was born to her, and she stood, her face still resting in her hands upon the fence, and struggled with that bitter sorrow which sometimes comes into a girl's life, yet only once, and while the world is still new and strange to her, and which is as keen and bitter as any that is placed on the world's long list of troubles. It was so dreadful too, she had nowhere to hide herself, no one to tell, or to sympathise with, and the summer and the sun, and the world, and all it held, seemed to have lost their beauty for ever. She, who had waited for his return, and remembered his words and treasured his letter, to be forgotten for Netta, who had only been six or seven weeks in the house, it seemed cruel; and every time she thought of her sister's beautiful face, she knew how hopeless it was to think that he might ever return to her. There seemed nothing left to live for; no one loved her—no one save her brothers, and sister Sally, and even they were getting new tastes and new ideas, and learning to live their lives without her. She would have given anything in the world if some one would have cared for her if only a little, it seemed such a blessed thing, and she shivered in the warm air as she thought of Adrian Fuller's tender tone when he spoke to her sister, and remembered how different had been his manner to herself only that afternoon. She looked up presently, and stared back across the garden at the house, then went slowly down the pathway, and in-doors. She listened for a moment, and heard the sound of cheery voices in the sitting-room, it seemed like a world out of which she was shut, and then she went up-stairs to her own room again, and locked herself in.

"No one will miss me now," she thought; "and I feel as if I could never see him again."

CHAPTER XIX.—THE SCENT OF THE ROSE.

IT seemed to Dorothy when the morning came, that she was years older. "The world was under my feet the other day," she said; "but now I feel as if I carried it on my shoulders;" and the old vexed question came back to her, "What do we live *for*, I wonder?"

"Dorothy, what is the matter?" Netta asked—there was something in Netta's manner that made Dorothy recoil from her—"you look as white as a ghost. I expect Mr. Fuller this morning, and want you to put the study nice and neat." It used to be Dorothy who expected him once.

"I won't!" and she turned round and faced the Beauty with a firm set face.

"Dorothy, what's the matter?"

"Nothing is the matter, only I won't do as you tell me, and I won't let you order me about. You have come home and spoilt my home for me, even the garden," and the tears came into her eyes, for she had so loved the garden; "and you have turned every one against me; no one cares for me, no one at all, and—and you have taken even Mr. Fuller away from me."

"I! how can you be so foolish, Dorothy! I have not taken Mr. Fuller. I have only tried to prevent you from making yourself foolish; why, he could see you were in love with him, and knew it as well as I did."

"He didn't!" said Dorothy, with flashing eyes and face and throat dyed crimson, as she stood also chained to the spot on which she stood, while a faint sick feeling sent a chill into her very heart. Presently, slowly and deliberately, she turned round, and looked at Netta, at her beautiful face and golden hair, at her small white hands and the graceful snowy frill round her white throat, and (for she was so great a lover of all that was beautiful) she found an excuse for her old companion, though she read her own hopelessness in her sister's soft blue eyes. "He didn't!" she repeated softly, her head drooping, and the pride that was new stinging her till she felt almost cowed.

"He did," repeated Netta; "he told me so."

Then the pent-up passion in the girl's heart found expression.

"It is too bad!" she exclaimed, bursting into passionate tears. "And he shall see how mistaken he was, for I will never see him more! And Netta!——" for she determined to tell her sister all she had overheard. "Last night——"

"Netta!" called Mrs. Woodward; "Mr. Fuller is here, waiting for you."

"Say I am not very well," said Dorothy, pleadingly; "and let me lie down a little while; I am so very tired," she added, in a sorrowful voice, that touched even Netta, for she bent over and kissed her sister, though Dorothy shrank from the embrace.

"Lie down a little while," she said, and went downstairs. "Poor little thing!" she said to herself, as she went; "I wish I had not been so cruel to her. She little thinks how well I understand it all!"

"Mr. Fuller is in the study, Netta," Mrs. Woodward said, meeting her at the foot of the stairs, "and I have a note for you from Sir George Finch," and she held it out.

Netta's fingers trembled as they took it, and she sat down on the stairs to read it, and having done so, went into the study to Adrian Fuller.

There was not much painting done that morning; they sat and talked—Adrian Fuller and Netta Woodward—not the Netta who domineered over the household, but a softer, better, more womanly one who seemed to have taken her place.

"Do you know I am not half so good as you imagine," she was saying, gravely looking out at the wild old garden—"not half. I should not make you happy, as you think I should; and poverty—" and she almost shuddered—"poverty would kill me."

"You shall never know it, my darling," he said; "I will work for you, and make a home worthy of you."

"You only love me in idea," she said, calmly; "and because you think I am pretty, I believe in reality that you care more for my little sister Dorothy."

"She is a mere child," he answered, impatiently.

"No, she is a woman, and you know it, Adrian," her voice was almost sad, for she thought of the weary face she had left above. "And she would love you far better than I should, and not mind being poor, and though you say you would work for me——"

"Work!" he interrupted, "I would do anything for you, Netta. "Oh, my darling!" he said, going over to her, and looking down into the clear blue eyes that turned shyly from their long gaze into the garden to meet his own. "There is nothing in the world I would not do for you, if you would once say that you loved me."

She seemed to be struggling against her fate, as she answered—and there was no acting or make-believe in her voice—"I *do* love you, Adrian, but—" and she almost held him from her—"I must not be bound by these words, remember, and there is no engagement or anything like one between us." She gave a sigh of relief as she said the words, and let her head droop for a single moment on his shoulder—"I loved you from the very first, as you did me." How strange it was, that even as she said what he had so longed to hear, there crept over him a feeling of doubt and misgiving, something that was almost like regret, as he thought of the Dorothy whose rose was yet treasured, and whose happy feet had wandered by his side through the summer fields not three months since.

(*To be continued.*)

DAVID IN THE WILDERNESS.—II.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM HANNA, D.D., LL.D., EDINBURGH.

SUCH as we have now described it in its most salient incidents was David's life as an outlaw. The events of the period are recorded in twelve successive chapters of the 1st Book of Samuel. But besides these chapters we have twelve Psalms composed by David himself in the course of this period.* Let us imagine that the twelve chapters, and these only, were put into one man's hands, and the twelve Psalms, and these only, into another's. How different the ideas of David which the two readers might gather each from his own exclusive source of information! The one having the narrative alone before him, might think of David as of a brave and noble youth, who having won in a single day by a single gallant deed, an unbounded popularity, had become exposed thereby for years to the cruel and capricious vengeance of a moody and envious tyrant, who first drove him from his court, then chased him day by day (1 Sam. xxiii. 14), forcing him to make his shifting home in the wildest regions of the country, reducing him and the motley group who clung to his fortunes often to the last extremities of want and danger, and driving him at last as an exile into a foreign land. No want here—in the sudden dangers, the hasty flights, the

* Psalms vii., xi., xviii., xxxiv., xl., liv., lvi., lvii., lviii., lix., lxiii., cxli. See Ewald, Stanley, Perowne, &c.

hair-breadth escapes, the marauding expeditions —of matter fitted to excite the liveliest interest in David's changing fortunes and final fate. No lack of information here as to many a prominent feature in David's character. His power to attract the love and confidence of his fellows; his patience, wisdom, and undaunted courage; his scorn for everything unjust, and mean, and selfish; his capacity for all kinds of command; his frank, manly, gentle, forgiving, altogether unrevengeful and chivalrously generous spirit. And yet, having noticed all these, and lavished on them all the admiration they are so well fitted to excite, how little, after all, of the real David of this period might the reader of the twelve chapters know! Our other reader has only the twelve Psalms to guide him in his notions of the writer's character and condition, and he pictures to himself a poor, desolate, persecuted, yet most ardent and enthusiastic pietist, of the most delicate spiritual sensibilities, subject to many fluctuations of varying spiritual emotions, now sinking into the depths, and sending from them low wailing cries of sorrow and despondency; anon springing, as if with angels' wings, up to the very gates of heaven, leaving behind in his ascent a stream of ecstatic praise that fills the air with its melody. And yet there are not two Davids. The David of the two readers is one and the same man, but that man revealed to us in his double nature, his earthward and his heavenward aspect; his outward intercourse with man, his inward converse with God.

Before bringing the two accounts—the historical and the devotional—together to see how they fit into each other, and mutually cast light upon one another, let us notice one point of beautiful harmony, that comes out at once and most noticeably to the eye. Upon the very surface of the historical narrative is to be seen David's instant and intense recoil from anything that would have imperilled the life of his royal master. It takes a second and closer look to detect as strong a desire to shield Saul's character as to protect his person. Yet to what else than to the generous desire to impute as much blame as he could to others, and as little of it as possible to Saul, can we attribute the very first words that he addressed to the king from the cave's mouth at Engedi: "Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold David seeketh thy hurt?" or the words spoken in his last interview with Saul, when, constrained to take a somewhat darker view of the king's conduct, he yet puts the alternative in this peculiar form: "Now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If the Lord have stirred thee up against me, let him accept an offering: but if they be the children of men, cursed be they before the Lord; for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, Go, serve other gods" (1 Sam. xxvi. 19). Is it not in striking accordance with all this, that throughout those psalms, composed under the cruel and long-continued persecution, never once does the name of Saul escape from David's lips; as little will he lift his pen as lift his sword against the Lord's anointed. He refers often to his persecutors, but with the utmost delicacy of feeling he refrains from ever pointing to the bitterest of them all—either mixing him up with the others, or speaking in the most general terms: "O Lord my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me; lest he tear my soul like a lion, while there is none to deliver." "Be merciful unto me, O God: for man would swallow me up; he fighting daily oppresseth me. Mine enemies would daily swallow me up: for they be many that fight against me, O Thou most High." "For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul" (Psalms vii. 1, 2; lvi. 1, 2; liv. 3). Had it indeed been only strangers that oppressed him; had it been only Amalekites or Geshurites or Gerzites who chased him over the mountains, he had not felt it as he did. With his hundreds against their thousands he had not feared to face them. Mere outward privations or perils had been little to him. He had been trained from boyhood to sleep out among the hills—to have his locks wet with the dews of the night; he had met the lion and the bear, and was as ready to meet wild men as wild beasts in the wilderness. But it was his own king, the anointed of the Lord, that "sought him every day;" it was his own countrymen who chased him as a partridge over the hills. Even their open hostility he could manfully have endured. But when there was flung upon him the "reproach of those who would swallow him up, whose teeth were spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword;" when privily and perversely a snare was laid for him; when working deceitfully like a sharp razor the tongue of malice was opened against him, pouring out devouring words; and when at last he heard that nothing short of the vilest treachery was imputed to him, then it was that his spirit was overwhelmed within him, and from the depths he lifted up his cry: "O Lord my God if I have done this, if there be iniquity on my hands; if I have rewarded evil to him that was at peace with me, let the enemy persecute my soul, yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust."

It was upon a dark background of human falsehood, injustice, and oppression, that David had to look; but the double confidence in his own integrity and in the justice of the Divine government remained unshaken. "Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to

mine integrity that is in me; verily there is a reward for the righteous; verily He is a God that judgeth on the earth. If the foundations be destroyed what can the righteous do? The Lord is in His holy temple; His eyes behold, His eyelids try the children of men. For the righteous Lord loveth the righteous, His countenance doth behold the upright."

It was only as a man among his fellows that David fell back upon his integrity, and found in it such a firm support. It was very different with him when his iniquities took hold upon him, and he felt how sinful a man he was before his Maker. Then it was that his heart failed him, so that he was not able to look up; then it was that his soul was in prison; that he sunk into a horrible pit, and felt his feet sinking as into the miry clay; then it was that as, poor and needy, he cried unto the Lord, and "the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles;" and he bore this testimony as to the Lord's dealing with him at this time: "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit."

Surrounded as he was by scenery so singular, and in many regions so sublime; coming in contact daily with such men as are described to us in 1 Chron. xii., engaged in raids and strifes, often so romantically perilous, what large material did this period of his life supply for lyric odes of the common poetic type, such as David's genius well fitted him to compose! But none such were written by him. The inspiration that prompted the Psalms of the Wilderness had a deeper fountain head, even that pervading, subduing, supporting, elevating sense of God's constant presence, protection, and loving-kindness, by which his whole nature was permeated, to which in these psalms he has given such full and impressive expression, serving thereby to plant and to nourish the same in so many other human breasts. The rocks, the caves, the slippery heights, the waterless river-courses, the bursting thunder-storm, the floods of many waters are, with him, not topics of poetical description, but signs of the Divine Presence, mementoes of deliverance wrought by the Divine Hand, It was from objects that had grown now so familiar to him, that he borrowed some of the most favourite epithets bestowed by him on the Eternal: "The Lord liveth, and blessed be my rock. For who is God save the Lord, and who is a rock save our God? I will love thee, O Lord my strength. The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer. He only is my rock and my salvation; the rock of my strength; and my refuge is in God." No incident of this period was too trivial for David not to see in it and to acknowledge the hand of the Most High. If darkness gathered round him, if his feet had well-nigh slipped down some deep precipice, if he passed harmless through the camp of the enemy, if in flight he sprang over some strong barrier distancing his pursuers, if in the thick of battle he prevailed, it was God who "lighted his candle and enlightened his darkness;" it was God that enlarged his steps under him that his feet did not slip; it was by God that he "ran through the troop and leaped over the wall," making "his feet like hind's feet, and setting him upon his high places;" it was God that girded him with strength unto the battle."

And in that God he placed his firm unfaltering trust, and to Him he gave all the praise. Waking early in "the dark cave of Engedi, he meditates on all the way the Lord had led him; takes his harp in hand, goes forth among the sleepers, seeks some cleft of the rock, looks up to the heavens, and pours his spirit out in prayer and praise: "Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me, for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast. I will cry unto God most high: unto God that performeth all things for me. Be thou exalted, O God above the heavens, as thy glory be above all the earth. My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise. For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds. Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens, let thy glory be above all the earth."

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 27. Paul before Agrippa.

Chapter to be read—Acts xxvi.

INTRODUCTION. Sum up with the children the number of times St. Paul has been placed on his defence—viz., on the stairs of the temple at Jerusalem, before the Council of the Jews, before Felix the Governor of Cæsarea, and Festus his successor. Now once more pleads for himself before Herod Agrippa. From xxv. 23 the scene may be described. The judgment-hall crowded; all the principal officers present, and great men of the city; the king and queen probably seated on a raised daïs, with courtiers and attendants around. What a hold Paul's preaching must have taken upon the city to excite so much commotion. Now the prisoner is brought in—small of stature, pale after two years' confinement, bound with chains to a soldier on each side of him, but looking calm and dignified.

I. THE DEFENCE. (1) *Early life.* (Read 1—11.) Paul begins his defence. Stretching out his hand, as an orator, to call attention, the chain would be seen. Let children see how wisely he begins, commending the king's knowledge of Jewish customs, &c., so as to be able to hear patiently and judge fairly on the questions at issue. Then passes to his early life, well known to all the Jews. To what sect did he belong? Explain that word Pharisee means "separated," and how Pharisees claimed to be most exact in obeying the law. Remind of Pharisees' statement when praying in Temple (Luke xviii. 11), of Christ's rebukes to them for undue importance given to ceremonies (Mark vii. 8). Such an outwardly God-fearing, honest, religious Jew was Paul, how then did he and the Jews fall out? For what does he say he is judged? (ver. 6.) Remind what this hope was: to Adam and Eve, that one should be born of a woman to destroy the power of Satan (Gen. iii. 15); to Abraham, that in his seed all the world should be blessed (Gen. xxii. 18); to Moses, of a prophet like unto him (Deut. xviii. 15). Question the children as to how these prophecies were fulfilled in Christ, born of a virgin, blessing the people by His wonderful miracles, preaching in sermons and parables in a way that none other did, and as a prophet foretelling His own death and resurrection, which had surely come to pass. For Paul's belief in this hope he was accused. He, like them, once opposed Jesus, not seeing in Him the fulfilment of the prophecies. How did he oppose Him? How did the saints bear the persecution? Let children notice how some saints died rather than give up their religion, while some were "compelled to blaspheme." Remind what Christ said as to blessedness of those persecuted for righteousness' sake (Matt. v. 11), and of the three men who were thrown into the fire rather than worship the image (Dan. iii. 25); how Paul would reprove himself for having caused any to blaspheme—*i. e.*, give up their convictions. What a warning to all, not to cause any to offend (Matt. xviii. 4).

II. *Conversion.* (Read 12—23.) The story of the conversion having twice before occurred in the Acts, may be passed over now. Let the teacher dwell on the effects of the change in Paul. Why did Christ appear to him? Not only for his own sake, but to make him a witness for Him, especially among the Gentiles. Show how this was to be done. He was to open their eyes to know their state of darkness and sin; just as Christ had fulfilled the prophecy of great light appearing to the Gentiles (Matt. iv. 16); then to show them Jesus Christ as the Saviour, and forgiveness through Him; then by His power within them to turn from power of Satan to God, and obtain inheritance among the saints. What a glorious message! Could Paul disobey? What then did he do at once? (ver. 20.) To whom did he begin and where? But what were the consequences? Who came to his help? Remind of the vision given him at Jerusalem. By God's help, then, he has continued witnessing to all the great principles of the whole prophecies—viz., the death and resurrection of Christ, and the truth revealed to the Gentiles (ver. 23).

PRACTICAL LESSONS. (1) *The call to repentance.* Paul's message the same as Noah's before the Flood, Jonah to the men of Nineveh, John the Baptist to the people, and Peter on the day of Pentecost. The same message now. Alas, how little heeded! Repent, or perish. (2) *The blessing of repentance.* Paul had one object ever before him—to preach Christ, whom before he had persecuted. Do we try and undo our former evil?

III. THE RESULT. (Read 24—32.) What did Agrippa think about him? Yes! mad, to continue a prisoner for such trifles, as he thought them, as the death of Jesus of Nazareth. But were they trifles to Paul and the Christians? On this fact of the resurrection of Jesus all their hopes based. They *would* be fools otherwise to endure such persecutions daily if no hope in the future (1 Cor. xv. 32). Now seems to see signs of being persuaded in Agrippa's manner. So turns to him with direct inquiry—does he believe his own prophets? Mark the king's answer. "Almost!" Why not quite? Paul has not only talked of faith, but of repentance, and works meet for repentance; and the king not enough in earnest to give up sin. So they merely discuss the prisoner; are obliged to allow that he has done nothing worthy of death or even of imprisonment; but as he has appealed to Cæsar he must be sent to Rome.

PRACTICAL LESSON. *Faith without repentance worthless.* Agrippa was persuaded, but could not give up sin. So often with children. Know perfectly what is right; have read the Bible; know right from wrong; but cannot give up some sin. Love their sin better than Christ. But His commands are imperative; must take up cross, deny self, or else will be rejected at last day. Now is time to choose; may not be able if delay; but Christ himself helps by Holy Spirit.

Questions to be answered.

1. Enumerate the different occasions on which Paul was placed on his defence.

2. Describe his early life, &c., education and habits.

3. What effect had his persecutions on the Christians?

4. What distinct work was set before him at his conversion?

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

THERE was nothing poor John Pemberton liked so much as to talk of what seemed to him the transcendant qualities of the syren to whom his whole honest heart was so loyally devoted, and Mary let him talk to her about Laura's voice as much as he liked, while her own thoughts had flown to that one from whom they were never long absent.

"How charmed Bertrand will be with Laura's singing if she ever lets him hear her," she innocently reflected, little dreaming how for Bertrand alone the Lorelei had striven to hide her gifts that they might burst upon him with a stranger, sweeter charm.

The days and weeks were speeding onward, now counted by Mary night after night as she laid down to rest, with the joyous thought that there was one term less of four-and-twenty hours to be passed, before she could see again the bright blue eyes that even in absence seemed ever shining in upon her life with a light that nothing else could give. He wrote to her often, charming tender letters, full of everything that was interesting to himself, as if he did not doubt her entire sympathy and oneness with him, and she answered, speaking ever of his concerns rather than her own, and when she had occasion to allude to those with whom she sojourned, talking of them always kindly and gently, with no hint of evil in connection with any one of them; she heard, too, often from nurse Parry, who was very dismal and unhappy away from her darling.

Autumn came and went, and winter certainly was dreary enough at Chiverley; but when the frost set in Laura found amusement and excitement in skating with Pemberton and Charlie on a little lake near the rectory, where the perfect grace of her lithe supple form showed to wonderful advantage, as she skimmed along like a bird with her pretty hands extended, and her long hair floating out upon the breeze.

Meanwhile, Mary left alone, went stealing silently into the miserable cottages, where the poor were forgotten in their want and suffering; all she had, and it was little enough, was expended in trying to relieve their grinding poverty to some extent, and even when her wardrobe required renewal she denied herself the tasteful dresses which a young girl naturally likes to wear, in order that she might have more to give away. Her self-denial in this respect placed her at a great disadvantage by the side of Laura, who was always dressed to perfection, as her father knew to his cost; for, poor as they were, the necessary sum for Laura's toilette was never allowed to be stinted in the smallest degree. But if Mary, in her plain black dress, looked unattractive beside Laura's lovely radiant figure, she seemed as an angel clad in shining garments to the poor people shivering with cold and pinched with hunger, to whom she brought comforts of every kind.

One morning, when all the frost had disappeared, and the air was moist and fragrant, Laura was standing at the drawing-room window looking out towards the shrubbery which bordered the green rectory lawn. She was watching Mary Trevelyan, who was outside, at some little distance, with the greatest curiosity as to what could possibly be the meaning of her proceedings, and of the unusual animation she was displaying. She had seen her first walking very slowly along the foot of a mossy bank which shelved upward to a group of fine old trees, evidently searching for some object which she was eagerly desirous to find, and for a time apparently her search was without avail; but suddenly Laura saw her bound forward, and kneel down upon the moss, while, with the utmost care, she took her treasure, whatever it might be, from the ground. Then Laura saw her rise, and stand holding it with both her hands, the one below the other, while she gazed down upon it with such a look of radiant joy on her pale calm face, as never certainly had shone upon it during all the time she had been at Chiverley.

The Lorelei's curiosity was too strongly excited not to be gratified at once, and in a moment she had opened the French window at which she was standing, and ran, fleet and graceful as a deer, to the spot where Mary's dark-robed figure stood within the shade of the trees.

"What have you found, Mary?—what is it?" exclaimed imperious Laura; and at the first sound of her voice Mary started, and made a movement to conceal her treasure, but as Laura came close to her, with the bright piercing eyes scanning her face, her perfect stillness of manner returned, and without a word she opened her half-closed hand, and let her companion see what lay there. A simple treasure indeed it seemed—only a little dewy violet laid on its own green leaf, with a faint exquisite fragrance issuing from it, like the breath of the infant spring. "A violet!" exclaimed Laura, much surprised. She was silent for a few moments, evidently pondering over the matter; then she looked Mary full in the face. "There is something under this, Mary Trevelyan, I am certain. The sight of a violet alone

would not have animated you suddenly as much as if you had received a new soul, like Undine in the story. Tell me, what does it mean?"

"It means spring," said Mary's low voice; and a soft happy smile played on her lips.

"Spring?" said Laura, slowly, while her subtle unscrupulous spirit laboured to probe her friend's secret. Suddenly she clapped her little hands triumphantly. "Spring! I have it! I know what it means. Your brother Bertrand comes in the spring."

"Laura, he is not my brother," said Mary, turning round, and looking at her calmly, though her lips were quivering.

"Oh, I always forget he is not so actually; it seems to me so like it, you know. His parents were quite a father and mother to you."

"They were my kindest friends—no more. My father and mother lie beneath the great Atlantic, and I have no brother or sister in the world."

"I will be your sister, if you like, just as I think Mr. Lisle ought to be your brother."

"Laura, I believe I have explained to you before that I cannot think it right to try to establish false relationships, which are not of God's appointment."

"Oh, very well," said Laura, with her light laugh; "it will come all to the same thing in the end," and she darted back across the lawn. Mary followed more slowly, bearing her little fragrant prize carefully in her hand, while she murmured, "He said he would come with the violets—with the violets; and this is the first!"

Any one less intensely reserved and delicate in her feelings would have enclosed this violet to Bertrand in her next letter; but she would not even thus remind him how the hope of his coming was as the rainbow of promise on the horizon of her thoughts; she laid the tender floweret close to the precious white rose, which had felt the beating of her true heart night and day since Bertrand gave it to her, and waited for the fulfilment of the dear hope of which it was the harbinger.

And he came with the violets. A few mornings later, while the family were at breakfast, the letters were brought, and Laura's keen eyes quickly spied out one in Bertrand's handwriting, which she had learned to know, for Mary, and another, also from him for Mrs. Wyndham; on this last she pounced at once, saying, "Here is a letter for you, Mrs. Wyndham, from Mr. Lisle; shall I read it for you, and tell you what is in it, as you are having your breakfast?"

"People generally like to read their own letters, Laura, but it would be more trouble to fight with you for it than to let you have your will," said her stepmother, languidly; and the Lorelei had torn the letter open before she had done speaking.

"He is coming on Monday week," she said, "and hopes to be here in the afternoon;" and she tossed the letter across to Mrs. Wyndham, while she sat thinking so deeply, that poor John Pemberton could not win another glance from her all through the breakfast hour. Charlie Davenant's good-tempered laughing face meantime clouded over in a manner most unusual to him. During the months that had elapsed since Mary Trevelyan came to the rectory, the young man had watched her quiet silent course with a thoughtful scrutiny, which had in it an element almost of reverence, for she had impressed him as no one else had ever done with the heavenly beauty of that charity of which so lovely a picture is drawn in the Scriptures, and which she seemed to him completely to represent in all its manifold yet harmonious qualities, the charity that suffereth long and is kind, vaunting not itself, seeking not its own, enduring all things, hoping all things, believing all things, walking ever in the more excellent way. He noted, with keen interest, the contrast between her and the brilliant woman who had so fascinated him for a short time. Laura had been to him like a dazzling meteor flashing through the air and shedding round a thousand sparks of brightness; but Mary was like the silver moonlight, white and still, shining steadfast in its pure serenity over the wild waves of the troubled sea.

Had Charlie Davenant been a few years older, with an assured income and a post which could give some confidence for his future and his career, he would probably have allowed himself to think of Mary Trevelyan as one whom he might at least dream of winning to himself one day; but as it was, he felt her to be so far removed from him in every way, that he never thought of regarding her but as a "bright particular star," appearing for a time above his earthly path, to lure his eyes and heart heavenward far beyond even herself.

And there was another reason why he never permitted his enthusiastic admiration to express itself outwardly in more than honest friendship: he felt certain that Mary had already given to Bertrand Lisle the rich undivided treasure of her whole heart's affection; he had watched her when his letters came, he had scanned her face when his name was casually mentioned, and he had seen the light that stole into the soft dark eyes, the tremor of the sweet lips, the faint flush on the pale cheeks.

"She loves him," he said to himself that morning, as he had many a time before; "and she will love him even to the death, yet the Lorelei, who does not know what it means to be true to any one but herself, will lure him from her to gratify her worldly ambition, and my star will be left to fade away alone in a long dark night of anguish! What can I do—what can I do to save her!"

The matter seemed the more difficult to poor Charlie because his father wished him to come home for a few weeks at Easter, which would prevent his being at Chiverley during most of Bertrand's visit.



(*Drawn by* W. SMALL.)

"What have you found, Mary?—what is it?"—*p.* 487.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SPRING had come, and the violets; and then came a fair and smiling dawn, flushing the sky with crimson light, and Mary Trevelyan's wakeful eyes saw the rising of the blissful day that was to bring her back the one love of her constant heart. "At last, at last!" she said, as she looked out upon the sunny world, her face transfigured to a wondrous beauty by the light of joy; but when she took her place at the breakfast-table a few hours later, the mere fact that human eyes were on her had driven the unwonted radiance from her quiet countenance, and made her seem once more what Laura often called her, a statue of snow. Almost the first words spoken referred to Mr. Lisle's expected arrival.

"Does not your friend Bertrand come to-day?" said Mr. Wyndham to Mary. "At what hour do you expect him? I must take the pony-carriage to meet him."

"There is only one afternoon train he can come by," broke in Laura; "at five o'clock."

"Five!" said Mary; I thought it was at 4.30."

"Perhaps; I will look into Bradshaw," said Laura, hastily. "Mary, you would like to go to the station to meet him, would you not?"

"Oh yes!" she exclaimed. "Laura is really kind," she added in her own mind; while Charlie's mental reflection was, "Lurline is at work already, what does she mean?"

"Of course you ought to go," continued Laura, "and I shall drive you there myself. You need not trouble to leave your books," she added to her father; "I want a breath of fresh air, so I shall take Mary to meet the train."

"Very well," said Mr. Wyndham, meekly. But his wife roused herself to say, "It does not seem to me quite a suitable arrangement, Laura."

"Why not?" said Lurline, turning round and looking full at her step-mother with her clear bright eyes. Mrs. Wyndham subsided at once, and said not another word; the idea of seeing Bertrand again so completely filled Mary's whole soul, that she was hardly able to care who went with her, but she was conscious of a slight regret that it was to be Laura rather than Mr. Wyndham. She said nothing, however; and later in the day when she and Laura were in the room alone, the latter said to her, "Mary, is not this your school or choir day, or something of that sort?"

"It is the day I generally practise with the choir in the afternoon, but I shall go to the school and ask them to change it to another time, as I am going to the station."

"But you need not; and it would be a pity, as the girls sing so much better when they are kept steadily to their practice, you will be in plenty of time if you are here by four o'clock; I will have the pony carriage ready for you."

"But surely that would be too late if the train comes in at half-past four!" said Mary, anxiously.

"But it is at five, I tell you; we shall have a whole hour; however, you can come back even earlier than four o'clock, and still have time for the choir."

"Yes, that is true," said Mary, "they need not have a very long lesson to-day."

So, at the usual time she went to perform her self-appointed duty, in trying to make the services in the House of God less irreverent and discordant.

She gave the children all her attention, though her own voice was tremulous, and her heart was beating fast, and when at length the task was over—a little earlier than usual—with a promise to the girls that they should have an extra long lesson next day, she left the school and sped through the village at her swiftest pace, hardly able to bear the tumult of happiness that agitated her quiet spirit, till she reached the rectory gate, and ran on to the door. Then she felt disappointed not to see the pony-carriage waiting. "Oh, I hope they will not make us late in starting," she thought; and she hurried on to the sitting-room, and went in. Mrs. Wyndham alone was there, half asleep as usual. "Where is Laura?" said Mary—and even in that moment of excitement her voice was soft and low—"it is quite time for us to set out."

"Laura?" said Mrs. Wyndham, yawning; "oh, she is gone to the station."

"Gone!" said Mary, in a faint tone.

"Yes; she told me to tell you she found out just at the last moment that she had made a mistake in the time of the train, and that unless she went off that instant it would be too late, so she could not wait for you; she was very sorry. I suppose she took her father instead, but I really do not know;" and Mrs. Wyndham turned round, and closed her eyes. Not a word did Mary utter; softly she left the room, and stole up-stairs to her own, then she sunk down on a chair and buried her face in her hands.

"How can I bear it? Oh, my Bertrand, my Bertrand! he will think I did not care to meet him! my own, my only love!"

But Bertrand would never see those tears or hear that cry; he was at that very moment looking out from the window of the railway carriage, watching with happy expectation the far-off country station of Chiverley to which they were approaching, and feeling perfectly certain that the first sight which would greet him on the platform would be that pure still face, whose dark eyes, true and tender ever, would be so eloquent of a loving welcome. And the train rushed on, and tore thundering into the little station, and Bertrand, the only passenger to alight, as Mary herself had been, sprang from the carriage, and looked round for her. She was not there; but before he had time almost to realise the blank feeling of disappointment he experienced, his attention was

irresistibly attracted by the most radiant vision he had ever seen, which suddenly emerged from among the rough country people who had come to meet the train, like a being from another sphere. Lurline seemed to have attired herself as a representation of spring, with white robes fluttering lightly round her, caught up here and there by knots of delicate green ribbon, a little hat chiefly composed apparently of gossamer white lace, with a bunch of snowdrops surrounded by green leaves in the front, and all her fair hair with its burnished tints was gathered up loosely under it, with many a shining curl escaping from the bond and straying down over her pretty shoulders; her eyes were radiant with sparkling animation, her bright face strangely fascinating in the witchery of its expression, and when she came swiftly forward, light and graceful as a bird, her little feet scarce touching the ground, and her dainty hands filled with flowers, Bertrand thought that he had never seen a more singularly lovely or attractive being. He was so taken by surprise, that after the first instinct of courtesy had made him raise his hat as she came straight up to him, he simply stood and gazed at her without speaking; then with a soft laugh on her lips, and a movement full of grace, she made him a little coquettish curtsey, and said, "Let me introduce Laura Wyndham to you, Mr. Lisle, representative of the inhabitants of Chiverley Rectory, who have sent her to bid you welcome."

"Miss Wyndham," he said, "it is indeed kind if you have taken the trouble to come and meet me; but Mary—Miss Treveleyan—I hope she is not ill?"

"Oh dear no; Mary is in excellent health and spirits. My father meant to have met you but he was engaged, so I volunteered my services. I am sorry you should have no better escort; but I am afraid you must be content with me as a charioteer all the way home."

"A very charming prospect," he said, with a courteous smile; "if I can relieve you at least of the fatigue of driving."

She shook her pretty head. "Oh no, that would never do; but I will go and take my place while you give our unique specimen of a porter some instructions as to your luggage."

She was gone before he could answer, and somewhat bewildered as well as dazzled, Bertrand went off to claim his portmanteaux; as he stood watching the porter disengaging them from the heap of boxes that had been left by the retreating train, his mind reverted to the fact that Mary had not come to meet him with a very wounded feeling; he could not understand it; surely it was a very marked proceeding; and could it really be possible that his quiet Mary, his loving steadfast Mary, had sent this brilliant attractive girl to meet him? What could have been her motive? He felt hurt and perplexed; at the same time the Lorelei was much too bewitching for him to dislike the prospect of a drive with her, though he was not prepared to find that they were to be absolutely alone together. When he made his way out through the little gate, however, he found the shabby basket carriage, with the subdued pony looking more than usually downcast, and Laura already established in her place, with the wind playing in her hair, and her little ungloved hand holding the reins with an easy grace.

"Am I to sit beside you," he said, dubiously, as he saw the narrow space in which the occupants of the front seat were expected to settle themselves.

She turned her bright laughing face towards him. "There is no alternative; your weight, not to say your dignity, would be quite too much for that ignominous little seat behind; jump in, please, Mr. Lisle."

He obeyed, and seated himself at her side, and then, at a word from her familiar voice, the old pony set off at the slow jog-trot from which it never could be induced to vary.

It seemed to Bertrand rather odd that he should be travelling across country alone with a young lady whom he had never seen five minutes before; but he was a man of the world, and since it had been so arranged by no effort of his own, he accepted the situation, and prepared to enjoy it. He leant back with folded arms, looking at the strangely winning face of Laura Wyndham, and thinking that although among the ladies of the foreign court he had seen many a face of more perfect beauty than the Lorelei's, yet he had never seen one with so singular a power of fascination as that on which his eyes were riveted now; he wanted to hear her musical voice again, so he spoke.

"Are you still determined not to let me drive?"

She nodded, setting her red lips together with a smile, and glancing at him with her flashing eyes.

"And why, pray, Miss Wyndham?"

"Because I have an accurate sense of the fitness of things; you and this wretched old pony ought not to be associated together as driver and driven. You ought to drive a splendid bay standing higher than my head, with magnificent action, that arches its neck and paws the ground, and is altogether a glorious animal."

It was impossible for Bertrand not to be pleasantly conscious of the subtle flattery contained in these words, and her fearless manner seemed to suit his new acquaintance well; but the thought passed across his mind how unlike Mary it would have been to have made such a speech.

"You said Miss Trevelyan was well, I think; but I rather expected she would have met me at the station."

"She did think of it, I believe," said Laura, carelessly; "but she has taken a fancy to improve the singing of the school children in our old-fashioned church, where we have managed to say our prayers hitherto very well without the shrill voices of the

village girls being trained to assist, so I do not take much interest in Mary's innovations; however, this happened to be the practising day, and she would not give it up even to come to the station to meet you. I told her I would wait for her as long as I could, if she would try to be back in time, but she never appeared."

Bertrand was silent for a few minutes, not choosing to betray to this stranger how much he felt wounded; it seemed very mysterious, and he thought he would try to probe the matter a little further.

"It is unlike Mary to be so very enthusiastic on any subject; she is usually very quiet and undemonstrative."

"Yes, that indeed she is; but simply because she has nothing to demonstrate; till I knew Mary Trevelyan I never could have believed there could exist a nature so hard and cold and passionless as hers."

"That is not my impression of her," said Bertrand, with a frown, which Lurline saw without turning her head.

"I can well understand that," said Laura; "from what I have heard of you I should imagine you were the last person to understand a character without power of feeling or affection; and any one looking at Mary's calm face and deep dark eyes would be apt to fancy there must be a world of thought and sentiment hidden beneath, but I have learnt to understand her thoroughly, and I have discovered what an utter mistake it is."

"You forget that I have known her from infancy, Miss Wyndham."

"That is, you, a man many years older than herself, have lived more or less in the same house with her for the short period of her life's duration, but if you think that constitutes anything like the knowledge two girls acquire of each other when they are shut up together for nearly a year in a dull country rectory, you are greatly mistaken. However, Mr. Lisle," and the Lorelei turned round her lovely face, with all its power of fascination vividly at work, "I cannot think how it happens that within half an hour of our first acquaintance I find myself seeming to describe unfavourably my very dear friend Mary. I have not the smallest desire to detract from her merits."

"Are you friends with her, Miss Wyndham?" said Bertrand, bending down and looking into her winning face.

"The best of friends," she answered, with her brilliant smile; "there has never been a word of disagreement between us; she is an excellent girl, far better than I am, with nice little formal ideas of duty to which she rigidly adheres with praiseworthy pertinacity, naturally they are all based on her early training, and I dare say to you it will seem very beautiful to note the especial reverence she has for the slightest wish your poor father may ever have expressed; be it what it may that he ever has asked of her, she makes his will her law now, just as much as when he was alive."

The subtle Lorelei! that poisoned arrow went straight to its mark, as the dark cloud that passed over Bertrand's fine face told her; but she had others of yet more deadly power in her quiver, and these she now prepared to use.

(To be continued.)

THE SPHERE OF PRAYER.

"In every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."—PHILIPPIANS iv. 6.

SCIENTIFIC investigation has done much service in the cause of humanity. It has added largely to our stock of truth; and also to our comforts in life, and to the amelioration of suffering; and in many ways aided the advancement of man. This is the mission of true science.

But man has wants which the things of earth cannot satisfy; and sometimes scientific theories would seem to shut out from him any other supply. Among these may be mentioned various ideas with regard to the sphere of prayer. We are sometimes taught, in effect, that the ruler of all things is not *God*, as we were accustomed to believe, but *Law*, that we and all things are in the grasp of an iron and relentless power, that must of necessity grind on in its appointed groove of cause and consequence, and that such being the case, it is in vain that we lift up our feeble voices in supplication, for the laws of Nature are invariable, they cannot alter their stern and rigorous course.

Some reply to such teaching by strongly expressing their objection to be trundled into such a tread-mill of destiny as this. Others appeal to the universal instinct of mankind in the hour of danger or desolation to cry for help to a higher power—an instinct that refuses to be stifled by the dogmas of the scientist—and ask how it can be accounted for on material grounds. Others, again, unfettered by speculation of any kind, simply appeal to the Word of God, which tells us there is a hearer and answerer of prayer, and quote instances of help asked and received, invariable law notwithstanding.

But it is unreasonable either to accept or reject any seeming truth because it appears to clash or otherwise with other truths which we believe. True faith in anything is the result of reason

And when anything new is presented to us as truth, let it be calmly investigated; if it has a proper foundation of fact let us not be afraid of it, for truth can never lead us wrong; and if it is not based on fact it cannot lead us at all.

Putting, therefore, moral objections aside for the present, we will make some inquiry into this doctrine of necessity, and try to find out whether it sweeps away, or puts any limit to the sphere of prayer.

It is of the utmost importance that we understand clearly what we mean by *invariable law*, for not seldom are such phrases used in current literature in a manner so vague and ambiguous, that though in some sense what is said may be true, the inference drawn or the impression left on the mind of the reader may be false.

All the operations of Nature are performed by invisible forces or laws. For the most part we do not know what these forces are, we only see the operation. When, from careful observation, we learn that certain movements of matter always and without fail occur in the same way, we call that a natural law, though in reality it is the work of a number of laws combined. There must be a cause or causes why these movements occur with such certainty, and sometimes we can discover this cause or force or motive power, and we call it a natural law, though this also, for aught we know, may be but the operation of other unseen laws.

Kepler discovered that the planets move in their orbits with a precision that can be calculated to a fraction, but he did not know the force that kept them going so steadily, he only saw the operation. Newton got a step further, he discovered gravitation; this was seeing more than the operation. it was the discovery of the force which holds them in their places—a force whose power can be calculated to a nicety, and whose action is invariable, It is an all-pervading force, of which we know nothing more than its existence and action, whence it derives its power we know not. There are forces behind forces in the mystery of matter, wheels moving wheels away into darkness, till we see the material blending with and moved by the spiritual, or what seems to be that in all nature as in ourselves. Every observer is forced to admit that there is some inscrutable power, a mysterious force, behind those invisible and perfect forces of Nature, something from whence they are derived, and this power the Bible calls God.

It is true that, so far as we know these forces, these laws of Nature, they are invariable; no law can by any possibility be broken. That is true; but it is not the whole truth. It is also true that every law is liable to be counteracted by other laws, and made to work out quite a different result from what it would do if left alone. Every law is rigid in its action, and if left alone would work destruction. If the law of gravitation was not opposed by centrifugal force, our world and the other planets would rush into the sun; if centrifugal force was not held in check by gravitation, they would all be hurled away into space. Unless law were pitched against law everything would in a moment rush into confusion and destruction. But we find that natural laws, each invariable by itself, so counteract and modify each other, that a most wonderful and perfect balance is kept up. We find that there is a nice and intricate adjustment of laws to work out purpose.

It is true that we are under laws that cannot be broken; but it is also true that no law works alone. Every operation of Nature is the result of a number of laws, or forces, delicately adjusted to balance and keep each other in check, and work out the required result. And by the slightest change in the adjustment of even one of them a totally different result may be obtained. One law, if let work alone, would without fail produce a certain result; bring another law to work with it, and both together would produce a result different from either of them if left alone; bring a third law into the combination, and still another result is produced, and so on. With a few forces at work a great variety of results can be obtained by combining them differently. Natural forces always work in combination. Even the formation of a drop of dew is the work of a combination of many laws. The more we know about natural laws we just find that the more wonderful is the intricacy with which they mingle and counteract in ever-changing adjustment for the accomplishment of purpose.

It is true that we are under laws that cannot be broken; but it is also true that although certain laws, under certain conditions, will work out a certain result, yet, by *altering the conditions*, an infinite variety of results may be obtained, and this without breaking any law, for that cannot be, but by bringing them to act upon one another. Thousands of instances of this may be seen in mechanics and chemistry.

It is true that we are under laws that cannot be broken; but it is also true that their rigidness, so far from shutting us in with a wall of destiny, is an "*indispensable condition*" to their being of service in working out our purposes. If their action was irregular or uncertain they would be unmanageable and useless. Water under certain conditions becomes steam, we know that that is quite certain, and can therefore produce steam when we want it; but if, under the same conditions, water sometimes became steam, sometimes did not change at all, or sometimes became ice, it would be unmanageable just because of its uncertainty. It is the very rigorousness

of the laws of Nature, with which some would tie the hands of the Creator himself, that makes them manageable, brings them under the power of will, and fits them for His and our service, so that by proper adjustment we can make those mighty forces our obedient servants.

Forces stern and rigorous, that cannot by any possibility be broken, instead of hedging us in, are, by their very invariableness, made servants on whom we can depend with certainty. We are, in a multitude of ways, continually interfering with the laws of Nature, controlling and guiding them at our will in our daily business. The science of mechanics takes in hand those immutable laws, and adjusts and combines them in many ways to work our will. Up to the measure of our knowledge of how to use them we have them under perfect control; up to the measure of our knowledge we can *prevent* consequences; and if *we*, with our limited knowledge and power, can so manipulate natural laws, how much more God, who is all-knowing and Almighty?

To say that because the laws of Nature are invariable in their action, and that therefore they must necessarily leave no room for God to work freely, is only a half-truth with a wrong inference. If it were the whole truth, freedom of action would be denied to man also, he would be a mere automaton, and some, logically following out their theory, have tried to make him such. But we see that man has freedom, and that this very invariability of laws is an indispensable quality to enable man to use them at his will. He knows what they will do under given conditions, and so he can alter the conditions, and make them work his pleasure.

It is not true that invariable law rules the universe. Laws that are invariable are everywhere at work, but no law works alone. Every operation of Nature is carried on by a *combination* of laws, and these combinations so far from being *in*variable are infinitely *variable*. It is ambiguous and misleading to talk of phenomena being governed by invariable laws. Invariable forces are at work, but always combined and *variable* in combination, and capable of being adjusted to work together in an endless variety of ways. Each law is rigid, but combined, as they always are, they are variable. And in this sense, practically, law is *not* rigid, but pliable and manageable, giving perfect freedom of action up to the measure of our knowledge of how to use them. It follows, then, necessarily, that God, the all-knowing, has perfect freedom of action, and we are not in the grasp of an irresistible iron despotism called Law, but that we only want perfect knowledge to have every law under perfect control.

Invariable law, then, does not limit the sphere of prayer. We are sometimes told that the rigidness of law precludes the idea of prayer being answered; prayer or no prayer, cause must produce consequence in one unbroken and never-ending chain, for law cannot be turned aside, it is irresistible, and will and freedom are crushed before it. To have a Juggernaut car like this for ever grinding on would be a dreadful state of matters, if it were true. But we have seen that laws *can* be turned aside by bringing other laws to bear upon them, that their very rigidness brings them under the control of will, that we ourselves can work them, and produce results at our pleasure without breaking any of them—there is no need for that, but merely by managing them. And surely we cannot deny to God such power as we ourselves possess? Reason compels us to believe that he holds them in absolute control, and that therefore when we cry to him he can make all things work together for our good.

We are sometimes told that though, on account of the rigidness of law, prayer be in vain with regard to material things, it is available to obtain spiritual blessings. But the spiritual, as far as we know, is under law as well as the material. Analogy would lead us to expect this; and, so far as we can understand its workings, mind is governed by law. This comes to be partly from the mysterious connection between mind and matter: natural laws, through our material frame, are brought to bear on the motions of the mind, everybody knows and feels this. We also see law operating on the mental in the form of *motives*. *Motives*, in the realm of mind, perform a function somewhat analogous to *forces* in the realm of matter. We balance motives against each other on mind when we are considering how to act in any emergency, just as we balance natural forces against each other in effecting our purposes on matter, and it is always in combination that motives act on the mind in producing a determination of will, just as natural forces act in combination in producing a result in matter. Here we see law governing the *im*material; and the same theory that makes prayer vain in the region of the material, if carried out to its logical conclusion, would make it equally in vain in the spiritual.

But although both the Bible and science recognise governing law in all things, neither of them puts any limit to the sphere of prayer. Science tells us we are *not* bound to the iron wheel of destiny, but under the free government of an intelligence whose knowledge and power is vast and inscrutable. Science leads us up to the Bible, where we learn that this intelligence is our Father who is in heaven.

The human heart in its hour of extremity instinctively turns in its helplessness to a power higher than itself—to one that is Almighty, and

who has all things under his control. This instinct of faith cannot be stifled; the heart *will not* be cheated out of its birthright by heartless half-truths of science.

The sphere of prayer embraces all things with which we have to do, and includes all circumstances. Yet, when we pray for any blessing, we are also to work for it, if it is in our power to do so. The value of prayer can never be tested by using it alone and comparing with the result of natural means used alone. And we can never distinguish between the effect of means and of prayer along with means, for to us they are inseparable. Our tests are not subtle enough for that; such things are not subject to chemical analysis; they belong to a region which reason as well as revelation shuts us up to believe, but of which we know but little.

We have seen that God is free from the shackle of law, that without breaking any laws but by *working* them he is free to bring about anything he pleases in answer to prayer.

It may be asked, "Are there things which interest us that it would be foolish or stupid to make a subject of prayer?" We think not. Our heavenly Father is interested in our well-being. His love and sympathy is constantly surrounding us; and surely, with the confidence of children in a loving father, it is natural that we should carry all our sins, our joys and sorrows, and all our interests to Him in prayer, and seek His aid and guidance and blessing. Even things that are very unlikely to be altered at our petition are to be no exception. Our Saviour Himself prayed that if it were possible His cup of suffering might pass from Him, but only if it were the Father's will. It was the cry of His weak human nature for help in the hour of darkness. And though the cup could not pass from Him, His prayer was answered by heavenly visitants coming to strengthen Him. Surely this is an example for us. When we are sore pressed let us not idly reason about the unlikelihood of our cup of suffering or whatever is against us being removed; let us simply tell our Father in heaven all about it, and he will see us through it in some way. What a rock we have here on which to plant our feet and *stand* in the battle. "The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth; he will fulfil the desire of them that fear him; he also will hear their cry and will save them."

J. HUIE.

IN PERIL

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

IT was a Sunday evening in June. The day had been very hot, even in the country, where a cool breeze, springing up every now and then in the shade, played among the leaves of the old elms, or the spreading oaks, or the stately beeches.

And now the sun, beginning to sink in the west, was casting smooth broad shadows over the soft green turf, checkering it with light and shade; whilst the sea, though still sparkling and rejoicing in the sun's rays, no longer gave forth the glare of mid-day, but lay calm and tranquil, reflecting back a clear softened light, and mirroring each passing cloud that floated in the bright blue heavens above.

The little village church, nestling among its old yew-trees, half way up the grassy slope of the hill, looked out upon a fair scene, which appeared fairer than ever that lovely summer's evening, when the sweet calm and peace of Nature was brooding over everything, and busy working life seemed suspended for a while, in order that all might have an opportunity of rejoicing in the spirit of beauty that was abroad, sent to bear upwards on its wings heaven-born thoughts and aspirations for yet nobler purer things.

A little lower down the hill, under the protecting shadow as it were of the church, stood a little whitewashed cottage, with honeysuckle-covered porch facing the sea, and little piece of garden in front, full of stocks and sweet-peas and white pinks, and other easily-reared flowers, which grew freely, and flung their perfume on the breeze as lavishly as if they felt they were placed in a favoured spot, and rejoiced in return to give out their tribute of sweet scents to add to the enjoyment of the passer-by.

Within the porch, on a low seat, sat an old woman, with black gown, but spotlessly white cap, the border of which formed a framework for a face so calm, so sweet, so peaceful, it seemed as if the mind —of which the face was as it were but the mirror— must have attuned itself to the spirit which that evening pervaded the scene upon which she gazed. All storms, all strivings, all sorrows, appeared laid to rest; the repose of those who ride safely at anchor within the harbour seemed to have settled down upon her spirit.

At times, it is true, a cloud was accustomed to dim her aged eyes; but this evening no trace of it was there, for ever and again she glanced down upon the open pages of her Bible, which rested on her knee; and when next she looked out over the smooth waters,

her brow was as unruffled as they; her expression one of patient hope and quiet confidence. Her finger rested on the words, "Though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence."

"'The uttermost part!'" she murmured to herself; "aye, though he has, may-be, wandered to the uttermost part—so far that none but God can reach him—yet still He says He will gather him from thence! Why should I doubt? Is distance anything to Him? Don't His mercies reach from the one end of heaven to the other? Then they can reach even to that far country in which, may-be, he's wandering still, and they can fetch him back and bring him to his Father's home. 'From the uttermost part!' Oh, my son, my son! if I could but see thee brought back, I should have no other earthly wish! But, though I may not live to see it, I believe that it yet shall be. Something seems to whisper to me this evening that the mother's prayers have pierced through to the Father's ears, and have won a blessing for the erring one."

* * * * * *

In London the sinking sun that evening looked upon a very different scene, especially in the densely populated parts inhabited by the poorer portion of the community. There the heat was stifling, the sun's rays having beat down with scorching power all through the long day, until the very air—if by chance the faintest breath of it arose—seemed hot and unrefreshing.

People dragged themselves to their doors, or congregated on the shady side of the narrow streets, as soon as the sun, in moving on, had left one side in shade; but go where they might, they seemed scarcely able to breathe. Rendered irritable by their sufferings from the heat, quarrelling and disputing appeared more than ever the order of the day, even the children adding their shrill cries or clamorous complaints to swell the general discord.

The squalid unwholesome dwellings seemed more than ever unwholesome this evening, the dirt and wretchedness more conspicuous, the fumes of tobacco and beer or the odours of decaying vegetables rotting near more offensive, if possible, than usual.

It was to escape from such a scene as this that James Forrest suddenly resolved to spend what money was still left in his pockets after last night's carouse in making an excursion into the country—somewhere, anywhere, so that he might escape for a few hours from this poisonous atmosphere, and find a breath of pure fresh air to cool his heated brow.

He could not tell, nor did he stay to inquire, how this craving for country sights and sounds had sprung up in him after lying dormant for so long, he was only conscious of its presence, and obey it he must. So, half an hour later found him seated upon the top of an omnibus, rolling onwards in the direction in which green fields and the open blue sky might be found.

Although it was Sunday he was still in his everyday working-clothes, for he had long since ceased to make any efforts to look respectable on that day. He would only have been laughed at by his neighbours had he attempted such a thing; and as nothing was now farther from his thoughts than entering a place of worship, it mattered little about his appearance.

He sat moodily, never glancing at his fellow-passengers, or exchanging a word with them, as the omnibus rattled over the stones. Strange that that noise of incessant rumbling seemed to him this evening like the roar of the sea, breaking in, wave after wave, upon the beach! He had not stood upon the sea-shore for years—not since he had left his native place, in his self-will and restless desire for change, to seek his fortune in London, and that had been five years ago—but yet that roar sounded in his ears almost as if he had been listening to it yesterday.

Suddenly, a louder rush than usual, a bigger wave dashing itself to pieces, brought before his mind's eye, by the power of association, a small white-washed cottage that stood within hearing of those waves. It had a porch, in which was sometimes seated the figure of a widow woman, with anxiously expectant face, which brightened up as a step drew near, and greeted with a sweet smile of welcome the returning one. That young man had been himself, that loving gentle woman his mother.

He started as he arrived at that point in his reverie, and found that the omnibus had reached its destination, and that he must descend.

(To be continued.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

193. What means did our Lord, on one occasion, use in healing one who was deaf and dumb?

194. What was the means whereby the priest knew how much of the sacrifice to take for himself?

195. Where in the New Testament, do we find any mention made of the trade of the fuller?

196. Quote any passage from the Old Testament where it is stated the people were exceedingly terrified because of the abundance of rain which fell.

197. By whom were the Pharisees and Sadducees called "a generation of vipers?"

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 464.

181. Because the garments were made of a coarse woollen fabric which shrank very much in washing.

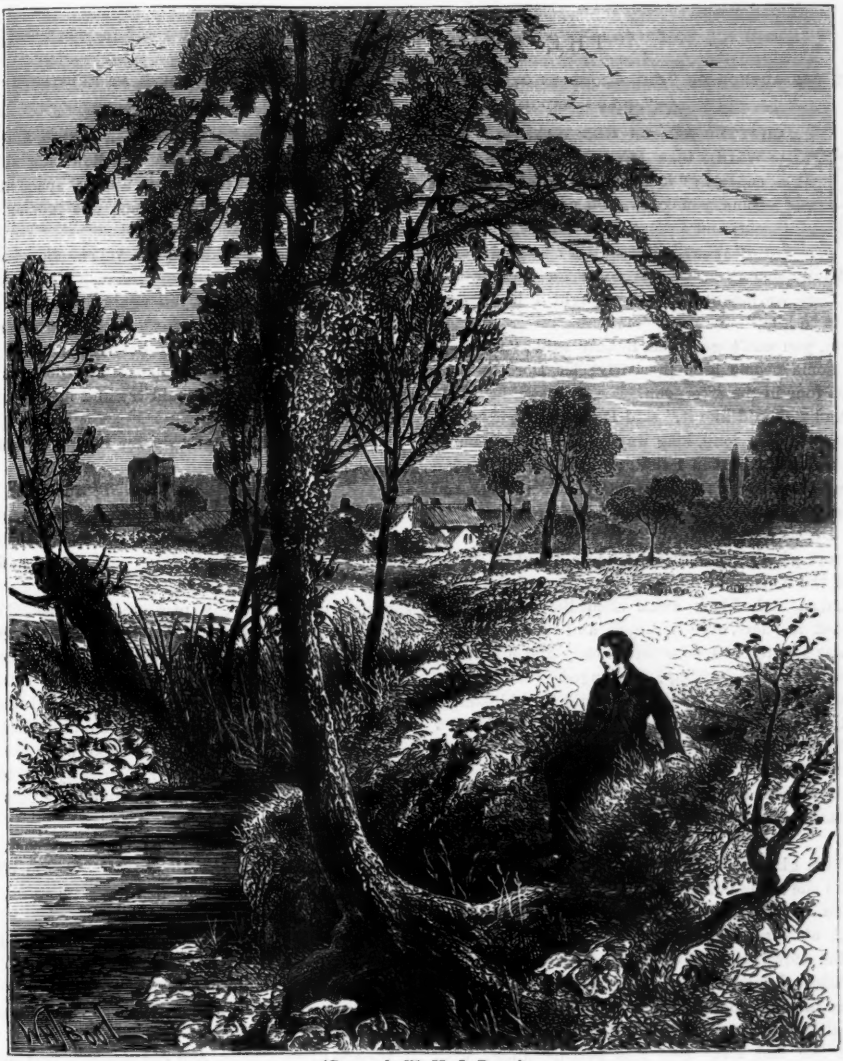
182. Uncle (1 Chron. ii. 16).

183. 2 Kings vi. 11—15.

184. Mark i. 13.

185. Because the land was God's, and they were only strangers and sojourners there (Lev. xxv. 23).

186. St. John (John xviii. 6).



(*Drawn by* W. H. J. Boot.)

SABBATH CALM.

LAPT in a dream of peace the Sabbath lay,
The sunshine playing on its placid breast;
All Nature seemed to know the sacred day,
And hush its hoarse unrest.
The trees basked moveless in the sunny glow,
The birds skimmed silent through the breezeless air;
The very surge's murmur was as low
As is a whispered prayer.

So placid hung the blue sky stretched above,
So peaceful lay the bright earth spread below,
So gentle was the water's waveless move,
So faint and hushed its flow,
That I, o'erwearied with this rude world's storms,
By clamorous week-day tempests toss'd and driven,
Could almost deem I breathed the air that forms
The eternal calm of Heaven.

THE LATE WILLIAM LEIGHTON.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XX.—ON HER WAY.

"I WILL take it, mamma," she said, eagerly; "it is the day all the people come, you know, and you must not be out, and I do so hate visitors."

"What is the matter?" asked Netta.

"An important letter has come for your father, sent here by mistake, and I thought I had better take it to him."

"Oh, you can't go," the Beauty said; "we shall have some people here presently; let Dorothy go." It was four in the afternoon.

"And I should like it," said Dorothy, eager to get away; "it is a long, long way to the Strand, but I shall walk it, and then I shall go into Covent Garden coming back, and walk down the centre avenue and look at the flowers. Yes, do let me go, mamma."

So Dorothy went.

It was a long way, but she was so thankful to be out of the house and thoroughly alone, and she drew her hat, a little black straw absurdity, with a tuft of black feathers, over her eyes, and trudged along. She was so wretched, so utterly lonely and miserable, and so tired with fretting; she longed to lie down by the way to sleep. "I am sure it would be a blessing," she thought; "and I am of no use in the world now at all," and pondering over that thought, she went into her father's office, and delivered the note. Mr. Woodward was engaged; she did not ask to see him, and came away at once.

"I am glad papa was engaged," she said to herself, as she made her way from the Strand to Covent Garden. She delighted in the centre avenue, most of all at spring-time though, when the primroses and the snowdrops and violets first came; but it was a pleasant dreamy walk always. There were summer flowers in profusion, though it was late for them, but they all seemed to Dorothy as if they belonged to a world she had left. She was getting angry with Adrian Fuller, more and more every time she thought of him, for even if he had seen she liked him he might have kept the knowledge to himself, and not have talked about it to Netta, and have told herself, as he had in manner if not in words, that it was useless. It was a terrible thing to remember, and pride and sorrow struggled for a mastery, till her cheeks burnt, and yet the sorrowful tears were in her eyes.

"I must go home," she said, with a sigh, and she took a last look at the masses of flowering shrubs and trees, all heaped together in a small space at the end of the avenue. Suddenly some one touched her shoulder.

"Miss Dorothy," said a quiet voice. She turned round quickly. It was George Blakesley.

"I am so glad to see you again," he said; "I called at your house this afternoon to apologise for not coming last night, and I heard where you had gone, and that you should come and look at the flowers, so I told them I would try and find you, and bring you home again.

"No," she said, hesitatingly, for she had so wanted to be alone.

"Yes, do let me," he pleaded; and then she laughed a little, she could not help it, for he seemed to think it would be such a treat, and so she assented, and they went up the avenue once more, and he bought her a cluster of roses at one of the grand shops, though Dorothy protested against it; he seemed so pleased to see them in her hand, though he said little, and Dorothy could not help—it was not in woman's nature to help it—being a little flattered and pleased, and contrasting his manner and that of the others, who let her live among them unnoticed and uncared for. He came at a time, too, when she was so unconsciously longing for sympathy, or to be soothed, and raised from all to which the past few days had lowered her.

So they set out together on their way back. It was nearly half-past six when they left the centre avenue, and it was a long way to Hampstead, but they both liked walking.

"I was so glad when I saw you," he said; "I caught sight of that little funeral-like plume on the top of your hat, and thought you were beneath it." They had got a good way on their journey when he said this.

He was always quiet, and did not talk very much, even that evening, and Dorothy looked up at him, at his broad shoulders and faded straggling beard, and at his untidy dress—he was always careless in his personal appearance, and yet he could not be mistaken for anything but a gentleman. He talked to her, as Adrian Fuller never did now, of books (but of books that were altogether of another type from those she had loved to linger over in the shady garden) and of

his work and studies, and many things that were beyond Dorothy, until at last she wondered if after all he might not be able to understand her, and to answer that question which she was always vainly asking herself. They were nearly at Haverstock Hill before she found courage to ask him about it. He had been silently walking by her side for some minutes, as if almost forgetful of her presence, and yet he was thinking of her intensely.

"You are so fond of work," she said, wonderingly; it seemed strange that any one should find happiness in what so many tried to shirk.

"Of course I am; and if I were not I would make myself so."

"Do you know, Mr. Blakesley, she said, at last, with a sigh, "I do so often wonder what we live *for!*"

"The old question, Dorothy, in another form," he said; "we live chiefly to be of use to others, to do some good which shall repay the world for its life and light and shelter."

"The old answer," she said, fretfully; "you think every one should work. Yet, for instance, what *could* I do?"

"You can help those around you, and try to make their lives better, if only in little things; and you can do a great deal."

"No, there is nothing I can do, excepting just reading and playing and things like other girls."

"Do what you can do best, or learn something and strive to do it as best it can be done, and improve upon it and make it useful to others. There is always plenty of work for those whose hands are willing, and, depend upon it, it is one of the keys to happiness. Everything must be paid for, Dorothy, and the good we do and the works we leave, are the means with which we pay for our place in the world. We cannot even rest till we have earned the right to enjoy it."

"But I do so hate work," she said; "and it isn't *wrong* to do nothing, is it?"

"I think it is," he answered; "certainly, from a religious point of view it is. Half the teaching of Christ may be summed up in helping those around us, and working. Nay, if we do these two things properly and thoroughly, we shall have accomplished half of our duty towards our fellow-men. We have no more right to squander away our lives in idleness than we have to squander away our own or even another person's money with which we are entrusted."

"I shall never be of any use," she said, hopelessly. They were near Hampstead now, and she was wondering if Adrian Fuller was there as usual. "Did you see Netta?" she asked, changing the conversation suddenly—"I mean this afternoon?"

"Yes, I went out into the garden to her," he answered; "she was sitting under the sycamore-tree with Mr. Fuller."

She turned away with a quick movement of impatience.

"There is a short cut this way," she said, presently, about to turn off.

"Let us go the long way," he answered, taking her hand, and drawing it tightly through his arm. "I want to talk to you," he said, awkwardly, but she only shrank away from him. "You know what it is about without my telling you. Don't you think you could give me a different answer from last time?"

"No, oh no! no indeed!"

He did not reply, only still kept hold of the hand upon his arm. They were among the Hampstead lanes by this time, and no one could see them, so they went a little farther on their way; she thinking how different this was from the tone of those at home. *They* did not care for her; and here was George Blakesley by her side longing to spend his whole life with her. She turned round and looked at him, as if to see whether he was different from other people. He was not handsome like Mr. Fuller, that was certain, and she remembered that Tom had said he was "washed out," and she understood what he meant. No, he did not look like a hero, and yet there was something gentle about him that pleased her, especially then, when she longed so much for sympathy. He looked down into her face, and he had soft kind eyes. "Well, my dear little child," he said, softly, "what is it?" There was something so grateful to the girl in his manner, and he called her child too, just as Adrian Fuller always did.

"I was wondering," she said, in a dazed manner, "if you——" but she stopped, and could not finish the sentence. He did for her.

"If I love you? was that it, Dorothy? I love you more than any one in the world," he said; "and the greatest desire I have in life is to marry you."

No one had ever loved her but he, this clever man beside her, who said he cared for her more than for any one in the world. She could not help being touched by it, and it soothed her pride too, which had been so wounded, and for a moment the thought shot through her, that if she married George Blakesley, Adrian Fuller could never again think and tell Netta (her cheeks burnt with shame as she remembered it) that she was in love with him. The tears came into her eyes, and rolled slowly down her cheeks, and he, seeing them, bent over her, saying tender things and soothing ones, begging her to care for him as he did for her, his dear little innocent girl, whom he had not been able to forget.

"Try and care for me, dear," he said; "you shall not be married yet, or annoyed, and I will wait till you have learned to think I am not so dreadful as you do now."

"It isn't that," she said; "I don't think you dreadful, but I should never do, indeed, and I hate work!"

"Then you shall do nothing, my child, till some day you have learnt to hate *that*, and then we will plod on together. We cannot live our whole lives in day-dreams."

"And I should be so sorry to leave them"—she was thinking of home, but suddenly she stopped, for she knew how little they would miss her; she was nothing much to them, and though George Blakesley said she was the world to him—"I mean Will and Sally and Tom."

"They should come and see you and you them as often as you please."

She went on a little way farther. They had walked about so long; it was getting dark, and the shadows were clinging about the trees, and lingering low over the fields—the trees and fields among which she had walked with Adrian Fuller only three months ago.

"The same, the same, yet not the same,
Oh never, never more!"

"Well?" he said; and he came to a standstill, and stood looking at her.

She looked back at him long and wearily. She was so tired of the world and of all in it, that she did not care much what became of her; but she thought it would be something great to have the power of making a whole life happy, as he said she could make his; she, a simple girl who knew nothing beyond her own fancies and dreams, and scraps of knowledge picked up in the wild weedy garden at home, and he, a clever man, sought for in society, and listened to with attention by the thoughtful and educated men of his day. She thought, too, of his words long ago, that in life we should all try to make something beautiful, and that she could make his life so.

"Would it make you so *very* happy?" she asked, slowly and sadly; for it was like taking yet a last farewell of the old life and the old dreams.

"My dear child," he said, gravely, holding down her hands and looking into her face, "it would make me more happy than any words can tell."

She made no reply, only let her head droop low down on her breast to hide the tears on her cheeks again.

"Very well," she said, faintly, at last; and then George Blakesley knew that he was accepted; and so Dorothy was engaged.

She almost tottered on, clinging to his arm, not that she repented yet, at any rate, only the feeling was so new and strange. Then suddenly, when they got to the gate, she began to realise all that had happened, and to feel afraid.

"Don't tell them," she said; "don't let any one know."

"Why not?" he answered. "They *must* be told, you know."

"Oh, but not to-night," she pleaded.

"You are not ashamed of me, Dorothy?"

"No, oh no; only they will all be in the garden;" and she was almost thankful—when she thought of how Netta and Adrian were probably together—for what she had done.

"Well, I am not going to stand up and make a speech, dear; you must leave things to me now;" and he touched her hand.

And then, with a caged feeling, and a frightened step, she entered the house.

(To be continued.)

THE TRIPLETS OF THE BIBLE.

BY THE REV. J. HILES HITCHENS, AUTHOR OF "THE FURNACE," "THE FACE OF THE KING," ETC.

V.—THE THREE WITNESSES.

"And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one."—1 St. John v. 8.

THERE is nothing to fear from the intense activity of men's minds in relation to the grave questions of religious thought. Debate will lead to decision. Inquiry will end in enthusiastic attachment to that which is divine. Even opposition must be transformed into assistance. The banner of Heaven-given truth must be borne in sunny triumph from every field of conflict. Numerous and determinate have been the efforts to dethrone Christ, to destroy or pervert His life, to dishonour His name, distort His words, and overthrow His influence in the world: but all in vain. The career of Immanuel will outlive the most searching criticism. Everything connected with Himself, His teaching, and His disciples, was exposed to the eyes of the world. Nothing was done clandestinely. Secrecy, disguise, suppression, were heartily denounced. Every veil was rent. Jesus came before the world with the proofs of His Messiahship as prophets came with signs and wonders, as princes come with insignia of royalty, as an ambassador comes with his credentials. His words were, "If ye believe not me, believe the works." "Believe me for the very work's sake!" Both the Founder of our holy religion and His followers invited scrutiny, and never refused a reason for the hope that was in them. "I speak as unto wise men; judge ye what I say." "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." In such words were men exhorted to exercise their reason, and so form their conclusions.

The design of the apostle in the words quoted

above was to give the nature of the evidence of Christ's Messiahship. He supplies three witnesses, the importance of which cannot be overrated. He does not say, nor even imply, that these are the only testimonies that can be adduced; but he furnishes these because they are harmonious, conspicuous, decisive, and probably because they were the three witnesses upon which, in his own ministrations, he was accustomed most fully to enlarge. In considering the passage let us bear in mind that the words "*in earth*" are interpolated—that those words, as well as the whole preceding verse, are not found in 112 out of 113 Greek manuscripts extant that contain this Epistle, that they are not found in the Greek fathers, the ancient versions, nor the Latin copies previously to the tenth century. The words "*in earth*" were introduced to correspond with what had been inserted immediately before in relation to the "three that bear record *in heaven*." We prefer to read the apostolic words thus:—"This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For they that bear witness are three, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one."

Now let us take each of these witnesses, observing how, in relation to Christ personally, and in relation to Christian truth, of which Jesus is the source and subject, that the water, the blood, and the Spirit, bear distinct and undeniable testimony.

The water. What is its testimony? How *did* and how *does* it bear witness? "This is He that came by water," says John, pointing back the thoughts of men to that solemn hour when Christ was baptised. The period having arrived for Jesus to commence His personal ministry, to come out from His privacy, and appear before the world as man's Teacher and Saviour, He journeyed from Galilee to Jordan that He may submit to the ordinance of baptism at the hands of John the Baptist. It was not from a sense of personal sinfulness that He thus submitted Himself, but from an earnest resolute intention to fulfil all the demands of the law. According to the Levitical law, Christ's connection with the people of Israel rendered Him legally impure. Though in Himself free from all taint of sin, yet He was included under the general declaration of uncleanness brought against the Jews by God through the prophet Haggai. "So is this people, and so is this nation before me, saith the Lord; and so is every work of their hands; and that which they offer there is unclean." Though innocent, yet Christ must suffer for His people. As an Israelite He became subject to the law, and He was wishful to "fulfil all righteousness." John hesitated to baptise Christ. He felt himself a servant in the presence of the Great Master—a sinner in the presence of ineffable purity. But Jesus removed John's objections, by reference to the Levitical consequences of the act—an act for which John had been specially raised up, and, in anticipation of which, John's appearance had been foretold seven hundred years before. John being satisfied, the ordinance of baptism was proceeded with, and was attended by outward phenomena of a most significant order. The heavens were opened. A light, "bright as the tenfold glory of the sun, yet lambent as the softly burning stars," enveloped Him. The Spirit, in the visionary form of a dove, descended, and a supernatural voice, "fearful exceedingly," proclaimed Jesus to be the "beloved Son" of the Eternal Father, acceptable because of the glorious work upon which He was about to enter, as well as because of His own essential excellence. *Thus* Jesus "came by water." Thus the water testifies of Christ's Messiahship. He was publicly set apart to the grand mission, for which He entered the world, at baptism, when heaven bore open testimony that the enterprise upon which the second person in the Trinity had entered met with the perfect approval and sympathy of the Father and the Holy Spirit. From that hour Jesus, before God, angels, and men, was devoted to the work of saving the world, consecrated to death, even the death of the cross. From that hour He possessed a personal consciousness of His unique position—a consciousness which, like a consuming fire, left only three years for His holy calling. That baptism was the inauguration of Christ's high priesthood.

And still the water testifies to Christian truth. As there is but one use of water in the New Testament economy, we must look for the testimony in the administration of baptism. That ordinance has been a permanent and palpable witness to Christ. None can observe that rite without, if thoughtful, recognising the fundamental doctrines which it at once suggests. By it we indicate our belief in the depravity of human nature, the defiled condition of the spirit of man, and the absolute necessity for divine cleansing. By it we express our belief in the existence of a fountain open for sin and for uncleanness. We confess the efficacy and sufficiency of Christ's atoning work. We proclaim our confidence that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." By baptism we signify the necessity for, and possibility of, regeneration. We allow that if we submit ourselves to the power of the Holy Spirit we shall be "saved by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Baptism is thus a public profession of the doctrines and duties of the Christian religion. It is the Gospel set forth in figure. It seems to say to all spectators that as water cleanses, refreshes, and revives the body, so the

blood of Jesus spiritually operates; and that as the water must be applied by a power without the subject, so the atoning and purifying blood of Immanuel must be applied to the heart by the Spirit of God. He must "purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God."

The blood. What is its testimony? As the water inaugurated Christ's ministry, so the blood terminated it. By the one He was consecrated to the work of saving humanity; by the other He executed and consummated that work. The very first intimation given fallen man of a coming Deliverer, was one which associated that Deliverer with suffering and bloodshedding. Very frequently the world was taught, both by the ceremonies of the priests and the direct predictions of the prophets, that He who should come as a Saviour would shed His blood for the race of man. "When Moses had spoken every precept to all the people, according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the New Testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover, he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission."

Yes, the teaching of the Mosaic dispensation was to this effect, that He who was to come as the antitype of all the Jewish sacrifices, should shed His life-blood for helpless man. So when the Saviour appeared He became *the* "Man of sorrows." Six times His blood was shed: at His circumcision, in His agony in the garden, when He was scourged by the ruthless tormentors, when He was crowned with thorns, when His hands and feet were pierced at the crucifixion, and when, after death, one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, "and forthwith came thereout blood and water." None of that blood was shed for Himself, but for others, even for all mankind. That blood "speaketh better things than that of Abel." It speaketh to the troubled heart of man, and tranquillises it; it speaketh to the hardened spirit of man, and subdues it; it speaketh to the sin-stained life of man, and cleanses it. Every blessing of salvation man owes to the blood of Christ. Redemption is "through His blood." Justification is "by His blood." Sanctification is by the blood which cleanseth from all sin. Final victory is "through the blood of the Lamb." Heavenly honours will be ascribed to "the blood of the Lamb." Thus the blood testifies to the Messiaship of Jesus.

Moreover, prior to the Saviour's departure from among men, on that last and most solemn night He spent with His disciples in the guest-chamber, He instituted the Lord's Supper to be a permanent representation and memorial of His death. Then it was that He took the cup, and said, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Just as Christ instituted the one ordinance—baptism—to convey truth to men, so He introduced the other—the Lord's Supper—to teach men concerning Himself. As the former was to be a sign of solemn verities, so the latter was to be an enduring witness. Water and blood were both ordained to testify of, and point to, Christ. Every time the people of God approach the table of the Lord, and partake of the visible memorials, the blood speaks aloud of the Redeemer. The bread and wine are emblems of the body and blood of our Saviour. The broken bread tells of His crucifixion, and brings to remembrance the language of the prophet, "He was wounded for our trangressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with his stripes we are healed." The broken bread being eaten, and the poured-out wine being drunk, teach us that it is alone by personal appropriation of Christ to ourselves that we can be saved—that as eating and drinking are essential to physical life, so partaking of Jesus by faith is necessary for spiritual life. The words of the Divine Teacher are brought to our remembrance—"He that eateth me shall live by me." And the participation of these emblems being a social matter, not designed to be observed alone in privacy, suggests the oneness of the Church of Christ—the intimate union existing between all the members of Christ's body.

In this manner the blood of Jesus is a constant witness to Him and of Him. Well will it be for us if we can realise more and more the preciousness of the Saviour's sacrifice. Well will it be for us if we can ever plead that blood as shed for us, and show that blood sprinkled upon our hearts, even as the blood of the Paschal Lamb was sprinkled upon the lintels of the house-doors of old. Washed in that blood we shall be happy and hopeful both in the shady vales of life and in the troubled waters of Jordan.

During the late American war, the Hon. George Stuart, of Philadelphia, a noble servant of the Lord, who conducted a Christian commission to the wounded and dying, one day forgot the password. As he was riding forth on one of his errands of mercy, the sentry, after challenging him, said, "I ought to shoot you; but I give you the chance of getting the right password, though I dare not tell you myself." Mr. Stuart rode back, and obtained the password, and then coming up to the sentry again, he said, "Young man, I hope you know the password for heaven; you will be asked for it only once." "Yes, sir," replied the

soldier, "I thank God I do, and I learned it from you in the Sabbath school. It is 'The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.'" Aye, that is the passport which is honoured of God, and accepted at the gates of the New Jerusalem. With that password we can confront the legion emissaries of hell, and safely force our way through the serried ranks of our bitterest enemies.

The third witness referred to by the Apostle is *the Spirit*—that is, the Holy Ghost.

During the entire period of the Saviour's ministry the Eternal Spirit bore testimony, but it is not specially to that the Apostle refers. The water was witness to Christ at the beginning of His ministry; the blood was the testimony at the end of His visible career; and the Spirit became the witness after His decease. It is to that special testimony borne by the Holy Ghost, subsequently to the completion of the Saviour's life-work, that the inspired penman alludes. That testimony began at the Saviour's resurrection. He was "quickened by the Spirit." "He was declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by His resurrection from the dead." The testimony of the Spirit was more fully given on the day of Pentecost, when the promise of Jesus to His disciples in the Upper Room was fulfilled. That the gift of the Spirit was a witness to the acceptance and ascension of Jesus, the Apostle St. Peter very forcibly proved, when he said, "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses; therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ." The written word which is in our houses and hands is the work of the Holy Spirit, and that word points to Jesus. Christ Himself said, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." Every touching narrative of the life of Christ; every doctrine concerning Christ; every promise from the lips of Christ; every epistle on the love, beauty, glory, sufficiency, and claims of Christ; every word that directly or indirectly calls the attention of the mind or the emotions of the heart towards Christ is a testimony from the Holy Spirit. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The evangelists could not have penned the Gospels had not the Holy Spirit brought all things to their remembrance. There was much that was prophetical, parabolical, perplexing, and even somewhat that was painful to the disciples, which would render a clear remembrance most improbable. Some of Christ's addresses were too long and elaborate for the strongest unaided memory. It was necessary, therefore, that all should be repreached to those four men who undertook to record the life and labours of their Lord. That Holy Ghost who "quickened" the sacred body of Jesus and raised Him from the dead, brought to remembrance the sacred words which Jesus had addressed to His people. And the Inspirer of Scripture is still the Interpreter thereof. He unlocks the truth, He unfolds the mysteries of revelation, He applies the healing balm to the yearning stricken soul of man. The heart of man naturally is veiled. The eyes of men are holden that they cannot see. It is not till the Holy Spirit opens the eyes to discern the force and fulness of Divine truth, and presents that truth in a light in which man can receive it, that he appreciates or comprehends it. Then the man is filled with rapt emotions from the vision he obtains; and he understands the words of Jesus when He said of the Spirit, "He shall glorify me, for He shall receive of mine and show it unto you." Besides all this, it must be remembered that the true Christian has the Spirit as a witness *within* him. He that believeth hath the witness in himself. The Holy Ghost takes possession of the godly man's soul, and confirms the verdict of conscience. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." "Hereby we know that He abideth in us by the Spirit which He hath given us."

Such, then, are the three Witnesses, and these three agree in One—agree to establish the character and claims of One Person, agree to recommend the saving power of One Physician, agree to confirm the prophetic words of One Teacher, agree to invite all men to One Saviour, agree to point out one and only one way to the Beatific Presence. Who, with such testimony, will dare question the credentials of Immanuel? With three such Witnesses, like a threefold cord that cannot be broken, who will be so slow of heart as to repudiate the authoritative demands of the Divine Lord?

Now, more than ever, men are coming to see that Jesus is worthy to receive all honour and power. Now, more frequently than ever, hearts are adopting the language of St. Thomas, and prostrate in humble confidence and love are exclaiming, "My Lord and my God!" The world must allow Christ's character to be original. The Sun of Righteousness rose on time full-orbed, and retains, as He ever will, His unwaning, supreme, perennial glory. Ages will only cause His effulgence to be more clearly seen, and His elevating influence to be more fully felt. They who now stand away from Him will come to see that He is light to the darkened mind, life to the inanimate affections, truth to the fickle thoughts, wisdom to the way-

ward judgment, bread to the hungry heart, rest to the weary soul, author and finisher of faith. All in all, a paragon of excellency, a gem of the rarest and richest worth! Never will another such worthy and winsome being appear upon the world's stage. Never shall the eye of man see one beside Him who is "altogether lovely." A living poet sings very charmingly:—

"Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrow lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace;
Ring in the valiant and the free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land;
Ring in the Christ that is to be."

Can human conception rise to a higher altitude than the lofty character of Jesus? Can more be expected or even wished than that we have in Immanuel? Never! never! To the living, loving, unchanging, and eternal Christ may we all and always cling, for without Him we can do nothing.

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER XIX.

THERE was complete silence between Bertrand and his companion for a few minutes, then suddenly Laura pulled the pony up short in the very middle of the road, and turning round, fixed her eyes, all filled with changeful flashing light, full on his face, and said to him, frankly, "I will tell you what I have been thinking, Mr. Lisle: here you are coming into a house amongst a set of strangers, with only one person of the whole number whom you think you know, but in truth do not; and you are really just like a man entering on an unexplored country, where he may find himself surrounded either by savages that will roast him alive, or by gentle islanders that will offer him the pipe of peace; and it seems to me that you are very much to be pitied."

"Especially if you are a specimen of the savages," said Bertrand, laughing.

"Just so; have I not been malignantly tearing to pieces the angelic character of my dear friend? but in spite of that evidence of my ferocious disposition, will you trust me, Mr. Lisle, if I do you an essential service, as I think it would be, and tell you all about the inhabitants of Chiverley Rectory before you have to make an outward acquaintance with them?"

"But they are all your nearest relations," said Bertrand, still smiling; "what can you do but praise them?"

"Even if they were I should speak out," said Laura, composedly, "or I should play you false, and that I would not do for the world; but as it happens, my father is the only relation I have amongst them, the rest are not more kin to me than to you; and when you come to know me, Mr. Lisle, you will discover that I have the dreadful fault in this punctilious world of being perfectly unconventional and outspoken; I say whatever I please without fear or favour, and I do not care in the least who I offend, nor much more who I win;" and she cast one of her gleaming glances at him.

"Plenty of the last I should think," he said; "but Miss Wyndham, do, by all means, give me the fullest description you can of my future acquaintances; I have not the smallest idea of what the family consists."

"My father, first of all, at fifty-five still a curate, therefore unsuccessful, therefore poor, therefore miserable; his second wife, my step-mother, and your cousin, comes next—your cousin," continued Laura, reflectively, when she had started the old pony once more on his course; "I wonder if you and she have inherited the same family qualities! Mr. Lisle, is it your intention to pass the term of your mortal existence in profound slumber, only diversified by intervals of consciousness for the purpose of imbibing nourishment? And do you give no other sign of animation except incessant yawning?"

"Well no," said Bertrand, laughing, "that is not precisely the style of life which commends itself to me."

"Then they are not hereditary characteristics; but you have there a brief analysis of Mrs. Wyndham's present history. Next in the actual family comes an individual whom I do not pretend to understand or to describe—we are greater mysteries to ourselves than to any one else, are we not?—Laura Wyndham, whom you will hear called Lurline, and Lorelei, and all sorts of pet names."

"Ah, Lurline! the beautiful syren of the Rhine! I can understand that the title applies well to your outward aspect; but she is dangerous, that lovely witch, and you can hardly be that."

"Dangerous! oh dear, I wonder what danger any one could be in from me!" said Laura, with the most innocent air in the world; I should not like the name if I thought it implied that—however, I really do



(*Drawn by* W. SMALL.)

"Her hands full of dewy flowers."—*p.* 508.

not care what any one names me, if only they do not call me Miss Wyndham, I do detest that odious formal designation."

"But those who have no right to call you anything else must address you in that way, like myself, for instance."

"Why must you? have I not told you I care nothing for the world's customs, and I hate conventionalities of all kinds. Here you are coming to be one of the family for some weeks, and why on earth should you not call me Laura, just as you will call that pony Bob, by which name he has been known ever since he has existed on this lower sphere."

"It shall be just as you please, of course," said Bertrand, courteously; thinking, as he looked at her, that he had certainly not seen any one at all like her in his life before; he smiled when he contrasted her freedom of speech with the courtly manners of the ladies with whom he chiefly associated on the Continent; but he was very much amused by her, so he encouraged his strange companion to go on with her account of the inmates of Chiverley.

"Mary Trevelyan comes next," said Laura, "but I shall not repeat what I have already told you about her, you think you understand her better than I do, but the day will come when you will find that I am right, and you are wrong; we will pass on, however, to John Pemberton: he is a young man who has come to read with my father for the purpose of taking orders, for which he was not originally intended, so he is rather beyond the ordinary age of pupils. How shall I describe him to you? he is so good, so saintly, one of whom the world is not worthy;" and Laura's voice softened, and her expression changed to one of meekness and tender feeling. "You could hardly imagine what a true devoted heart he has; poor dear John, I wish I could have a better hope that he will be happy in the future!"

"Why should he not be happy?" asked Bertrand.

"Ah well," she said, with apparent hesitation, "people's affections are not always to be won, even by those who deserve them; but it is hardly well for me to speak of John Pemberton, so we will go on to the last on our list. Charlie Davenant is another pupil of my father's, a good-tempered commonplace sort of fellow, of whom, I think, it may be recorded, at the close of his career, that he has performed one great feat in inspiring Mary Trevelyan with a certain amount of life and animation."

"How was that?" said Bertrand, turning sharply round upon her.

"Because Charlie, being a sober youth, has fallen in love with the staid Mary, and she to him does seriously incline."

"Do you mean that they are engaged?" exclaimed Bertrand, involuntarily grasping Laura by the arm, so that she turned away her head to conceal a smile.

"Oh, as to that, I dare say Mary would tell you that there is no formal engagement, because for the present, marriage is not possible for them; but there is no doubt it will end in that. As yet Charlie is too young, and his father would not make any provision for him till he has proved his constancy to his present choice. He has always been disposed to fall in love with every young lady he meets, as I know to my cost," added Laura, laughing so gaily that the admission did not jar on her hearer's delicacy as it would otherwise have done; "it was awkward for me, as I could not quite quarrel with my father's pupil, so I established myself as his adopted sister, which suits very well."

"Perhaps Mary Trevelyan has done the same," said Bertrand, eagerly.

"No, no, answered Laura; "she is far too matter-of-fact; she told me, in the most solemn manner, that she did not approve of unreal relationships, and that she preferred more binding ties of another description."

Bertrand turned his head away, stung to the quick. Was this the reason why Mary had failed to meet him at the station? Had she shrunk from looking him in the face because she had given away the love to which he almost felt he had a right; yet, after all, he had no definite right, she was perfectly free as he was. He would have been wiser, perhaps, if he had invaded the sanctuary of death, and spoken to her of marriage and happiness while his father's corpse yet lay in the house; but no, if she had loved him so lightly, or not at all, as to have transferred her affections to this young man, it was well that he had not compromised himself. Bertrand Lisle had no fancy to be refused—such a thing had never happened to him, and never should; and then suddenly, while these bitter thoughts coursed through his mind, he seemed to hear a sad wailing voice rising out of a far-off grave, with the echo of the unforgotten words he first had heard by his father's bed of death, "Bertrand, these were her words, 'He is now, and ever will be, my one and only love.'" Surely it could not be that she had changed so soon? Well, he could but wait and judge for himself; and having arrived at this conclusion, he turned back to Laura. She had been furtively watching the varying expressions of his face, and her instinct enabled her to read his thoughts as plainly as if they had been written in a book.

"Mr. Lisle," she said, very softly, "we are close to the rectory now; let me say how earnestly I hope you may be entirely happy and peaceful during all the time you pass under its roof."

Her manner was very charming as she said this, and he thanked her warmly. "I have had a wonderfully pleasant welcome at all events," he said.

"And you will not forget that I was your first friend, among the Wyndhams at least. If I can ever do anything to conduce to your happiness here you will frankly make use of me, will you not?"

"I shall not forget your kindness, most certainly, and I should think you must always conduce much to the happiness of every one in whose society you are placed."

"I should like to make this dull place brighter for you, at least," she said; and then she turned slowly round, and brought to bear on him all the wonderful sweetness of which her expression could at times be capable, in one brief earnest look; for the hour she had so deftly won for her own purposes had come to an end, and she had already detected that which Bertrand had not yet seen—a dark robed figure standing just within the rectory gate, looking out anxiously along the road.

"There is Mary Trevelyan waiting for Charlie Davenant, no doubt," she said, as the turn of the road brought them right up to the gate, which Mary had already flung wide open.

But Bertrand's eyes had fallen on the well-known well-beloved figure, and for the moment all the poison that had been poured into his ears was forgotten; he only knew that it was Mary, his young pure love, who stood there, and in an instant he had bounded from the pony carriage, and had caught both her hands in his. "Mary, dear, dearest Mary!" he exclaimed; and she lifted up her dark eyes, filled with such a rapture as he had never seen in them before, while she breathed, in a scarce audible whisper, "At last!"

"You are glad to see me then?" said Bertrand, with a smile half sad half reproachful, as some of Laura's insinuations began to return to his mind.

"Glad! oh, Bertrand!" and Mary's hands involuntarily clung to his, while her head drooped over them, as if bowed down by excess of happiness; but she had no time to say more; for the Lorelei's clear sweet voice rang out through the air. "Good people, do you mean me to drive over you? I would pass on and leave you to your nursery recollections, if I could do so without danger to life and limb."

As a matter of fact there was abundant room for her to pass, had she chosen to do so, but Bertrand and Mary were too much absorbed to notice this. Mary started, and coloured painfully at her words, while Bertrand laughingly apologised. They both turned and went towards the house, while Laura walked the pony beside them at a foot pace, and joined merrily in the conversation. In this guise they reached the door, where Mr. Wyndham stood waiting to welcome his guest, and Mary did not see Bertrand alone again that night.

CHAPTER XX.

Bertrand Lisle had come to England at this time with the firm intention of definitely asking Mary Trevelyan to be his wife; but he went to his room on the first night of his arrival at Chiverley with all sorts of conflicting feelings combining to bewilder him. He was dazzled by Laura, doubtful of Mary, and quite perplexed as to his own position. The whole of the Lorelei's conversation with him had been most skilfully managed by her, so as just to convey the impression she wished in an indirect manner, but of all the arrows in her shaft, there were two especially which had struck home to his heart with peculiar keenness: first the insinuation that Mary would at all times obey his father's wishes at any cost to herself; and secondly, the intimation that she had become attached to Charlie Davenant. There are few men who would accept of a sacrifice in order to win a wife, and Bertrand certainly was not one of them; if Mary Trevelyan gave herself to him it must be because she loved him, and not because his dead father had desired the alliance; and if any other had won her heart he would be the last to interfere with her choice; in fact, he did not consider that he had any right to do so; he remembered very well the words he had spoken to her by the new-made grave, when he told her that his father's wishes were his most truly also, and by those words he considered himself morally, though not legally, bound to her. But he also very well remembered that she had made no answer to them, and that in so far as it might be considered that he had conveyed to her then his wish to marry her, she had neither accepted nor rejected him. At the time he had firmly believed that her silence was eloquent of a love which rejoiced in the prospect of their union, but he had no actual ground for the supposition beyond the sentence so solemnly repeated by his father on his death-bed, as having come from Mary's own lips, and it was just possible that the old man had been mistaken; or at least, if that was impossible, as to the actual words which he had so carefully treasured in his memory, it was at least conceivable that Mary might have been influenced to some extent in uttering them, by the desire to gratify the last wish of her best friend in his dying hours.

Bertrand lay awake for a long time pondering over all these considerations, and the final result at which he arrived was precisely that which the Lorelei most desired: he would wait and watch all concerned, and then be guided by circumstances; instead of seeking, as he had intended, the very first opportunity of asking Mary to join her fate finally to his, he would simply treat her with the affectionate kindness of their earlier years, and say not one word of marriage till he was well assured, as he had been until now, that she loved him and him alone.

"I will have no half-hearted wife," he said to himself; "she must be mine altogether or not at all." It was not without a pang that he thus contemplated the possibility of losing her; nor was it only caused by wounded pride, for Bertrand Lisle did love Mary Trevelyan—better perhaps than he knew himself—with a deep, long-standing, earnest affection; though he did not at present feel for her that overmastering,

passionate love which would make it seem as if the very light of life were blotted out should he lose her; and yet, even after he had come to the formal determination that he would wait and test her feelings to himself, there was all the time an underlying conviction in his heart of hearts that Mary Trevelyan was indeed his own, that all her love was surely his; for the vision of her sweet pure face rose up before him, with the dark eyes, still and deep as fathomless waters, and he felt that whatever else might be doubtful about her, this at least was certain, that she was truth itself in all she said and did, and that if she had indeed uttered the words his father had reported, she had meant them in their fullest sense.

"She would not be false even to give peace to the dying," he murmured; and with this last reflection, Bertrand's handsome head sunk back on the pillow, and he went off into the profound slumber which usually carried him, with his good health and easy conscience, so lightly from one day to another.

In his dreams however there came to him another image, as different from that of fair quiet Mary as is the morning star blazing in the dim skies of early dawn from the white rose in whose heart the dew-drops lie like pearls.

All night he was haunted by a bright bewitching face, with flashing eyes and radiant smile and arch sweet looks, that came and went with the fitful fancies of sleep in a hundred changeful aspects.

When Bertrand awoke next morning, and gradually came to understand where he was and what the day was likely to bring forth, his first thought was, that he should see again that strange and lovely Lorelei; his second, that he should once more hear the low soft voice of gentle Mary.

We do not intend to trace out in detail all the arts by which Laura Wyndham laboured to separate Bertrand Lisle from his first love, and win him to herself. It is sad enough to know that there are in the world persons who will leave no stone unturned to compass their own ends, and who care not over what broken hearts or untimely graves they have to step in the attainment of their object; sad enough to know that the character we are describing is no fiction, but a living reality, and while we trust that the history of this erring soul, with her perverted gifts, may act in some measure as a warning to those who may be tempted to enter upon tortuous paths, yet it can never be a salutary process to unfold the windings of the serpent evil, and show by what means the rarest qualities, that might have been used to noble purposes in the service of the God who gave them, may be degraded to the basest uses, and made the ministers of falsehood and cruelty.

Be it remembered that the heart of Laura Wyndham was untouched by that divine fire of the love of God, which can make the desert blossom as a rose, and turn even pain and suffering into sweetest joy if borne for the dear Redeemer's sake. This mortal life was all in all to her, and she never really looked beyond it, though she believed herself to have a faith in that which was to come, and now, at the point of her career at which she stood—verging on thirty, sickened of the dreamy sameness of her existence, without a prospect of escape from it—it was hardly strange that she, such as she was, should seize, with almost desperate determination, the possibility which presented itself in Bertrand Lisle, not only of release from a detested durance in her father's miserable home, but of the possession of all that her fancy pictured as the perfection of happiness. Marriage with him had, in fact, every attraction life could offer her. He was himself a thoroughly lovable individual—handsome, agreeable, honourable, and good; he had an excellent position; the *entrée* into the best society; and his home was in the gayest and sunniest of Continental towns, where music and laughter were in the very air.

What wonder that she set herself to win him by fair means or by foul, and thought no more of Mary Trevelyan, whose happiness she might be crushing in the process, than she would of a tender flower trampled under her feet as she sped on some hasty errand.

And this much more may be said for Laura, though it would not have stayed her course had it been otherwise, that she did not in the least understand the depth of Mary Trevelyan's nature. She honestly believed her cold, and incapable of strong feeling, and, although she knew perfectly well by her instincts as a woman that Mary did love Bertrand truly, and him alone, yet she believed her heart to be so still and passionless, that even his loss, she thought, would but pass over it as a light cloud soon dispersed; and now, though Mary had to die for it, though John Pemberton's life should be for ever marred and broken, she, Laura Wyndham, meant to be Bertrand's wife, to live with him in his sunny *palazzo*, to shine like a star at his diplomatic receptions, to spend her joyous evenings at operas and balls, and taste at last all the pleasures of a life spent amid the allurements of the world.

So, from that first morning when Bertrand, coming out of his room, saw her dancing in through the open door into the hall, with her hands full of dewy flowers, fairer even than in his dreams, more radiant than the morning itself—to the day, a month later, when we resume the record of events, the Lorelei ceased not for a single moment to use every charm she possessed, every art she could devise, to allure him to herself, and she succeeded. She dazzled his senses, she captivated his fancy, and she woke a sudden passion in his heart which had neither the depth nor the durability of the sentiment he had felt and still in a measure retained for Mary Trevelyan.

As it happened, there was nothing whatever to stay Lurline in her triumphant course. Charlie Davenant had left Chiverley two or three days after

Bertrand's arrival; he just remained long enough to let the new-comer see clearly that he had neither eyes nor thoughts for any one but Mary, and the excessive annoyance and distress he manifested at having to leave the rectory at this juncture could only be attributed by Bertrand to that which Lurline told him was indeed the cause, the fear that he himself might prove a rival to him in Miss Trevelyan's affections. In actual fact Charlie's great unwillingness to leave Chiverley at that time arose from his perfect comprehension of the Lorelei's plans for the capture of him on whom he well knew Mary's whole happiness depended; he could not bear the idea of thus abandoning her to her fate, although he hardly knew what he could have done to avert it had he remained. There was no help for it, however, he had to go; and Lurline knew well how to make capital with Bertrand out of his miserable looks as he bade farewell to Mary.

Laura was thoroughly mistress of the situation so soon as he was gone; for Mary never by word or look made the smallest attempt to stand between her and Bertrand, or to keep that place in his affections she had once believed to be her own. She, like Bertrand himself, had never forgotten the avowal she had made to Mr. Lisle on his death-bed, or the possibility that he might have repeated her words to his son; and to her delicate shrinking nature there could be no terror so great, no pain so keen, as that which was aroused in her by the bare thought that Bertrand might marry her by no desire of his own, but out of reverence to his father's wish, and compassion to herself. Her dread of this left her but one course to pursue. She must betray no sign of the deep enduring love she bore him, unless he made it unmistakably plain to her that he shared it heartily and without reserve. She was careful, therefore, even when they were alone, which was but seldom, to show him only the sweet gentleness of manner which characterised her with every one; she would speak to him of nurse Parry, or of any recollections they might have in common, as she might have done with any old friend, and when the Lorelei came flashing in between them, as she invariably did, Mary would quietly give way, and leave them together, as they seemed to wish, while she went down to the village to attend to the sick poor, whom she did not think it right to neglect, even for the happiness of being in the same room with Bertrand Lisle.

And so it was that the month of his visit, to which Mary had looked forward with such unutterable longing, became to her a period of intense and silent suffering; for she understood at once, by the power of her own deep affection, that he was being strongly attracted by Laura, and she felt that nothing was left to her but to stand aside and see all that was joy and hope and life itself to her pass swiftly away from her utterly and for ever.

(To be continued.)

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 28. A Voyage.

Chapter to be read—Acts xxvii. (part of).

INTRODUCTION. Remind of the result of St. Paul's trial. To whom had he appealed? Where did the emperor live? Must therefore be sent to Rome. Might go by sea or land. Trace the two routes on a map (which must accompany this this lesson throughout). Which would be easier in days of bad roads, no railroads, &c.? Therefore naturally go by sea: so this story is about a voyage.

I. The Travellers. (Read 1—13.) Of whom did the party consist? and what do we know of them? (*a*) *Paul*, the prisoner—how delightful the sight of the sea and the refreshing sea-air, after two years' imprisonment!—would quite enjoy it. Remind what a great traveller he had always been by sea and land. Who else is there? (*b*) *Aristarchus*. First heard of at Ephesus (xix. 29) as Paul's companion in travel, having left his home in Macedonia to accompany Paul. See how constant he was as a friend—not tired of him or ashamed of him when in trouble and prison. Afterwards called "fellow labourer" (Col. iv. 10) and "fellow prisoner" (Philemon 24). (*c*) *Luke*. Show how this is evident from ver. 1, the plural "we" showing that the writer was present, had been left in Jerusalem (xxi. 17); how glad such old friends would be to meet again! Would be quite a happy party sailing together. Under whose charge was the prisoner? (*d*) *Julius*, a centurion. Let children notice his bearing, not haughty, but affable even to a prisoner (ver. 3). How well it speaks for both! Paul has by his conduct gained the officer's good-will, and Julius recognises the worth of his prisoner. Evidently mutual respect between the Roman idolater and Christian prisoner.

Practical Lesson. *Christian courtesy.*—Some children like to be rude and overbearing to servants and juniors; some also sulk when punished wrongfully: both may learn a lesson from Julius and Paul, to be pitiful, courteous (1 Pet. iii. 8, 9); so will receive blessing and be imitators of Christ.

II. The Course. Now let children trace the course on a map. Start from Cæsarea by a coasting vessel, belonging to and bound for Adramyttium, on coast of Mysia; touch at old town of Sidon, known ever since the Flood (Gen. x. 19); go on shore for

few hours, then sail west along Mediterranean; instead of going south of Cyprus, obliged by contrary winds to sail between it and the continent; wind being west they sailed north-west to Myra, a populous city; there transferred to large corn-ship, bound from Alexandria, in Egypt—the great corn country—for Italy. Wind still being west, and not allowing a straight course, obliged to sail south of Crete (ver. 7) to Fair Havens, where they anchor in the little harbour. Now a consultation is held. Paul advises to stay where they are; large ship; 276 people on board (ver. 37); winter coming on; the great fast Day of Atonement, or tenth day of seventh month, *i.e.*, September, being past; this sea, which he had often crossed, being very dangerous in stormy weather. Master of ship urges to push on to Phenice, the other harbour of Crete (ver. 12); which would naturally be more listened to? So they wait for a south wind, and again set sail.

III. The Storm. (Read 14—26) Phenice, only thirty miles off; with fair wind, would be there in few hours. Soon wind changes, and ship caught by fearful hurricane; driven south-west before wind; boat towed behind now drawn into the ship; timbers strongly bound with ropes. Now the quicksands on north coast of Africa are neared; great fear, so the topsails hauled down; some of the cargo thrown into the sea. Picture the scene: the dark and lurid sky; the sea rolling in giant waves; the wind howling; ship tossed by the hurricane; now in the trough of the sea, now riding on the top of the waves; the crew and passengers and prisoner working night and day at the pumps, throwing overboard the unnecessary sails; no observations taken; hope of being saved all gone. Now the prisoner stands forward, calm and collected, to give advice, Picture him on the deck, the sailors and passengers eagerly listening; his voice—before heard at Athens on Mars Hill, at Jerusalem on the stairs of the Temple, at Cæsarea before Festus and Agrippa—again gains hearing. Let children notice his—(*a*) *Assurance.* What warning had he given them before? Was it heeded? Now how is he assured of safety? To him alone has the angel come; what a testimony to him as under special protection of God! (*b*) *His faith;* in whom had he believed? What precious proofs had God given of His protection! So now he trusts Him, and has no fear; and all are to be safe as well as himself.

Practical Lessons. (1) *Confidence in danger.* Who alone was calm in danger? Whom did St. Paul serve? He confessed God before men, and so was preserved and encouraged by God. So Daniel was preserved; and Peter in prison. Similar promises to all God's people. Need fear no evil if only are in the path of the righteous; *e.g.*, young boy at school, servant in kitchen, if do right, will be kept from evil. (2) *The Ministry of Angels.* Tell children meaning of word angel, as messenger, sent by God to minister to His children. Thus, angel came to Christ after temptation (Matt. iv. 11), in Garden of Gethsemane (Luke xxii. 43); to Paul at Cæsarea, and now in the ship. So always the angels near us (Ps. xxxiv. 6), to whisper consolation, to cheer spirit, to incline to pray. This for comfort and protection of saints; not alone in danger; God himself near, and angels sent to help. Only be quite sure we, like Paul, do serve God, thus may claim promises of support.

Questions to be answered.

1. Who were the travellers to Rome? Say what you can about them.
2. What lessons may we learn from the behaviour of Paul and Julius?
3. Describe the course of the voyage.
4. Name any incident in the storm.
5. What character did St. Paul exhibit in the storm?
6. What lessons may we learn?

IN PERIL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER II.

JAMES walked straight on along the road, without troubling himself to inquire whither it led. He saw a vista of green trees and fields before him, and that was enough.

After going on some distance he came to a rising ground, and, when he had gained the summit, stood still involuntarily, to contemplate the scene around him. Rich woods stretched out on one side, and on the other an open undulating country, which lay smiling in the floods of golden light which the sun at that hour in the evening sheds over the earth, seeming as if he would fain, before departing, pour out upon her his richest choicest blessings. His slanting beams glanced fitfully here and there; not, as in mid-day, lighting up everything impartially, but as if, before bidding adieu, he was singling out special favourites for a special distinction; darting upon certain leaves of the copper-beech and causing them to glow with a bright red blush; alighting on a few late sprays of drooping laburnum which were still left hanging on the tree, and making them shine like burnished gold, and, glancing through the thick foliage of the elms or oaks, danced here and there upon their leaves, which seemed at his touch to renew their youth and stand out in the bright tender green of early spring.

Contrasted with the London courts and alleys James had lately left, this fair scene appeared a perfect paradise in his eyes.

For he had been born and reared amid country sights and sounds, and had loved them in his boyhood; and it had been only since he had left them that he had gone on so rapidly in his downward course, falling lower and lower, until he had reached his present point. And that was—— James started as he thought what it was; for, compared with the peace and purity which all Nature around him breathed, it seemed to stand out in darker colours than it had ever done before.

Not only had he by this time grown accustomed to vice of every description, from which he would once have shrunk with horror, not only was he learning to drink and swear, and indulge in evil passions without restraint, but, beyond that, he stood committed to join in an act of robbery that very night! He had given his word to his neighbour, Peter Bell, to meet him as the clock struck twelve, and with him, under cover of the darkness, in the still midnight hour, perpetrate the long contemplated and carefully concerted deed of sin and shame.

So cautiously and cleverly had it been planned that there seemed no risk of detection, but a certain prospect of sudden and easily acquired riches, which the two had been coveting so eagerly, that they had with difficulty put a curb upon their impatience, and waited until the most favourable opportunity. Now, at length, the time was nearly come. That morning they had said to one another in low whispers, as they separated, "To-night, at twelve o'clock."

At this point in his reverie James started violently, for the words suddenly fell upon his ears—"Thou fool: this night, aye—*this very night*—thy soul may be required of thee!"

The effect upon him was almost like that of an electric shock. He trembled as he looked around, for he could see no human being; it almost appeared as if the air itself must have uttered the sounds. But again, distinctly and clearly, came those words of plain and awful warning—"This night thy soul may be required of thee; then——"

"Aye, *then!*" thought James, "*then!*" And at that instant he seemed standing on the brink of an abyss where all was dark as blackest night. He listened, and again heard the voice, though this time the wind did not bear the words to him.

Going forward in the direction whence it proceeded, he at length came upon a group of people standing listening to some one who, from a more elevated point of ground, was addressing them in distinct, earnest tones. James was irresistibly attracted nearer, and he too stood and listened.

The speaker went on. "Aye, my friends, it may be this very night the summons will come; but what then? To those who love the Master's voice it will be a joyful sound to hear Him calling them to come up higher, and take their place in His courts above. And picture to yourself, if you can, what those courts will be. If you look around, doesn't the sweet beauty of the scene lying before you seem to touch and soften your heart, and fill it with gentler, calmer feelings? Then think what it will be to gaze upon Him 'who is altogether lovely,' and to walk those courts whose glories no words we have can describe!

"But there are some who have *not* yet learned to love the Master's voice; who have up to this moment been dwelling in scenes of strife and sin; to whom it would be a fearful and a terrible thing to hear the words, 'This night thy soul shall be required of thee.' Then let them listen; for the Master has a word for them, too—a word not, as we might expect, of condemnation, but of gentlest entreaty. Listen! this is it: 'Turn ye! oh, turn ye! for why will ye die? Come unto Me, and I will wash you clean in the blood I shed for you, and your sins and your iniquities will I remember no more.' Oh, then, come to Him. Leave your deeds of sin, your evil passions, your toiling and hankering after this world's riches; leave it all, and come to Him. Ask Him for His holy spirit to help you, and He will give it to you as fully and as freely as the air you breathe."

For a time James's thoughts no longer followed the speaker; he was pondering so deeply upon what he had just heard. At length, however, his attention was again caught, by the words—"But if you would come to Him, my friends, it must be by leaving your sins behind you, for His eye searches out every hidden act. He is ever close beside you; when you least remember it, when you have stolen away in secret, as you think, out of range of every eye, to work some deed of darkness, He too comes in, and stands by looking on. You cannot keep Him out. No bolts nor bars can do that; though you do not hear His footfall, for it is noiseless as when he once walked upon the Sea of Galilee. The waters there gave back no echo to His tread; and it is just so now, as He glides through closed doors into dark places, where deeds of sin are being planned or committed, and hears and notes it all.

"But there is *one* door through which He enters not until He is invited; and that is the door of our hearts. We may keep that closed against Him if we choose; but if we will open it He will come in—silently, noiselessly, as I have said He once walked upon the waves; and in that case His coming in will be to bless and heal and fill with joy unspeakable the hitherto empty joyless heart."

Still more the speaker said, but James heeded it not; he had heard enough. Strange unwonted feelings were stirring within him. The sin which he had pledged himself to commit that night stood out in distinct lines of darkest dye, as he thought of that Eye which would be upon him, that Presence which

would be beside him all the time, and which he could not shut out, try as he would. But if he would leave his sins, that Presence might be to him a delight instead of a dread!

He turned and walked on, little needing where he went, so that it was away from the great city. On he went, haunted by the thoughts that had so lately been awakened in him; and when the shades of night fell he was still hurrying on, as though pursued by some terrible fear, by some enemy that was treading on his steps, and might overtake him unless he pressed ever on and on.

A tremendous struggle was going on within him: a choice between life and death; between the powers of darkness and of light. Which would win the day? The chains of sin with which he had allowed himself to be bound were strong; but there was One strong enough to break them and set him free. Would he cry to Him, cry mightily for deliverance, or would he yield to the suggestions of the evil one, tempting him with visions of gain and sinful enjoyment? Would he, with a violent wrench, tear himself from his present life and associations, or would he prove too feeble and faint-hearted for such a course, and return to his late haunts and companions, to fall yet lower than before?

It was the turning-point in his life—the moment that was to decide his future destinies.

And again and again he murmured as he walked along, "Twelve o'clock to-night! twelve o'clock to-night!"

Ah, where would twelve o'clock that night find him?

(To be continued.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

198. It is stated in Exodus iv. 27, that God told Aaron to go and meet Moses. What proof have we that this was done in a vision?

199. What was the value of the books burned at Ephesus by those who dealt in familiar spirits and used "curious arts?"

200. How long did David reign over *Judah alone* in Hebron?

201. What general recommendation does St. Paul give as to the conduct of public services?

202. What expression was used by the ancient writers of the Bible to signify the whole length and breadth of the land of Israel?

203. What does St. Paul say was a stumbling-block to the Jews?

204. What proof have we that David was much impressed by the power of the *archers* in the army of the Philistines?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 480.

187. Ten thousand talents of silver (Esther iii. 9).

188. "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none save James the Lord's brother" (Gal. i. 18, 19).

189. Aretas (2 Cor. xi. 32).

190. Job xxxix. 13, 14.

191. A red and lowering sky in the morning (Matt. xvi. 2), and a cloud rising out of the west (Mark xii. 54).

192. The attempt made by Haman to destroy all the Jews in the kingdom of Ahasuerus (Esther ix. 20—26).

THE FOLDED LAMB.

I HAVE a little child in heaven,
A dear one angel-bright;
Christ unto her a crown has given,
And garments pure and white.

She stands upon the crystal sea,
Before the Throne above,
With harp, and palm of victory,
And sings the song of love.

I miss the hands that clung to me,
And made my heart so glad;
I miss her prattle and her glee;
And I am very sad.

God's will be done—He knoweth best:
Her wanderings are o'er;
My little lamb is safe at rest
Where sin can hurt no more.

She might have strayed—I cannot tell;
Christ knew what lay before;
But now I know that all is well,
And fear for her no more.

Before one rising cloud could dim
Her sky, or drop in tears,
Christ came and took her home with Him
To summer all the years.

I often think, where she has gone
What honour great I bear,
That I have one before the Throne
Who calls me "mother" there!

She is with Christ—and I am His;
Round Him our hearts entwine;
And tho' far up the heights of bliss,
In heaven she still is mine.

And oh! when I my own shall meet,
Together we shall go,
And cast our crowns before His feet,
And learn His love to know!

J. Hoie.



(*Drawn by* M. E. EDWARDS.)

SHOULD I STAY ON MY WAY.

WHEN sunless evening settles low
On darksome grass, and men have laid
Aside their daywork tools, to go
On home along by grove and glade;

And all the rooks have floated by
O'erhead, to seek their roosting trees,
While pale and paler shine the leaze
And mead, below the high-mooned sky;—

Then on my way, beside the screen
Of bank and bough, or where may blow
The wind, through gate or bar-way, keen
Or soft, along the way I go;
Should I stay still for anything,
Unless to see, below the oak,
A knot of little fairy folk,
All dancing in a whirling ring?

Yes! By the elm I fain would stay,
And gaze on that now lonely mound,
Where, on a long-gone summer day,
We sat, in mirth, upon the ground;
Or, by the orchard's ivied wall,
Up where we saw dear Mary stand,
While apples from her lifted hand
Flew out in many a blushing ball.

Or at the stile that some lost mate
Sprang sprily o'er in one high leap;
Or at the slowly-slamming gate
That fell from hands now still in sleep;
Or at the bridge that reaches pale
O'er water where, in summers past,
Our boat, before the upward blast,
Oft stemmed the stream with bunted sail.

But even while I thus might stay,
The time would still be gliding on,
And wafting later things away,
Where those of olden time have gone;
O night! O night! how very clear
Thy light brings back an earlier sky;
O night! O night! how very nigh
Those sights bring back another year.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXI.—DOROTHY ENGAGED.

"I CANNOT bear September; there is always something very sad about it," Dorothy said, wearily, as she sat with her betrothed beneath the boughs of the sycamore-tree.

She never had anything to talk to him about—or very seldom, at any rate—and when he talked to her of a hundred things she neither cared for nor understood, she quietly sailed off in a day-dream.

He used to think she would awake some day to the realities he saw so keenly, and so he waited patiently till the time should come.

"Yes, dear," he said, quietly, in answer to her remark, but without the slightest shade of curiosity in his voice, or even looking up from his book.

"It is the month in which the leaves begin to fall, you know, just as if they were trying to make a pall for the dead summer."

"Yes, dear," in the same tone.

"I hate being called 'dear!'" she broke out, passionately.

He looked up then.

"My dear child," he said, kindly, "what is the matter with you?" and he put down his book on the end of the seat, and, taking her hands in his, looked at her face, and at the two brown eyes into which the tears were slowly stealing.

"Don't call me 'child' either," she said.

It used to be Adrian Fuller's term of endearment, and now she could not bear that he should use it.

"Then I'll call you my little girl," he said, tenderly; "and so tell me what is the matter."

"Nothing," she answered; "only the summer has gone, or nearly so, and I feel as if all the past summers belonged to me, and I lived in them, but the future ones will belong to others, and I may look on, but shall never feel they are mine any more."

"Where did you get your strange fancies from, Dorothy?"

"I don't know."

"You must read more, and learn to think more, on hard healthy subjects, and get all those miserable ideas out of your head. You should learn to occupy yourself."

"That is what you always say," she answered. "But what *can* I do?"

"I'll find some work for you by-and-by. We will study together, dear. You shall write for me sometimes, too; you write such a nice hand, Dorothy."

"Yes," she said, not at all delighted with the prospect or propitiated by the praise. "Shall you always work?" she asked, after a minute or two.

"Yes, I hope so."

And then, seeing that the tears had vanished from her eyes, half absently he opened his book again, and she sat thinking.

She had been engaged a month, and she was so tired of it. It was like being in school, she thought, though school was a thing she had never known. She thought when she accepted George Blakesley, too, that after all Adrian Fuller would be sorry, and even his sympathy would be grateful to her; but no, he had only seemed a little surprised—that was all. And Netta had been delighted; it was a step towards the prosperity of the family, she considered; and her mother and father had been pleased also, and kissed her, and told her that now she must leave off her wild roving habits, and behave like a young lady; and her rebellious spirit rose at the speech. As for Tom, he had chaffed her in no sparing terms, and, it had fretted and worried her; and Will and Sally

seemed to think that as she was engaged she was no longer one of themselves, and so they left her to her own devices, and the old happy life went for ever.

George Blakesley was always with her—always bringing her books to read, and talking to her of things she could not and would not understand or like, and she got impatient, and angry, and fretful. He was always kind, always affectionate and patient, and willing to explain things, but still she shrank from him. She was grateful to him; for, did he not love her? Yet she was not satisfied, and longed—oh, how wildly she longed!—to be free; but she felt chained and bound.

He shut his book presently. "It is getting dusky," he said. "Get your hat, dear, and let us go a little way."

She meekly obeyed him; and they sauntered out at the garden gate, and on through the dim lanes.

"Dorothy," he said, presently, "will you come to tea to-morrow at my house. You have never seen it yet, you know, and I want you to meet my aunts. We have been engaged a month, and they have not seen you yet."

She had always put it off.

"Oh no, no!" she answered, shrinkingly.

"Why not? You shall come to early tea, with your mother, in the afternoon. My aunts are nice old ladies, and they will be so fond of my little girl. We'll invite Netta too."

"Not to-morrow," she pleaded.

"Yes, dear; I have asked them already, so you must manage it. I saw them to-day, and they were so anxious to see you." Then there came a dead silence, and they walked on. "Don't you think we might be married this year?——" he began.

"Oh no, no!"

"Why not, dear?"

"Oh please don't!" she broke out; "oh pray let me off! I don't want to be married, and I shall never do—indeed I shall not! I am not half clever enough; and I would give the world to be free again. Oh, George, do let me off! I am not old enough yet, and want to be by myself a little longer!"

"My dear child!" he said, when a pause came, and reverting in his surprise to the old phrase, "you mustn't go on like this. You quite distress me. It is all strange to you yet, dear."

"Oh no—it is not that," she said, sadly; "but I shall never be reconciled to it. Won't you let me off?" she pleaded.

He looked at her with a long long grave look.

"No, dear," he answered. "I could not bear to do that now. You will get reconciled in time. I cannot let you off." *(To be continued.)*

MEMBERS ONE OF ANOTHER.

BY THE REV. W. COVINGTON, M.A., VICAR OF ST. LUKE'S, SHEPHERD'S BUSH.

IT has sometimes been brought as a charge against the teaching of Jesus Christ that very many of His sayings are to be found elsewhere; that some, if not all, of His teaching is copied from philosophers who are commonly called heathen; and that there is scarcely any part of His religion which can be called original. The charge contains a half-truth under which there lies a fundamental error. It is indeed true that Christ has taken and made his own much of the intellectual wealth of ancient philosophy. In accomplishing that vast mission which He came into the world to finish, He never hesitated to take and to use for His own purposes those lesser revelations by which His Father in heaven had spoken of old. He stated expressly that He was come to fulfil—that is, to fill out, to expand, and to complete—all that had gone before, and that in Him would be found the substance of which that had been the shadow. It follows as a matter of course that it is easy to select from His teaching ideas and even sentences to which a previous utterance had been given, and to show that men have struggled in all ages after some of the ideas of His religion.

But it is a very great mistake to suppose that Christianity in its essence is simply a compilation of doctrines and dogmas and ethical precepts. Were it so, a man would be justified in cutting away from it all that was to be found written, or even indicated, in the writings and the lives of the pre-Christian heroes, and so in reducing it to a residuum of that which was purely original. But such is not at all its character. Christianity is not at all a mere code of ethics, or of morality, or of casuistry. Christianity is a Person and a life, embodying perhaps much that had been written before, but embodying it in a Person, and setting it forth in a life, after a manner to which nothing else can compare. Christianity is an enthusiasm, using perhaps the weapons of antiquity, but using them after such a fashion as had never been previously attempted. Christianity is a motive power, influencing the life not so much by the regulation of outward actions as by the infusion of a spirit into the heart. And if you could prove to me, which you cannot, that every word of Christ's teaching was taken from some external source, you would not in the least shake my faith in the fact that there is something in Christianity different from all other systems which the world has

ever seen, and lifting it up high above them—high as heaven above earth.

Now, we have a special instance of this use by Christ and his apostles of a pre-existing idea in the conception of a vast brotherhood, a general membership one with another, upon which they so strongly and so frequently insist. It was not a new conception; it was one which many a philosopher, many a sage, and many a leader, had tried to embody. The belief even in a great brotherhood of mankind had struggled to live in many a bygone age. Very imperfectly indeed had it been realised; very faintly had it been sketched; yet down the ages it had floated, like a dream of some lost paradise, fading away like a dream from those who most longed to grasp it, yet appearing again, and never utterly disappearing, because there lay beneath it a truth which was even divine, but reserved for revelation only in the fulness of time. It was indeed true—and philosophers of old had seen its truth—that man can only reach his highest development when he is joined by firm and lasting bonds in the unity of brotherhood, when he is a member of a society which gives him common sympathies, common wants, common feelings with others, and that he who lives utterly apart from others will soon be utterly deprived of all nobility of character, and lost in selfish isolation. That idea, once born into the world, had struggled through many an age to gain for itself a more general acceptance; but all human endeavours to maintain it had failed. Men had tried power, only too soon to find it melt away. Men had tried philosophy, and preached that all men are one, only to find it a miserable failure. Men had tried self-interest, and pointed out the greater strength of unity and of united action: but all their efforts had signally failed, and it was only that germ of divine truth which it contained which had kept the idea alive so long. It was reserved for Christ to reveal that one great fact upon which the whole rested—the Fatherhood of God, that great name, the Father, which men had sought after before, but never found. That was the great distinction which makes the teaching of Christ and His apostles as to the brotherhood of men different to the teaching of all the philosophers whom the world has ever seen—that while they only strove to teach brotherhood from below, He taught Fatherhood from above; He taught that men were brothers because they were sons of God, and that that familiar conception of family life and family love so dear to each one of their hearts was only the reflex of a vast truth, transcending all time and all space, that all men were God's children, and therefore brothers.

I have said that this conception of brotherhood had struggled to live in the ages preceding Christ, but was definitely established upon a lasting basis only by Him. I have said that while all human means had failed to establish it, the revelation of God as a Father, loving each one of His children and asking from them love in return, that revelation which was given in Christ, gave an entirely new aspect to the thought of man's brotherhood, and from that time to this has caused it to strengthen and to develope with a power previously unknown. I have only to refer you to matters of history to convince you that this is so.

Look, for instance, at the reverence for human life which has sprung into being under the auspices of Christianity. Infanticide, suicide, the games of the arena, with all their wanton prodigality of destruction, where are they now? Consigned, by the influence which Christianity has had upon the popular mind, to the well-merited doom of popular execration. And what has become of that vast institution of slavery, with all its organised system of laws and regulations, which was once the basis of civilised and uncivilised society. It has been driven by Christianity outside the limits of modern civilisation, and, though the struggle has been a long one by which it has striven to live, yet at last it has succumbed. Or, to turn from that which Christianity has destroyed to that which it has built up, look at the vast system of charitable relief, of systematic help in times of poverty and of sickness, which every Christian nation is now proud to maintain. I do not pause to ask what kinds of charitable relief do good, and what do harm; I only point you to the fact, too well-known to need further comment, that it is Christianity which has inaugurated so vast a system for the relief of those whom it calls its poorer brethren—which has covered the face of the earth with almshouses, hospitals, schools, and orphanages; which has insured, even by legal enactment, the relief of want. What are these but surest evidences that Christianity alone has put into its proper place and position the doctrine of the brotherhood of men, and has taken this as its first basis of teaching—that, brethren of Christ and children of God, "we are members one of another"?

But this unity, be it remembered, is essentially a spiritual, not a visible unity; the very word which is employed to represent it—"membership"—implies that there always is and always must be a variety amongst the members. There is nothing upon which the apostles of Christ who speak of this matter insist more carefully than this, that the unity of mankind is unity of *sonship*, unity of relationship to a common Father, under diversity of form. We are members, indeed, of the same body, and are therefore necessarily different; for the body could not be in itself perfect unless the difference were maintained. If every member were the hand, says St. Paul, where were

the feet? On the face of this earth there are spread the varied races of mankind, differing each in their characteristics, their constitutions and their habits. These differences are no disproof, but rather a proof, of their spiritual unity in the eternal sonship of their race to God. Or if we narrow down the limits of our view within the line of Christianity itself, how shall we regard the distinctions of creed, and caste, and faith, which have found place within its ranks? Is it possible, the unbeliever will say, that these Christians can be one, when such vast gaps of custom and of belief intervene between their various Churches? Yes, indeed they are one—one in their spiritual unity with Christ their head; and to each is given his own office in the varied functions of the members of the body. Narrow down again the limits of our inquiry within the range of our own experience and of our own nation, and see how the whole fabric of our Church and of our country is built up upon this as its basis—unity in diversity—membership in one body, wherein each member is discharging his own proper functions, taking his strength and his life from the whole. Take any class of society, and cut it off from the rest, and see how it fares: take, for instance, the rich, and cut him off from the poor; leave him alone with his gold and his vast estates, and if he denied before the brotherhood of the poor, he will deny it no more. Or take the great middle classes, who are the media by which the wealth of the rich and the labour of the poor are made to meet, and cut them off both from above and from below, and they will learn a lesson which the better ones amongst them have learnt before, and only the worst have contrived to forget, that they too have a debt owing to the other members of the social body, that they too are dependent for their well-being upon the welfare of the whole.

But how are all these thoughts purified and ennobled by that grand truth which Christ and His Gospel have introduced into the world—that all these interlacings of classes and of societies, all these varied wants of rich and poor, are all part of the family organisation of our great Father in heaven; that there is One above all who has pre-arranged all this, and has decreed that thus it shall be for ever, so long as man is a tenant of this globe; that each society, each class—aye, even each individual!—shall work, whether he like it or no, not only for his own benefit, but for the benefit of others, and that each shall contribute to the general well-being of the whole, or shall pay the penalty of uselessness by being cast out from the body! And I cannot help thinking that there was something of all this in the mind of the Saviour when He left behind Him as His last precious legacy to his disciples something which should speak to them, with no feeble utterance, of their spiritual unity in His body, of the necessity of their spiritual life being nourished by and through their feeding upon Him. The strength of His body was to nourish theirs; the spirit of His life was to transfuse theirs: that, I cannot doubt, was one of the chiefest points which He desired to teach when He consecrated for ever the sacred memorials of His death; and if at other times we are prone to forget it, I cannot conceive of any Christian coming to receive at the table of his Lord, and rejoicing, as every true Christian must rejoice, to kneel side by side with the humblest in the land—I cannot conceive of any Christian forgetting *then* that "we are members one of another."

In conclusion, then, reader, I ask you to think of this in all the relations of social life, as well as in all the relations of religious life. Do not, I beg of you, let one spirit guide you in this and another in that. Do not go to the House of God, and speak of a common Father and a universal brotherhood in Christ, and then go forth again into the world and shut yourself up in yourself, with no thought of your duties to the brethren around you. Let your religion, your faith, and your social life be consistent. Think of this your sacred character whenever a question arises as to your duty to those around you; do not answer that question until you have brought these words vividly before your minds—"We are members one of another."

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 29. A Shipwreck.

Chapters to be read—Acts xxvii., xxviii. (parts of).

INTRODUCTION. We left St. Paul standing bold and fearless amongst the sailors, telling them of the visit of the angel, and assuring them that all would be safe. Let the children draw a contrast between this calmness of innocence and Jonah's consciousness of guilt. Both going away from their own country—Jonah fleeing from God, Paul going to be a witness for God—both among heathen, but Jonah bidden by the idolaters to call upon his God, while Paul showed them how near God was to him. What has God promised to do for Paul (ver. 24)? Was he alone to be delivered? We shall see how the promise was fulfilled.

I. The Shipwreck. (Read xxvii. 27—44.) How

I. The Shipwreck. (Read xxvii. 27—44.) How long did the storm last? Remember how fearful the apostles were in the storm of only a few hours, and this one fourteen days! The ship anchored, but tossing about under the terrific waves, always worse near a shore, and noise of breakers on rocks, filling sailors with dread lest they should be driven on them. What do the sailors attempt to do? (ver. 30) See how selfish danger makes some men! If the sailors deserted the ship, who could work the sails so as to make the most of any possible chance of safety? So what does Paul say? Now look at his conduct. This dreadful night is wearing slowly away. Nothing can be done till daylight. They cannot sleep; had better take some food; have had no regular meals for a fortnight; will want full strength next day in last battle with sea and rocks.

At last day breaks. Strange land; but they see a creek, and steer for it, first cutting the anchors and leaving them in the sea (ver. 40, margin), then hoisting up the mainsail, run the ship aground; there it sticks fast, and becomes broken up by the waves. Now two dangers imminent. What do the soldiers want to do? (ver. 42) Because, responsible for the prisoners, if they escaped the soldiers would be put to death (see Acts xii. 19). But who was Paul's friend? So God again delivered him. Now comes a terrible moment. All throw themselves into the sea. Fancy 276 men struggling at once with the waves; how unlikely that all would be saved. But what was the promise (ver. 24)? and God is not a man that He should lie. So, some clinging to spars, some to hen-coops, some to bits of the wreck, all get safely to shore.

Practical Lessons. (1) *The certainty of God's promised aid.* Paul had work to do for God at Rome, therefore was kept in safety. So with all truly serving God and working for Him, God's aid promised. Do we serve Him as Paul did? Then God promised to aid us. May safely trust Him, and all things will be safely ordered for us. (2) *The honour put upon God's people.* The prisoner becomes the most important man in the ship. His cheering words, his advice about retaining the sailors, about taking food, all helped to save the voyagers. So Joseph became the most important man. So the little captive maid's advice saved Naaman. So these who honour God will be honoured by Him.

II. The Island. (Read xxviii. 1—10.) Picture the scene on the shore—the shipwrecked soldiers, sailors, and prisoners; the fishermen coming to see the wreck—doing what they can—lighting a huge fire; all helping to gather sticks. What comes out of Paul's bundle? What do the fishermen expect, because *knew* how venomous these snakes are? But what *does* happen? Another deliverance! They saw Paul was a prisoner—think he was guilty of some fearful crime. Were they right in so thinking? Remind of what Christ said about Galileans (Luke xiii. 5). Besides, does the viper do any harm? So what do they think now? What an opportunity for Paul to tell them of Christ, whose he is. Now the governor hears of the wreck. What does he do. And how is his kindness rewarded by St. Paul? So Publius has indeed received an angel, which means "messenger" of God (Heb. xiii. 2), and Paul can speak for Christ to the rich as well as to the poor. So, like his Master, goes about doing good and preaching the Word of Life.

Practical Lesson. *Use hospitality without grudging.* These sailors did what they could, though heathens. Can we say as much? Remind of solemn warnings to those who neglect their duty to those in want (Matt. xxv. 45).

Questions to be answered.

1. Compare St. Paul's voyage with that of Jonah.
2. Describe the events of the night before the shipwreck.
3. What lessons does the story teach us?
4. What happened at Malta?
5. What did St. Paul do during his stay?
6. Draw a practical lesson for ourselves.

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER XXI.

BERTRAND LISLE had only obtained leave from his post for six weeks, and the close of a full month after his arrival at Chiverley found him well-nigh as much perplexed as he had been the first night he had slept under the same roof with Laura Wyndham. He was irresistibly attracted by her, and had he been altogether free he would certainly have asked her to be his wife at once; but he held himself in honour bound to Mary, by his own words as well as by his promise to his father, unless it should indeed prove to be the case that she no longer loved him, even if she had ever done so. He had begun to doubt very much that there was any truth in the idea of her attachment to Charlie Davenant, though it would have been a great relief to himself to have believed it. But Lurline had almost succeeded in persuading him that Mary's stillness did really indicate a cold temperament, and that she was as incapable of feeling deep affection for any one as if she had

been a block of white marble. He determined at last to put the matter to some definite test, and if he found that Mary was indeed indifferent to him, he would at once make some provision for her out of his own fortune, and then give himself up to the delight of securing the fascinating Lorelei to be the light and life of his home. It was not without pain and misgiving that he came to this resolution, however, for the true affection he felt for Mary still lay deep in his heart, beneath all the passionate excitement of feeling which Lurline caused him, and there were times when the pathetic sadness of her dark eyes, and the quivering of her sweet lips when she spoke to him, moved him strangely. One other subject of disquietude poor Bertrand had in his perplexing position, which was the fact that he could not at all understand what John Pemberton's relations with Laura really were. She called him her brother; but it was quite clear that his almost worshipping adoration for her went far beyond any fraternal attachment, and at times there seemed to be a tacit understanding between them, which did not precisely harmonise with the unmistakable love and admiration for Bertrand himself, which Lurline had taken good care to make sufficiently plain to him.

"I will end the suspense at all events," said Bertrand to himself one morning, as the family were finishing breakfast, "no later than to-day. My leave will expire in less than ten days," he said aloud, addressing Mrs. Wyndham, "so I have only a short time longer to spend with you."

Mrs. Wyndham made some sleepy sort of response, feeling secretly very glad that she would have one less to house and feed, while her husband, who had always the manners of a true gentleman, said, courteously, that he hoped Mr. Lisle would visit them again. John Pemberton was seated just opposite, and, Bertrand saw him suddenly raise his honest wistful eyes with a look of intense thankfulness, which showed how welcome his departure would be to this member of the family at least.

Laura and Mary had both risen from the table before he spoke, and were standing together in the window; and as he turned to glance towards them he was struck by the great contrast between them, and the wonderful advantages which the Lorelei possessed over her companion, at least in looks. She was standing in an attitude of perfect grace, exquisitely dressed in the most becoming costume, with the full blaze of the morning sunshine pouring down upon her lovely head, and turning all her fair disordered hair to what seemed like a nimbus of gold. A little behind her, in the shade, stood Mary, with drooping head and down cast eyes, while her slight figure looked almost too slender in the shabby black dress, which she continued to wear long after she would have wished to discard it, in order that the money which would have bought a new one might be given to her suffering poor.

"It is easy to see which would look best at the ambassadress's balls," thought Bertrand, as he turned away with a feeling of vexation against Mary, for the very plain guise in which she appeared; but when he looked back, after having stated his intention of leaving Chiverley in so short a time, he saw that she had passed out by the open window, and disappeared. It was the opportunity he wanted; he resolved that he would follow her, and make her take a walk with him in the wood which lay at the foot of the rectory grounds, so that he might speak to her alone, and ascertain, once for all, what was the real state of her feelings towards himself.

Bertrand rose at once, and left the room; he took his hat from the hall table, and went out by the front door, just in time to see the dark slender figure passing swiftly over the green lawn in the very direction he wished her to take. Mary was going towards the wood, which was a retired lonely spot, to seek the solitude which her heart, almost bursting with its load, so sorely needed. She went on quickly, till she reached its innermost recesses, where the tall trees, already in leaf, stood thickly together, and shut her out from all human sight or sound. Then, when she found herself, as she thought, completely alone, she laid her head against one of the friendly trees, and flinging her arms round it, murmured, "I shall never see him more! how can I endure it! my Bertrand! my Bertrand! mine never again!"

It was thus that he saw her as he turned the corner of the mossy track that led to the spot where she stood, and came suddenly upon her. He paused a moment to look at her. Her whole attitude was indicative of the utmost despondency: her hat had fallen to the ground, and her long dark hair hung down over her face like a veil; her breast was heaving with tearless sobs; and the little hands which clasped the trunk of the tree were pressed against its rough bark convulsively. It was no statue of snow, assuredly, which was passing through that silent storm of grief, and Bertrand came forward with a strange revulsion of feeling in his mind: if it were indeed for his departure that she was grieving thus, she was his own true Mary most assuredly, unchanged and unchangeable.

She did not hear his approach till he touched her very gently on the shoulder, and then she looked up and met his eyes fixed scrutinisingly upon her; the idea that he might have divined the cause of her anguish caused a flush of scarlet to flame for an instant over her fair face, and then it passed, leaving her more deadly white than usual, while all her maidenly pride came to her aid, and in an instant her habitual stillness had returned to her, and he stood before the calm white Mary whom Lurline affirmed was moulded out of marble, hard and cold.

For once in his life, Bertrand, diplomatist and man of the world as he was, felt very much embarrassed; he did not know exactly how to begin a conversation

with her, as it was plain she would allow of no remark on her secret agitation, and presently he found himself, after some incoherent observation on the beauty of the wood, quietly walking by her side among the trees, as if they had simply strolled out together without any definite purpose. He was not going to lose his opportunity, however, which Lurline's constant companionship made a matter of rare occurrence, so at last he said, trying to see her face, "Well, dear Mary, I must soon be leaving Chiverley, and I have enjoyed my visit very much, though it grieves me to think I have seen so much less of you than I hoped."

"It is enough if you have been happy," said her low voice, calmly.

"But we have been so little together," he replied, impatiently. "You disappointed me the very first day by not meeting me at the station."

"That was not my fault," she said, avoiding his eyes.

"Was it not? Whose then?"

She did not answer, for she believed he loved Laura, and she would not accuse her to him; her silence made Bertrand suppose that Charlie Davenant had been the real hindrance; he was too much infatuated with the Lorelei to suspect her of any evil. They went on in silence till they came to a spot where a little rustic bridge spanned a swiftly-rushing stream that made its way through the wood to the valley below. Bertrand paused here, looking down into the deep water, with his arms folded on the railing, while Mary stood silent beside him.

"Have you been happy at Chiverley, Mary?" he said at last.

"They have been very kind to me," she answered.

"You have only two or three months longer to stay here," he said, looking earnestly into her face.

"I know that," she replied.

"And have you any idea where you are to go when you leave this place?"

She was compelled to answer, "None;" but she added, hastily, "I have no doubt some way will open for me."

"To Charles Davenant's home, perhaps!" said Bertrand, half bitterly, half playfully.

"Charles Davenant!" Mary uttered the name with an accent of the most genuine surprise, and, turning round, she fixed her dark eyes unflinchingly on Bertrand's face. "What can you mean?" she said.

"My dear Mary, it is no secret that Davenant loves you."

"I think you are mistaken," she said, calmly.

"I am sure I am not," he answered; "but that is not a matter which would be of importance to me at least, unless you, Mary, are disposed to return his affection."

"Bertrand," she said, slowly, "I am sure you would not wish to hurt or annoy me; but you do both when you even hazard such a supposition; Mr. Davenant is absolutely nothing to me, and never can be anything."

"That is enough, Mary; forgive me;" and involuntarily he thought how incapable Lurline, with all her fascination, would have been of the quiet truthfulness and gentle dignity which Mary had shown in her answer; the strong attraction she had had for him in former times was beginning to revive, away from the syren who had lured him from her. Presently he said, in a low earnest tone, "Mary, I know you always tell the truth, but sometimes you are silent when others would wish to hear you speak; will you give me a distinct answer to one question?"

She merely bowed her head.

"Tell me what you have done with the white rose I bade you keep for me; have you thrown it away?"

"Thrown it away! Oh, Bertrand!" instinctively she pressed her clasped hands against her breast where the rose lay hid, and all her loving constant soul was in her eyes as she turned them reproachfully upon him—"how could you suppose it!"

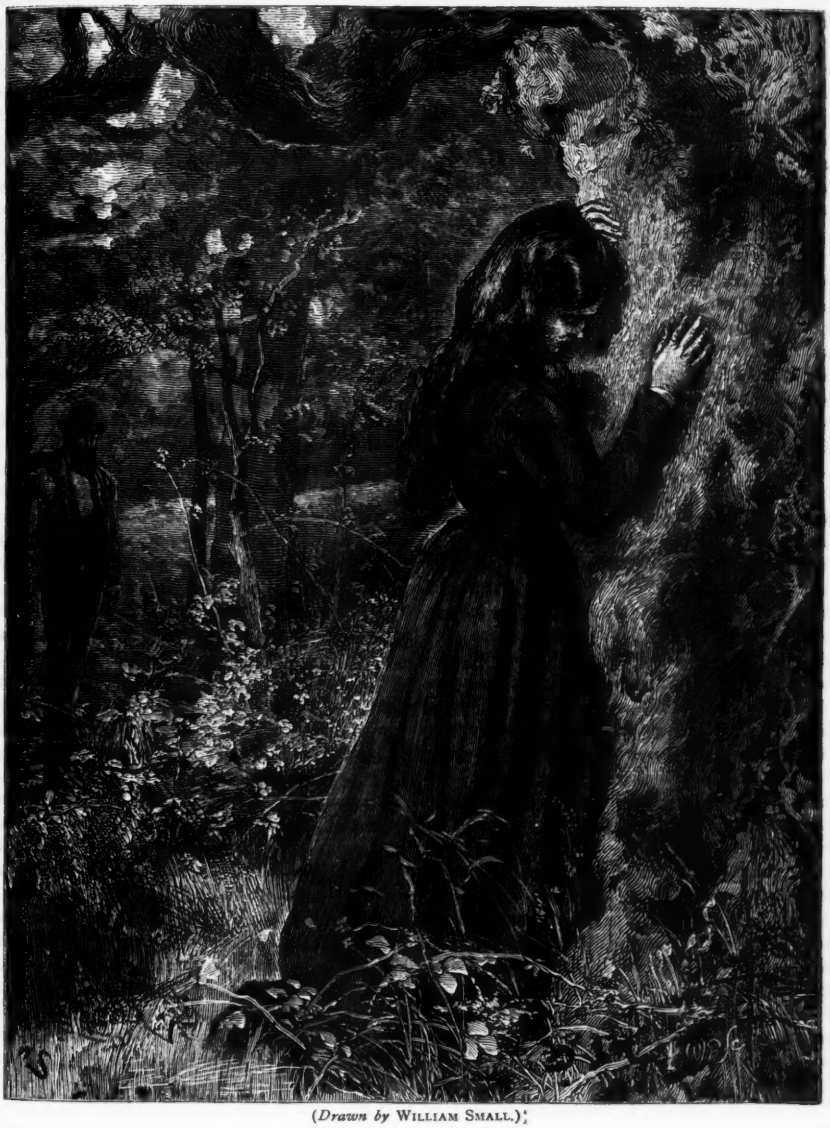
"You have kept it then for my sake, sweet Mary?" he said, tenderly.

"Yes," she whispered; "and there lies by it now one of the violets that told me you were coming."

It was the most she had ever said as an admission of affection for him, and involuntarily he caught her hand in his; but the movement had been seen by eyes that were watching his every look and gesture in a perfect anguish of terror and dismay; and at the same instant there arose, as it seemed from the very depths of the water beneath them the low sad wail of a most lovely voice, that thrilled through the air with an unutterable pathetic sweetness, which no one could have heard unmoved. And Bertrand was the last who could have done so; for the one special charm above all others which the Lorelei had always had for him, was the wonderful beauty of her strange and exquisite singing. She had always let him hear it when they were quite alone, and she would then pour her whole passionate soul into the melody, till every tone of her perfect voice seemed to vibrate in the chords of his heart; and now that same voice, inexpressibly touching in its mournful despair, was filling all the space around him with a cry of utter anguish, and it was as though a spell had been flung over him again. Letting Mary's hand fall, he exclaimed, "It is Lurline; she must be in danger or distress!" and with one bound he had sprung from the bridge, and, dashing along the bank of the stream, was soon lost to view, and Mary was alone.

CHAPTER XXII.

Bertrand Lisle leaped from the bridge to the rocky bank of the stream below, forgetting everything but he sound, so wildly plaintively sweet, which had drawn him from Mary's side, and which seemed to



(*Drawn by* WILLIAM SMALL.)

"She laid her head against one of the friendly trees."—*p.* 519.

recede before him as he hastened along at his utmost speed. It was Lurline's voice, he well knew, for none other could fill the air with melody of such exquisite softness and pathos, or thrill through his own heart with such dismay and pain, as he recognised in its mournful cadences the expression of some deep distress, and the thought that she was in peril or grief drove from him all recollection of any one in the world but herself.

Judging by the sounds, that grew fainter and fainter, she seemed to be flying away from him, and he hurried on, half frantic with dread as to what evil might have befallen her, especially when the sweet sad voice died away altogether, and he heard it no more. He increased his pace, dashing through the reeds and water-lilies that edged the stream, till at length the course of the current, sweeping round a projecting rock, brought him to an isolated spot, shut in by overhanging trees, and a very long way from the bridge where he had left Mary Trevelyan.

The water at this point was extremely deep, and the bank rose from it abruptly, with only here and there a rough moss-covered stone, affording a stepping-place for any one adventurous enough to approach the stream.

As Bertrand reached the top of the bank, and looked down upon the little inlet, he beheld a sight which struck him for a moment motionless with breathless terror: Laura Wyndham was standing on a stone which jutted out far into the deep pool formed by the stream at this point, and she was bending forward over the water in an attitude which must infallibly have precipitated her into it, but for the frail support which she received from the slender branch of a tree, round which one of her hands was clasped; her other arm was stretched out over the pool, as if she was about to fling herself into it, or at least was making no effort to save herself from sinking into its dangerous waters when the branch, which was rapidly giving way under the pressure of her hold, should finally break asunder.

This Bertrand saw, to his horror, it was in the very act of doing, even while he looked on it, and the result could only be Laura's instantaneous fall into the water, from whence, if she did not sink at once, she would drift into the rapid current that would speedily bear her beyond his reach. The danger was too imminent for him even to attempt to rouse her to a sense of her position before he rescued her from it, and with one bound he had cleared the space which separated him from her, and at some peril to himself of falling into the stream, he succeeded in flinging his arm round her slender waist, and dragging her back from her dangerous post up the bank to a place of safety.

Then for a moment he stood breathless, holding her close to his heart, which was beating wildly with the sense of the danger she had escaped, and the excitement of her rescue, while she, with her head drooping on his breast, and her long bright hair trailing over his arm, made no effort to detach herself from his grasp; but he recollected himself almost instantly, and gently laid her out of his arms on to the grass at the foot of a tree under whose shade they were standing.

It was with a bitter pang, however, that he loosed his hold, and let her lean for support against the rugged trunk of the old elm instead of on his own passionate heart, where he longed to give her a place evermore, for the agony he had suffered in the moment of her peril had been to him a sudden revelation of the extent to which she was indeed intensely dear to him, and he knew now what he had failed altogether to understand before: that if he gave her up from a sense of honour to Mary Trevelyan he gave up with her the fairest promise of happiness his life could ever have known.

"Lurline," he said, in a voice hoarse with emotion, and the words burst from him so impetuously that he scarcely knew in what terms he framed them; "darling Lurline, thank Heaven you are safe!"

Then suddenly she shook the shining hair back from her face, which was wan and mournful as he had never before seen it, and lifted up to him her lovely eyes, wide open and dilated in a wild half-frenzied look, while she exclaimed, clasping her hands convulsively, "Why did you save me, Bertrand Lisle? why did you save me? But for your merciless help I had now been lying perhaps cold and senseless under those deep waters, safe from suffering any more, safe from feeling even the loss of all I prize! Oh, why did you not let me die?"

"Lurline," he exclaimed, flinging himself down on the grass at her feet, "what are you saying? what can you mean? Is it possible that you, the brightest and loveliest of beings, can have had the dreadful thought of flinging your dear life away?"

"I did not mean to kill myself; I do not wish to do wrong," she said, piteously, "but if the branch had broken and I had fallen in, it would not have been my fault, and yet I should have been at rest, and safe from the misery I see before me."

Artful as Laura Wyndham was, there was genuine anguish in her tone, for she did feel at that moment that all her future was trembling in the balance, and that the scales were leaning heavily to that final separation from Bertrand, which would indeed be utter grief to her, although the causes which would make it so were more or less ignoble.

He caught her hand in his.

"But why do you see misery before you, beautiful bright Lurline? You are fitted to bring sunshine and joy to every heart that knows you, and it cannot be but that your own path must be blest with light and love wherever you go."

"My path has been through gloom and dreariness all my life long," she answered, passionately. "I have been like one stranded on an arctic shore, with

only gloom, and ice, and solitude around me, and when suddenly there came a six-weeks' summer to my life, all full of warmth, and hope, and brightness, and I thought there was in it a light of affection that could never altogether fade away from it, do you wonder that it is misery to me to hear all in a moment from careless lips that it is about to be quenched in sudden darkness; that the drear winter of hopeless loneliness is coming back to me again, made all the gloomier for the recollection of the vanished sunshine?"

It was with an effort Bertrand kept back the words trembling on his lips, which would have asked if indeed it was his presence that had made radiance in her life, his threatened absence which was to bring back the gloom, but the recollection of Mary and of his dead father's wishes held him back, loyal and true-hearted as he was, and he gazed mutely into her exquisite face with a look which she read as if it had been written in a book. She knew how to meet it; with one of the wild impulsive gestures which enabled her so often to say with impunity what would have seemed unmaidenly in any other, but in her appeared only to be guileless freedom, she exclaimed, "I do not know what the friendship between us has been to you, Bertrand—a passing amusement, perhaps. I believe it is so sometimes with men, who care not what life-long agony they cause if they can while away a few weeks pleasantly—but I do know that to me it has been light, and joy, and blessedness, which has changed the whole world for me, and made it like the garden of Eden where you are, and a desolate wilderness where you are not; and then you wonder that I hate my life and shrink from the future when you coolly announce that you are about to take yourself out of my sight for ever and for ever!" and bursting into a passion of tears, she clasped her hands upon her knees, and laid her head down upon them, weeping bitterly.

"Oh, Lurline!" said Bertrand, almost beside himself; "if only I dared tell you what our friendship has indeed been to me these last few weeks! more, far more than ever it can have been to you, and now it would seem to me the very sweetest dream of bliss to have your companionship all my days, but I dare not, dare not speak of it, since it is so decreed that we can never be more to each other than we are now."

"Never more to each other than we are now!" she repeated, slowly; then she lifted her head, and fixed her large eyes, shining through their tears, on Bertrand's face. "Do I understand you rightly," she said, very softly, "that if there was no impediment in your way you would wish that our lives should be passed together?"

"Can you doubt it?" he exclaimed. "I am wrong, perhaps, to say it, but this once only I will make the avowal, and then lock my lips over all I feel for ever more. Darling Lorelei! to have you for the blessing of my life would be the deepest wish of my heart, and I hardly know at this moment how to bear the fiat which tells me it may never be."

A smile radiant as the morning sunshine flashed over Laura's face, and lit it up with a dazzling beauty on which Bertrand gazed entranced, while she exclaimed, in a tone of rapturous joy, "Oh, Bertrand, I think we may be happy yet! I think the terrible black cloud is rolling away from my life. I understand it all; I see where your mistake is: you think that I am bound to John Pemberton, and that you must not in honour come between us, but you are quite mistaken; I am free as the air—free to give myself to you. Poor John is nothing to me but a brother, whom I adopted as such out of very charity, as an innocent consolation to him for my refusal to make him happy, for he does love me, alas! but too well. No, Bertrand, there is none in all the world can come between me and you. I never gave my heart before, but I have given it now; it is all yours for ever!" and she gave him both her little hands with a gesture of tender grace, as if she concluded all doubt was at an end; but in the words she had spoken, which seemed the genuine outburst of a guileless heart, she had been false with the basest falseness, for she well knew that John Pemberton was not the obstacle between them.

Bertrand's fine face had taken an expression of the deepest distress and perplexity.

"Oh, Lurline, do not tempt me—do not madden me!" he said; "you cannot dream how you are stabbing me to the very heart! It is not your relations with John Pemberton which stand in our way—though I did not indeed understand before in what they consisted—it is my position with regard to Mary."

"Mary Trevelyan! Your sister Mary!" exclaimed Laura, turning round upon him with a look of almost horrified surprise.

"She is not my sister, Lurline. Oh that she were!"

"She has no other feeling for you but such as a sister might have. If she loves any one it is Charlie Davenant."

"She does not love him, Laura, I am sure of it."

"Perhaps not: because she is incapable of feeling affection at all; but in any case, she does not love you. What fatal mistake are you making, Bertrand?" continued Laura, vehemently. "You have told me plainly that you do not care for her, and that I am dear to you, and are you going to sacrifice yourself and me to the wild delusion that any love for you exists in that block of marble—that cold, passionless, rigid statue! She feels no more for you than does that stone," and Lurline pushed one angrily away with her foot.

"How can you be so sure she does not love me, Lurline?" said Bertrand, reluctantly.

"Because I have lived with her nearly a year, and I know her through and through. Have I not seen her coldness when she spoke of you, her indifference when your letters came, her careless unwillingness that your arrival should interfere with her own arrangements? A thousand things have proved it. Could she have made me her intimate friend all these months, and never a spark of her affection for you have shone through her life to me, if indeed she possessed any? Bertrand, it is madness to suppose she can love you!"

"Yet I have had good reason to think it," he said, slowly.

"What reason?" exclaimed Laura, flashing her bright eyes impatiently on him.

For a moment he did not answer: his delicacy shrank from betraying Mary's secret to any one. At last he said, gently, "I think you must not ask me that, dear Lorelei."

She started to her feet, and flung up her hands as with a movement of despair, crying out, "Because you have none—because it is a mere excuse. You are deceiving me! You have been only playing with me! You wring from me a confession of my fatal love for you, and then fling it back in my face, and tell me you are to give yourself to that block of stone. Why, why did you not leave me to die! But I can bear no more! I will never see you again! I have been betrayed, but I will never be scorned!"

And all her frame quivering with passion, she wrenched her hands out of Bertrand's grasp, and ran with the speed of a deer along the bank towards the point of danger.

But he was swifter even than she was, and he had caught her before she had gone many steps.

"Laura, Laura, forgive me!" he exclaimed, "you mistake me quite. Stay with me, only stay with me, and I will tell you all—everything you may ask me!"

(To be continued.)

THE ARCH OF TITUS AND ITS TESTIMONY TO THE FAITH.

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."—St. Matt. xxiii. 37—39.

THE venerable remains of Phœnician, Egyptian, Greek, and Roman antiquity have often been cited in illustration of the evidences of the Christian faith. These monuments are scattered over an immense area, extending from the Euphrates to the Guadalquiver, and the Danube to the Desert of Sahara, and the slopes of the Atlas Mountains. They vindicate the truth of the inspired record, or at least the genuineness and authenticity of our sacred books, by inscriptions, by painting, and by sculpture. Among the buildings which fulfil the latter office, the arch of Titus, at Rome, built to commemorate the conquest of Judæa by that general, is not the least conspicuous. It is deservedly reckoned a perfect model of architectural grace and beauty, notwithstanding the ravages of time and the feudal wars of the Middle Ages, and the foolish attempt of the Frangipanni family, many hundreds of years ago, to improve it, by placing a sort of turret, or a crown, on the top. This excrescence has happily been removed. The monument is situated at the foot of the Palatine Hill, the original navel and centre of old Rome, on a road which led from the forum to the amphitheatre of Vespasian, commonly called the Colosseum. It consists only of a single arch, whereas the arch of Constantine and that of Septimius Severus consist of a large arch in the middle with a smaller one on each side. In fact they are similar in general outline to the Marble Arch, at the top of Oxford Street, in London, while the gateway opposite to the entrance to Hyde Park in Piccadilly rather resembles the arch of Titus. Concerning its precise architectural character it is foreign to our present purpose to treat. Let us rather carefully investigate the inscriptions and sculptures by which it is ornamented. Let us suppose ourselves leaving the Flavian Amphitheatre, in other words, the Colosseum, turning our backs to that gigantic building, and facing the somewhat distant Capitoline Hill. In front of us stands the arch of Titus. Over the triumphal arch itself stands out, in big domineering capitals, which may still be read at a considerable distance, the following inscription:—

SENATVS POPVLVSQVE ROMANVS
DIVO TITO DIVI VESPASIANI F
VESPASIANO AVGVSTO.

The achievements of the imperial general are displayed in various forms upon the building. In Montfaucon's celebrated "Antiquities" there are several plates which represent the figures upon the arch more exactly than they are now to be traced. In the first we see the emperor making his triumphal entry, in a round chariot called *thense*, drawn by four huge war-horses. This forms a bas-relief on the right hand side of the interior of the arch, as the spectator approaches from the Colosseum. A Victory places a crown of laurel upon the head of Titus. In one hand he brandishes a truncheon, probably a symbol of

supreme command, like the *bâton* of the modern field-marshal, in the other he holds a somewhat mysterious scroll. The well-known figure, armed with a helmet and spear, which is found in so many ancient remains, and represents the tutelary genius of the city of Rome, appears doing honour to the conqueror by leading one of the horses by the bridle. His imperial majesty is surrounded by lictors and soldiers, all crowned with the customary chaplet of laurel. On the left-hand side of the arch, in a space exactly corresponding with that on the right-hand, is found a far more interesting and suggestive group of figures. Here is shown the actual conquest of Jerusalem itself. Several legionaries, also wreathed with laurel, bear aloft the golden table which stood in the Temple that for so many ages glorified the sacred height of Mount Moriah. The two brazen trumpets, often alluded to in the Holy Bible, are borne by similar attendants. Crowds of warriors follow, some carrying the great golden candlestick with seven branches. All the bearers have staves to assist in supporting them under the enormous and crushing weight of these precious trophies. Some carry branches of laurel, and others tablets, on which were probably inscribed the names of the conquered cities. Montfaucon's work contains several other antiques, typical of the conquest. Among them, the river Jordan is borne along in triumph, represented by an old man lying down, and leaning upon an urn, which was a favourite Roman method of symbolising rivers. Contemporary with the erection of the arch, or nearly so, several medals were struck. On one of them, a woman sitting sadly by a palm-tree deplores her bitter misfortunes; behind the palm-tree stands a soldier with his foot upon a helmet, and the inscription is "JUDÆA CAPTA," that is, "Judæa taken." A fearful picture of the daughter of Jerusalem, who has so long sat and wept in the dust! The apotheosis of Titus is represented in the middle of the vault by the emblematic figure of the conqueror, borne to heaven on the broad wings of a towering eagle. Josephus* corroborates many of the foregoing remarks, and minutely describes the triumphal procession of Vespasian and his son. Amongst other trophies carried before them, the rich spoils which had belonged to the Temple at Jerusalem were conspicuous. "There was the golden table," says the Jewish historian, "which weighed many talents. It was constructed upon a different principle from anything in use amongst us now. In the middle was the main stem, which rose out of the base, from this proceeded smaller branches, very much resembling the form of a trident, and on the top of each of them was a lamp worked in brass. There were seven such in all, emblematical of the seven days of the Jewish week. The Book of the Law was the last of the spoils, and closed the mournful procession."

This narrative would not be complete if we omitted to state that the material of which the arch was constructed came from the purest marble quarries of Pentelicus, white and glistering at first, but afterwards blackened by age and exposure to the weather. At last the building became so ruinous that it was taken down, block by block, during the pontificate of Pope Pius VII., and entirely restored, Travertine stone being used for the new portions of the work. From the foundation to the frieze it is covered with suggestive sculptures. As one has felicitously observed, "it is a document in marble." It bears testimony that the sovereign pontiff Vespasian and his son, by destroying the Temple and the city, which seemed to crystallise the Mosaic dispensation, fulfilled the prophecies of Holy Writ, especially those uttered by our blessed Saviour Himself. The inscription on the side opposite the capitol honours Titus for having "subjugated the nation of the Jews, and destroyed the city of Jerusalem, a fortress vainly attacked and besieged before him by generals, kings, and peoples." The conqueror's attire was that of Jupiter Capitolinus. "His face and his arms," says Josephus, "were like the statue of Jupiter Triumphans, enamelled with minium or vermilion." This stately colouring has long since disappeared, for every Jew who passes the arch flings a stone at the head of Titus; and no son or daughter of Abraham will, under any pretext, pass under the accursed gateway.

We have remarked that the arch and its sculptures form an impressive evidence of the fulfilment of prophecy. Some have thought that the prophecies of the Old Testament, relative to the final overthrow of the Jewish polity and power, are illustrated by the arch of Titus. This is disputed by others. Declining to become arbiters in such a conflict of opinion, let us confine ourselves to our Saviour's prophecies. Here we stand upon sure ground. In His last visit to the gorgeous Temple at Jerusalem, then recently restored by the Idumean usurper, Herod the Great, He uttered these remarkable words: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold your house is left unto you desolate." Shortly before, He had wept over the devoted city, saying, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench

* Burgess's "Antiquities of Rome."

about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee, and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." This language may be paraphrased: "The crisis hastens, the moment will soon arrive when thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and thou shalt suffer all the horrors of a siege." The word translated "trench" might be rendered *rampart*, for the earth and stones excavated to form a trench were used in piling up such a heap. To all these utterances the event most critically and exactly corresponded. Josephus says: "When Titus attacked the city the Jews defended themselves so obstinately that he found there was no way to gain his purpose but to compass the city round with a trench and mound. By this means he kept the besieged in on every side, cut off from them all hope of safety by flight, and consumed them by famine. The work which he undertook was indeed a matter of extreme difficulty, for the wall measured thirty-nine furlongs, or almost five miles, and the towers were thirteen in number, every one of them ten furlongs in compass. Nevertheless, the whole was finished in three days, for the soldiers in performing the task were animated by a Divine impetus."

When Titus and Vespasian ordered the entire demolition of the town and temple, they little thought that they were confirming the words of our blessed Lord, uttered some forty years before. "There shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." They were the unconscious agents in a great Providential scheme. The demolition of Jerusalem was a standing proof that our Lord Jesus was the true Christ, the Messiah; that He had already come to His temple, and that the Mosaic dispensation was for ever at an end, Christ having in every sense fulfilled the law; and that the Jewish nation was about to be scattered to the four winds of heaven. In like manner Josephus was a mere secular historian. It is doubtful if he had ever heard of the Saviour's mystical words; yet he records, with dispassionate candour, their precise fulfilment, that the great city and Temple were literally overthrown to the very foundations, the stones being excavated down to the solid rock. We are informed by Maimonides, the learned rabbi of Cordova in Spain, that the very site of the Temple was ploughed up, thus fulfilling the prediction, "Sion shall be ploughed as a field." Now, it may be asked again and again, why was all this permitted in the wise and orderly administration of Divine Providence? It is said that Titus wished to preserve the Temple, and would have punished the incendiaries that set fire to its cedar beams and hangings of Tyrian purple, but that such was the remorseless malignity of the wild factions within the city, as much against each other as against the Roman forces, that the legionaries of Titus were roused to more than superhuman rage. The infatuation, obstinacy, and purposeless atrocities of the Jews, drove them to brutalities of which the "grinding to powder" of gems of architectural beauty was only the small material type. Thus were the Lord's words, every jot and tittle of them, exactly accomplished.

But it might still be supposed desirable that some standing record of these events should be handed down from generation to generation. The narratives of contemporary writers might not improbably be lost, as the precious art of printing was not invented till many centuries afterwards. Even the works of the most eloquent and impressive authors sometimes utterly perish. The "Annals" of Livy are incomplete; the "Ecclesiastical Polity" of Hooker wants some important books. The memory of many a great event has been obscured because the written record of it has utterly disappeared; but in the arch of Titus we have just the sort of history in stone which the case requires. The great temple has been razed, but the monument erected to commemorate its overthrow still stands at the lapse of nearly eighteen centuries. It has been restored, it is true, but in so conservative a spirit that every available portion of the original building has been kept in its place. The inscription stating the occasion of its erection is unusually large and conspicuous, and is wonderfully preserved, considering that it was inscribed nearly two thousand years ago. The sculptures with which the gate is so profusely decked hand down, with singular exactness, the distinct and varied features of contemporary races, the costumes of soldiers and civilians, and, above all, the shapes of the Temple furniture. Verbal descriptions often admit of a double interpretation, but not so these delicately-carved stones. What an impressive commentary do they form upon the Mosaic Institutes, their development and their abolition! Stand out, old arch, still uttering thy silent testimony, refulgent as though built of burnished gold when the sun is at the zenith, and coldly grey in the presence of the evening star and backed by the deep blue and violet of the Italian sky! to thee shall men come, reverential pilgrims, not merely students of art and history, but loving and believing Christians, from the east and the west, the north and the south. From the banks of the Thames and the Mississippi, the Hudson and the Euphrates, they shall gaze on thee with strange curiosity, as witnessing to the truth of the inspired record, and, above all, to the claims and prerogatives of that Divine Intercessor and Mediator who is emphatically and in every point of view the author and the finisher of our faith!

T. JACKSON, M.A.

IN PERIL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER III.

AGAIN the shades of evening were beginning slowly to creep over the earth, which, after the heat of day, seemed gratefully to welcome their cooling touch; and again the little village by the sea seemed to have given itself up to the quiet enjoyment of the fair things Nature had spread around.

The busy workers in the hay-fields now rested under the shade of the spreading trees, whilst their little ones played in the sweet-scented grass, and gave out their ringing laughter to mingle with the clear song of the birds, the chirps of the grasshopper, the lowing of distant cattle, and the roar of the waves breaking upon the shore below.

Here and there, in many a trim cottage garden, might be seen a man hovering among his flowers, and tending them lovingly, with a smile of content upon his face as he watched them thriving and prospering; whilst others were busy in their allotments, cultivating the vegetables which were to form so large and so acceptable a part of their children's food. The health-giving breezes from the sea found their way everywhere, fanning the sunburnt cheeks of the tired labourer and putting new strength into him, brightening the rosy faces of the children, which deepened into a yet more healthy glow at their touch, and rustling through the leaves of the honeysuckle which drooped and clustered round the porch of that little cottage below the church—played upon the pale cheek of the patient watcher, who once more sat in her favourite seat, gazing out over the calm deep blue waters.

Suddenly she raised her head and listened. She had heard a sound which made her heart leap until she was obliged to press her hand upon it to still its beating. For this was the sound for which she had waited five years; daily, almost hourly, praying that she might hear it once again, and sometimes hoping, sometimes fearing, whether she ever should do so. And now there it was—a sound so sweet that it thrilled through her—the voice of her long absent son softly breathing the long unspoken word, "Mother!"

She rose tremblingly from her seat, and stood at the entrance of the porch, with the sprays of honeysuckle and deep red roses drooping round her calm pale face, which looked almost beautiful, lighted up as it was with the unutterable joy of that moment.

For there he was, her only son, leaning over the gate, with a pleading entreating expression on his face, and eyes softened and dimmed by the starting tears, as once more the lips uttered the word, "Mother!"

"My son, my son!" and the two were clasped in each other's arms.

"Mother, fergive me!"

She could not speak; she could only lay her head upon her son's shoulder, and weep in silence there.

"Mother, say you forgive me!" he pleaded; and then, taking her face between his hands, he held it long as he gazed into it, and read therein her deep unchanging love for himself, her joy, too great for expression, at her long-lost son's return.

They sank down upon the rustic bench, and there they sat hand in hand gazing out over the peaceful landscape, or turning to look into each other's faces, which beamed with joy and love and tenderness.

"Mother, you forgive me; then God will too."

"Aye, He will, He will; He does, He has!" and she clasped her hands as though to still the tumult of her joy.

"Yes, He has," said the young man, in a low, almost solemn tone. "He has; I came to Him and said I had wandered *very* far; but it seemed as if, before I had confessed one half, 'He came and fell on my neck and kissed me,' as it says He did to the prodigal son."

"'From the uttermost part!'" murmured the mother, amidst her tears, which fell softly and silently, and relieved the heart burdened with so great a weight of gladness—"'from the uttermost part!' Oh, my son, He has then gathered thee home! has sought for thee and found thee at length! How can we ever praise Him enough for His great goodness!"

And she glanced upwards at the deep blue heavens overhead, whilst the breeze rustled in the leaves of the trees, and bowed the heads of the flowers, and then floated upwards laden with sweet scents and charged with the evening song of the birds, which mingled with the softly breathed "Amen" that escaped from the lips of the young man. And a deep peace stole down into his heart as silently as the dew which was even then falling around them, and as refreshingly: the peace which God gives to those who have given up all—both sins and their own self-will—for Him.

They ate their frugal supper outside their cottage door; and then sat on until the moon had risen and cast her soft silvery light in one long stream of shimmering whiteness over the waters, when the only sound to disturb the deep stillness was the never-ceasing murmur of the waves, which seemed to those two to speak of the boundless ocean of the mercies and the love of God.

Then James Forrest told his story to his mother. A sad story it was, full of ever darkening shadows of sin and evil, until he came to the plan of robbery

which he had formed with his neighbour, and which in a few hours he would have carried out, had it not been for the restraining hand of God upon him. They both shuddered as they thought of the brink of the precipice upon which he had stood; but it only served to deepen their gratitude to Him who had saved and snatched him from that fearful peril. And then James repeated the words of the preacher—words which had made so deep an impression upon him, and had opened his eyes, as with a lightning-flash, to the sin and the danger of his evil courses.

"So you never went back to London at all that night?" said Mrs. Forrest.

"No. Perhaps it might have been cowardly; but I felt it would be all up with me if I once trusted myself back in the wretched court, with Peter Bell persuading and edging me on. I knew I should never have strength to resist, and so I thought the best way was to fly from temptation. Besides, the longing for you, mother, grew so great, that I turned my face in this direction, and walked on and on—for I'd no money in my pocket for a railway fare—and though I've been a good bit of time upon the road, here I am at last." And the words were uttered with a sigh of infinite relief.

"Thank God!" murmured the mother.

"I hadn't much to leave behind me at my miserable lodgings, and, such as it was, I thought 'twas better to give it up than run any risk by going back for it."

"Ah yes, indeed; and all that I have is yours, my son."

"Oh mother, how good you are to me! and what happiness it is to be sitting here once more beside you!"

"And then to sit together in heavenly places! Think, James, what that will be hereafter!"

There was a pause, and then the mother spoke again. "And you are come to stay here for good, now? You have grown tired of your wanderings?"

"Aye, that's true, mother. I hope nothing will ever part us now till death comes to take one or other of us."

"One or other!" Mrs. Forrest started. The idea of her own departure was one often present to her mind; but upon the possibility that her son might be the first to go she had never dwelt.

She turned and gazed again more searchingly into his face, and a pang shot through her as she perceived how worn and pale and weary was the countenance that when she last had seen it wore all the freshness and brightness of early manhood. Those years of sin and self-indulgence had left their traces on him; but as she marked the humbled yet steadfast hopeful expression which had replaced the restless one of bygone days, she rejoiced, and felt that, even should it be her portion to look on and see him pass away before her, she could joyfully yield him up to the Father who had sought and brought home again His long-lost child.

But she was spared that trial. Some years of tranquil undisturbed happiness were granted to the two; and when at length the aged head drooped in the sleep of death, it was the son's hand which closed the eyes whose last look, full of deepest tenderness, had been fixed upon himself; and it was the tears of the erring, prayed-for, repentant one, that rained so thick and fast upon the calm still face. But there was a sweetness in his sorrow which healed whilst it purified. She had but gone before whither he humbly hoped one day to follow; and meantime life was full of blessings and duties; and the remembrance of the happiness of those last few years spent together would serve but to make him long for and ever keep in view the deeper fuller happiness reserved for those who have attained to the rest above.

As time passed on a smiling young bride was brought home to the pretty cottage; and then, after a while, children's voices filled the air, and young forms flitted to and fro in the garden, or ran a little way along the road to meet "father" on his return home from work.

And every Sunday they all paid a visit to "grandmother's" grave; though often, at other times, the figure of a man might be seen standing beside it, apparently lost in thought—thoughts that evidently were calming and soothing, for a look of peace always settled upon the face at those times.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

205. What is stated in the Book of Revelation concerning the "Tree of Life?"

206. What words of Jeremiah would imply that he was very young when he began to prophesy?

207. Where is it mentioned that the earth is God's footstool?

208. Quote a passage which would seem to show that distinct prophecies were given to the people of David's victories against the Philistines and of his future greatness.

209. To what king did our Lord refer when He said "Go ye and tell that fox?"

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 496.

193. "He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers into his ears, and He spit, and touched his tongue" (Mark vii. 33).

194. While the flesh was in seething he took a flesh-hook of three teeth in his hand, and struck it into the pan or kettle; all that the flesh-hook brought up the priest took for himself (1 Sam. ii. 13, 14).

195. Mark ix. 3.

196. "It was the ninth month, on the twentieth day of the month; and all the people sat in the street of the house of God, trembling because of this matter, and for the great rain" (Ezra x. 9).

197. St. John the Baptist (Matt. iii. 7).



(*Drawn by* TOWNELEY GREEN.)

"GOOD-BYE"—*i.e.*, "GOD BE WI' YE."

HOW sweetly sound the words "Good-bye,"
When spoken from the heart,
Though tears are falling from the eye
Because dear friends must part.

It may be that a sad farewell
Such parting has in store;
Because in life, ah, who can tell,
That we shall meet once more?

It may be when we say "Good-bye,"
This thought will bring relief,
That when we meet right merrily
There'll be no cause for grief.

But "*God be with you*" (such the prayer
Conveyed by each "Good-bye")
Will tell that He is everywhere,
A present God, and nigh.

And where God is, bliss there may be,
We need not fear nor cry;
For though our God we cannot *see*,
We *hear* Him in "*Good-bye*."

Paglesham. JAMES HARRIS, M.A.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXII.—DOROTHY A HYPOCRITE.

IT came about that Tom escorted Dorothy to her lover's tea-party the next day. Mrs. Woodward was not well, and, to Dorothy's relief, Netta excused herself, on the plea of expecting visitors at home. A change had come over Tom lately. What it was Dorothy did not know; but he seemed more taken up with himself, and a little preoccupied, and almost selfish. He used to be so very unselfish at one time—ready to buy her anything he could afford out of his pocket-money, and to help her in a bit of fun, or sympathise with her in any of the trifling troubles that came to her, in the old happy days.

"I suppose as we get older we get more selfish, all of us," she thought, as they trudged along, "and more taken up with our own individual troubles and pleasures. I am. I used to think of all sorts of things once, and now all my time is taken up in thinking how much I would give if my life were different."

"What an awful 'gig' you look, Dorothy!" said her hopeful brother, arousing her with a start from her reverie, and recalling her to the terrible ordeal before her—*i.e.*, the first visit to her future home (as she supposed it would be), and the meeting of the maiden aunts.

"Do I?" she exclaimed, ruefully; "and I have got on all my best things. Netta made me put them on, and they are so uncomfortable."

"Made you do it on purpose, you may depend. This is Blakesley's house, Doll. Awfully prim-looking crib, isn't it? and you have no idea what it's like inside—all spider-legs and crockery, chairs you can't sit upon, and clocks that won't go—a get-up which he calls Old Style. He'll make *you* get up like a Dresden china image when you are married, to complete the picture."

It *was* a prim-looking house—a square, squat little place, standing under the shelter of a much larger house which was next to it, and enclosed on three sides with a neatly-kept garden. There was a rustic porch—"so make-believe countrified," she thought, as they entered. A middle-aged servant opened the door, and showed them into a peculiar-shaped drawing-room, which was reached by ascending a steep little staircase, lighted by a diamond-paned window. It was a quaint room—only a man of culture and refinement could have collected and arranged the things in it—and yet it had a hard uncomfortable look everywhere, save in one corner by the fire, where there was a large old-fashioned easy-chair, into which Dorothy longed to creep and hide herself.

"The old cats haven't arrived, that's evident," said Tom, with his usual want of politeness.

There was no one in the drawing-room when they entered.

"Oh Tom, don't——" she began; but George Blakesley entered, and Dorothy stood shyly before him, awkward with the weight of her best clothes and the shining glory of the bracelet Netta had given her long ago, and some additional ornaments which the Beauty had insisted upon lending her (to do her justice, Netta had tried to make her sister look nice, and had succeeded), and shrinking from the ordeal of meeting strangers as the acknowledged *fiancée* of the master of that house.

"How pretty we look!" he said.

The words would have given such new pleasure to her once, no matter from whose lips they fell, but now she hardly cared. The faint sound of a door-bell was heard, then a rustle of silk, and Dorothy retreated into an uncomfortable arm-chair in a corner (there were lots of arm-chairs), just half a second before the door opened, and three ladies entered. From her corner and the arm-chair, from which she suddenly realised that it was impossible to rise, Dorothy first looked at her future relations. Tom was perhaps the only self-possessed person in the room for a moment.

"Aunt Milly," George Blakesley said, when he had saluted the elderly spinsters, "this is Dorothy; and this is your Aunt Milly, dear."

She was the eldest of the three—a kind old lady, with a bright sunshiny smile, and a voice as crisp and clear and sweet as the chirp of a bird.

"I am very glad to see you, my dear," she said; but Dorothy hung her head, and had nothing to say in reply to her.

"I feel such a dreadful hypocrite!" she thought.

"This is Aunt Josephine."

And the second lady (she could not be called old yet) came forward; but she only bowed. A handsome woman still was Josephine; she had been a beauty in her day, and she carried the conscious remembrance of it about with her. She was not a sunshiny happy-faced thing, like her elder sister, nor was she as gentle, though her heart was every bit as kind, perhaps. But she was stiff and proud, and sometimes perhaps a little hard when she meant to be only just. Then Dorothy was introduced to the third aunt, Minnie, who was not more than forty-five; she was a smaller woman than the others, and had a nervous little laugh. She came forward and kissed Dorothy.

"I am so glad to see you, dear," she said; and Dorothy sank back into the ugly chair again, quite relieved.

Tea was brought up, and some more people arrived. George Blakesley had quite a party, and every one looked at Dorothy, who felt herself getting more and more frightened.

"I only wish I dared make a face at that man sitting on the sofa!" she thought. The man on the sofa was handsome, but looked miserable (it was a way he had Dorothy found out afterwards); "and I would give all the world to do something outrageous, and horrify every one. Of course, they all think I'm dreadfully in love, and I'm not—not a bit; I'd give the world to go away and never see any one again as long as I live!" Then a half sad, half comic train of thoughts came floating through her brain. Never to see any one again! why, she must be a Robinson Crusoe to accomplish that! And she thought of Mr. Fuller, and the summer day on which he had told her, carelessly enough, that she should be "Man Friday," and the tears came into her eyes. "I shall never be so happy again," she thought; "never, never, as long as I live!"

"I have brought you some tea, dear," a low voice said; and she looked up.

It was the man to whom she was engaged, whom she ought to love more than any one in the world, and whom, oh sorrowful thought! she did not love even the least bit. Presently the miserable young man rose, and went, and the other visitors followed his example, all but the aunts, each pointedly shaking hands with her, to show that they recognised her position.

"Tom," said George Blakesley, "I want to show you some fossils I have in my study." Dorothy rose to her feet also, but he went over and put his hand upon her shoulder, and wondered why she trembled so. "I dare say she is nervous, poor little thing," he thought. "No, dear," he said, in the kind voice her ungrateful heart would not answer; "you stay and talk to our aunts a little while."

And he vanished with Tom, and left her to their tender mercies.

CHAPTER XXIII.— TABBY, TORTOISESHELL, AND BLACK-AND-WHITE.

So they gathered round her—those three stiff spinsters, in their old-fashioned rustling silk gowns; the youngest (Minnie) did not wear silk either, but something soft and clinging, with a dead white collar about her throat.

"And are you very happy, my dear?" began the eldest, in her purring sort of way.

"Yes—I don't know—I suppose so, Miss Mil.—" stammered Dorothy, feeling that she was about to undergo a cross-examination, and fearing lest she should betray what a rank impostor she was.

"You must call us all aunts, my dear; I am Aunt Milly, you know," the old lady said, kindly.

"You must let me tell you, Dorothy," said Josephine, grandly, "you have every reason to congratulate yourself. I can assure you I do not know a more worthy young man than our nephew George. A most clever, upright, conscientious——"

But Minnie (among their friends they were always addressed by their Christian names, preceded by the title of Miss) interrupted her sister with a nervous little laugh. "You mustn't frighten her, dear Josephine," she said; and then, feeling it was her turn to put a question, she asked, "and when do you think it will be, Dorothy?" They all carefully called her Dorothy to show that she was considered a future member of the family.

But Dorothy only looked still more afraid, and said she didn't know, but "not for a long time she hoped;" and they thought it only natural that she should be shy.

Then they asked her if she was musical, and if she was fond of reading, and how long she had known George, and all sorts of questions, which poor Dorothy answered to the best of her ability till Tom and the hero of the occasion appeared, and the aunts got up to go.

"You must let us see you often, Dorothy," Josephine said; "I dare say George will bring you to dine with us one evening next week," and she swept grandly out of the small room, ruffling a tiger's skin, and nearly upsetting a valuable and singularly ugly old china vase on her way.

"Good-bye, dear!" said Miss Milly, kindly, and she whispered, "Be a good little wife to my George; he has always been my boy since he lost his mother, and now you must belong to me, too," and when she looked up, surprised at receiving no answer, she saw two wistful brown eyes, and so sad an expression on the sweet girl-face, that it haunted and puzzled her for many a day afterwards. She stooped and kissed her, and the third sister followed her example, and then they vanished, and the dreadful tea-party was over.

The September days were drawing in when Dorothy and her brother and George Blakesley left the prim cottage.

XUM

"We'll go and make Netta sing to us in the twilight," the latter said, as an excuse for returning with them; and then he asked, "well, how did my little girl like the aunts?"

"They were very kind," she began.

"Nice old cats!" said Tom, approvingly.

"Tom!" exclaimed Dorothy, horrified.

"Well, so they are; I don't mean it disrespectfully, do I, Blakesley?"

"No, of course not!" he answered.

"Do you know," continued the youth, blithe at finding himself encouraged, "the eldest makes me think of a nice kind old purring tabby. I like cats," he added; "so does Dolly; I remember she blubbered like anything over Venus's funeral two or three years ago."

"I'm sure I didn't, Tom!" said his sister, indignantly; and then she added, "do you know, I think Aunt Minnie is something like what Venus was—so very gentle and soft, and all black-and-white."

"And what is Aunt Josephine?" asked Blakesley.

"Tortoiseshell, of course!" said Tom. "She's handsome and grand, and wags her tail just like a tortoiseshell."

"Very well then, we'll call them Tabby, Tortoiseshell, and Black-and-white, in future," he said; and thus, without one spark of disrespect, and in no uncomplimentary spirit, the aunts were generally spoken of afterwards.

"Now I shall trudge on," said Tom, obligingly, "and give you two a chance to spoon in the twilight."

Dolly tried to hold him back (being alone with her *fiancé* always distressed her), but he said he wanted to get on faster, and left them to their fate.

(*To be continued.*)

THE SEVEN LAST WORDS OF THE LORD JESUS.

BY THE REV. T. M. MORRIS, IPSWICH.

VII.—THE WORD OF DEATH.

"And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."—ST. LUKE xxiii. 46.

WE who have been contemplating the successive events of Calvary are now called upon to witness the closing scene of the great tragedy; and having listened to the ever-memorable words uttered by our Saviour in His passion, it is ours to listen to the last word of all—*the word of death*—wherewith He commends His spirit into the hands of His Father, saying, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit;" having said which, He gave up the ghost.

The first word—that of intercession for His murderers—was probably spoken by Christ while He was being affixed to the cross, or immediately after He was uplifted upon it. The next word—that of promise and kingly majesty—was elicited by the petition of the malefactor who was dying at His side, and was spoken by the Saviour at the time when His kingly character and claims were most completely the subjects of mockery and derision. The next word—that of filial affection—was spoken shortly before the descent of the preternatural darkness; and then, from the sixth hour to the ninth hour, was the entire scene veiled, which period was a period of silence as well as of darkness, the termination of which was almost simultaneous with our Saviour's cry of desertion. From the utterance of that cry does His soul gradually emerge from that lowest depth of humiliation and suffering to which it had descended, and now also, with the return of light to the soul of Jesus, does the material darkness roll away!

The last three words follow one another in swift succession. Wearied by His mighty conflict, and by His solitary endurance of unutterable agony, Christ says, "I thirst;" the vinegar is offered and received; the one outstanding prediction of Scripture is fulfilled, and then is heard the word of victory. With a loud voice the announcement is made to all that the work he came to do is finished—is completed; and now it only remains for our Saviour to utter the last word—the word of death, which is the word of victorious faith—"*Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.*"

This period of consummation is signalised by certain concurrent phenomena—the earth quakes, the rocks are riven, the veil of the temple is rent in twain, the graves open. The symbolical significance of these remarkable events is so obvious that there is no need to dwell upon it. The only point to which we would refer in passing, as occasionally misapprehended, is the opening of the graves. Owing to insufficient carefulness in reading the narrative, this difficulty has occurred to some:—Do we not read that Christ is the first-born from the dead, the first fruits of those who believe? how are we with this to reconcile the statement that at the time of Christ's death certain saints or holy persons came forth from their graves? In Scripture all we are told is this: that at the time of Christ's death the graves were opened, probably by the force of the earthquake which is here referred to, and herein have we the symbolic declaration that the power of death was broken;

that Christ by dying had destroyed him that had the power of death; but the graves, though opened, did not yield their contents till after the resurrection of Christ, and then these long-buried saints arose, and appeared unto many.

We have a remarkable proof of providential arrangement if we consider *the time* of Christ's death. Regarding this event as that of which all the prophets had spoken, and to which all the arrangements of the ritual economy had pointed, there is an obvious and striking appropriateness in the time of the offering of the great world-sacrifice.

It was the month Nisan, the first month in the Jewish ecclesiastical or sacred year, and the appointed season of Passover. It was the fourteenth day of the month, the day regarded above all other days of the great festival; it was at this period of commemorative and predictive solemnity —in the evening of this great feast day, or, as it was denominated, the hour between the evenings, about three o'clock in our afternoon, the very time of the slaying of the paschal lamb, that Christ our Passover was slain for us. According to our reckoning of time, at about nine o'clock in the morning Christ was affixed to the cross, at noon the darkness descended, and about three o'clock in the afternoon Christ uttered these last words, and gave up the ghost. We cannot regard this as a mere coincidence, but as a proof that God would have it so; that not only in that very way, but that at that very time, Christ the Lamb, who had been potentially slain from the foundation of the world, should offer Himself in actual sacrifice once for all. And very impressive is the scene suggested to the mind by this conjuncture of events. At that very time—the ninth hour—the priest in the temple must have been slaying the appointed sacrifice, not knowing that within a short distance of him, and in part through his criminal instrumentality, Christ, the great Passover, was being slain. But so, in the wonder-working providence of God, it was. And at the very moment that He who is both priest and victim, sacrifice and altar, gave up the ghost, the Temple rocks in the earthquake, the veil is rent in twain from the top to the bottom, the recesses of the innermost shrine are disclosed, the mercy-seat becomes visible and accessible to all; and thus signs were afforded, little understood at the time, which indicated the passing away of the old and the coming in of a new and better dispensation.

But we must return to the last word of Christ—the word of death—"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." These words, spoken by our Saviour in the very moment of death, are words which remind us of those which David used long before, and which the proto-martyr Stephen used not long after. They are a quotation or rather an adaptation of words which we meet with in Ps. xxxi. 5, "Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." Into the hands of this God, in whom he professes to have such strong confidence, the Psalmist commends his spirit—"He gives it over into His hand as a trust or deposit; for whatsoever is deposited there is safely kept, and freed from all danger and all distress. . . . . The language of the prayer lays hold of life at its root, as springing directly from God, and as also living in the believer from God, and in God; and this life it places under His protection who is the true life of all spirit-life. It is the language of prayer with which the dying Christ breathed forth His life. The period of David's persecution by Saul is the most prolific in types of the passion, and this language of prayer which proceeded from the furnace of affliction through which David at that time passed, denotes, in the mouth of Christ, a crisis in the history of redemption in which the Old Testament receives its fulfilment." (Delitzsch.)

As we listen to these words, which fell from the lips of the dying Saviour, we are reminded *of the way in which the Lord Jesus did die, and of the way in which every believer in Jesus may die.*

1. *These words remind us of the way in which the Lord Jesus did die.*—This last word spoken from the cross sets a seal upon all the rest. With tranquillity and child-like confidence does He commend His spirit to His Father's keeping. "A text of Scripture was the torch which lighted Him in the valley of the shadow of death. As he had always lived in the Scripture, so did He die with its words upon His lips." As we look upon our Divine Redeemer at the very moment He is yielding up His spirit, as we listen to this His last word, we feel that His death is not less full of significance than His life.

As we read these words the impression produced upon us is, *that the death of Christ was voluntary, spontaneous, unconstrained.* When He gave up the ghost, it was not because He could not retain it, but because He was willing to lay down that life over which He had absolute power. When men die they yield to an inevitable necessity. What we call death is but the final outworking of a law written in their members. When the appointed moment comes no man hath power over his spirit to retain it. Death is the result of causes which ordinarily have been long in operation, and which result, however much we may dread and dislike it, we are powerless to avoid or postpone. The utter helplessness of man never appears more evident than when we see him gradually subdued or suddenly smitten down by the resistless might of the King of Terrors. Even where man voluntarily submits to, or even inflicts upon himself some fatal blow, the deadly

injury having been received, the consequence, which is death, *must be* endured. When we contemplate the death of Christ, we see something altogether different. We see Him voluntarily submitting to death, dying with a perfect sense of freedom; no man taketh His life from Him, He layeth it down. As by a mere volition He might have saved Himself from the cross, so, down to the time of His uttering this final word, He might, had He been so pleased, have descended from the cross in kingly might and majesty. But no! it was for this very thing that He came. He was made for a little while lower than the angels for the suffering of death; to this fiery baptism He had been looking forward from the very first, and felt straitened till it was accomplished. He hangs upon that cross a perfectly voluntary sufferer, and at last, knowing well that even then He might avoid the supreme crisis, He says, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit; and having said thus, He gave up the ghost."

As we look upon this perfectly voluntary death of Christ, *we see Him laying down His life for others—for us.* He dies for sins not His own. His death is sacrificial and substitutionary. He who has been representing us in life and suffering, now represents us in death.

It is unnecessary to refer to the way in which this wonderful and voluntary death of Christ is ever represented in Scripture as the point around which all interest gathers. If we look to the ritual mysteries of the Old Testament we see this; if we listen to many of the most remarkable utterances of the New Testament we hear the same thing. Now, this death of Christ can never appear intelligible to us; we shall never learn the true lessons of the cross till we regard the death of Christ as sacrificial and substitutionary. "He gave Himself for our sins." "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it." "He gave Himself that He might redeem us from all iniquity." Alluding to His own death and the greatness of His love manifested thereby, He says, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." He "hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." He "in His own body bare our sins upon the tree." Yes! *He gave Himself for us.* This is the one foundation of our faith and hope. Christ on the cross took the sinner's place. We see Him suffer there, we see Him die there, as our representative and substitute.

2. Here at the cross we not only see how Jesus did die, *but we see how the believer in Jesus may die.* The believer, in his degree, may make the dying experience of Jesus his own. Our Divine Redeemer not only sets before us the example of a holy life, but He reveals to us the secret of a peaceful and blessed death. He lived and suffered and died as He did that we might be able to die as otherwise we could not. By dying He has overcome him that had the power of death—that is the devil—and delivered them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. He has taken away the sting from death, and victory from the grave. If, as believers, we are interested in Christ, death is despoiled of its terrors. He suffered and died for us, that we might be able to make His words our own, and when the end comes say, in a spirit of filial confidence, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." We must all die, in some way or other, at some time or other; happy are we if we are able to die as Jesus died. He lived, He died, He ever liveth, that this might be possible.

Now, the soul can only find its true rest and place of safety in God, and in this emergency the believer at once thinks of God—of God not in Himself, but as He is made known in Christ Jesus. Unless we can thus look to God—to God in Christ—there can be no comfort, no confidence in death. Not long after Christ died on the cross we are presented in the sacred narrative with an account of the way in which a believer in Christ did die. We allude to the evangelist and proto-martyr Stephen. His was a rough and cruel death. We see him in the midst of an excited and angry mob; we see his bruised and battered body falling to the earth, its proper resting-place, under a hail of heavy and ragged stones; though not insensible to pain, he is not much concerned about the fate of the fleshly tabernacle, which is being so roughly unpinned and beaten down; he is thinking rather of the immortal, the undying tenant, which, presently enfranchised, shall speed away from earth and all earthly scenes and sufferings, and, thinking of it, he cries out, "*Lord Jesus receive my spirit.*" In thus commending his spirit to Jesus, he is but confiding in that best and truest friend, who has loved him and given Himself for him. May we be able, like Stephen, in the awful and trying hour of death, to rest simply in the power, and faithfulness, and love of Jesus; then in that very last hour of all we shall be able to say, with undisturbed tranquillity and the much assurance of faith, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. First Series. No. 30. St. Paul at Rome.

Chapter to be read—Acts xxviii. (part of).

INTRODUCTION. The long voyage and shipwreck safely over, where is Paul left? What good has he done at Malta? What an example to travellers! He never forgot whose servant he was. Like Christ, always seeking opportunities of doing good. Detained three months in Malta, till ship arrives bound for Rome.

I. The Journey to Rome (read 10—16). Contrast the arrival and departure. Arrived destitute, friendless, stranger: departs laden with gifts; friends with all, from the governor down to the boatmen; quite sorry to part with so many kind friends. What made the difference? God's servants, who honour Him and work for Him, sure to be honoured. Now the journey to Rome begun once more. Let the teacher trace it for the children on a map. Embarks on the ship; what was its name? Perhaps painted on stern. See how minutely St. Luke notices things. From Malta nearly due north to Syracuse, capital of Sicily; north again to Rhegium; thence north-west to Puteoli, chief port of Italy at that time. Here the voyage ends. Once more they stand on dry land, and now begin the last part of journey on foot. How long do they stay at Puteoli? Everywhere friends are found, so many have heard of the great apostle. Now once more start, along the celebrated Appian way; each step brings nearer Rome. For what purpose is he going? Was to "bear witness," as he did "in Jerusalem" (xxiii. 2). Picture him as he walks along, weary with long journey, downcast at thought of what lies before him: still to have work, and suffering. What is the work? How can he, a poor prisoner, do any good in the great city Rome? How can he get to the people as he used to in the synagogues? Perhaps, too, will have more suffering—can he bear it? doubtless from time to time raises his heart in prayer! How is he cheered? Who come to meet him? How kind of his friends to come so far as Appii Forum (forty-three miles) to meet him! He is not alone then. God has much people in this city too; is cheered, and goes on his way rejoicing. At last arrives at Rome; the prisoner given up to the captain; but what a privilege! he is not treated like a common prisoner! is to live in his own house. Is indeed still a prisoner, always chained to a soldier (ver. 29); still will have much privacy, and can see his friends and others. Always is some mercy in all trials.

II. Paul's Work in Rome (read 17—31). How soon does he begin? Only three days' rest! To whom will he speak first? Remind how had been rejected, persecuted, delivered up by the Jews, and was especially sent to Gentiles (xxii. 21). Still cannot give up the Jews, all his own countrymen, he longs for their salvation; so, once again, summons them first. Begins with the chief; if can convince them, they will preach to the others. Picture the scene. St. Paul's hired house—probably inside the barracks of the Emperor's own guards (Phil. i. 13)—the prisoner bound to the soldier, in his eagerness raising his hand showing the chain (ver. 20), the Jews listening with curiosity. They have heard no harm of him, only that the sect of the Christians is always spoken against (ver. 22). What can it all be about? will St. Paul tell them? They are quite curious to hear. So a day is appointed for going into it. The day comes; St. Paul tells his tale. What is it all about? The same "hope of Israel," the same "kingdom of God," which they profess to care about. But what can they not believe? That Jesus of Nazareth is the hoped-for King who should deliver Israel. How does Paul try to convince them? Not by his own arguments, but by Word of God. Therefore, if they do not believe, are rejecting God and not him. What is the result? Just the same then as now—same Scriptures, same Word, same Saviour, believed by some, disbelieved by others. So Paul dismisses Jews with Isaiah's solemn warning. Now turns to Gentiles, and for two years preaches to all who will come to him the same story of the Lord Jesus Christ, no man forbidding him.

III. Practical Lessons. Have now finished the life of St. Paul; can find some general lessons for ourselves from his life and work. (1) *What a noble thing is a life given to God!* All must admire him; whether travelling, working, studying, among friends, in prison, is always thinking and working for his Master. Are we doing so? (2) *The honour put on such a life.* St. Paul always making friends and converts—kings, governors, captains, sailors, boatmen, all touched by his loving manner and bold words. Is God honouring us in like manner? If not, whose fault is it? (3) *The solemn responsibility of rejecting Christ.* We, like Jews, are always hearing, profess to believe, but do we act upon it? Are we leading a life of faith and repentance? Those who reject Christ now will be rejected by Him hereafter when He comes to visit us in power and great glory.

Questions to be answered.

1. Describe the journey to Rome.
2. How was St. Paul cheered?
3. Describe his imprisonment.
4. For whom did he send first, and why?
5. What was his message to the Jews?
6. Name some general lessons from his life.

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AS Bertrand spoke these words, impetuously, holding her fast all the time, Laura slowly turned round, and looked up at him with the sweetest expression possible softening all her winning face.

"Come and sit down," he said, "and I will give you the fullest details of my position; it will be a great relief to myself to do so, I have been so completely alone in my perplexity."

And then he told her how, as Mary grew up in her fair stillness in his home, he had always loved her with a true and deep affection, and how, when his dying father had adjured him, both by word and letter, in the most urgent manner to make her his wife, he had been very willing and pleased to do so—"because, not then, sweet Lorelei," he added, "had my heart ever been roused to any warmer feeling, as it has been unhappily since."

"But your father could never have wished you to marry a woman you did not love," broke in Lurline, impatiently.

"No, he expressly said that he did not, but I did love Mary in a calm and reasonable manner then, and he had a most solemn reason for wishing that I should marry her, almost as an act of justice."

"What was it? Tell it me, dear Bertrand," said the soft caressing voice.

And he did tell her all the history of Robert Trevelyan's fatal accident, and its consequences in Mary's utter orphanhood and Mr. Lisle's life-long anguish of remorse; for it did not seem to him that in so doing he was failing in care and reverence for his father's memory, as he did not consider that he was in reality at all to be blamed for the terrible catastrophe, or that one of less sensitive conscience would have considered himself in any real sense the cause of it."

Laura caught eagerly at the expressions he used as to his father's morbid scrupulosity and exaggerated sensibility.

"Yes; and can you suppose, Bertrand, that in the clearer light where he sees all things now, he could wish you and Mary alike to sacrifice yourselves to a marriage in which there would be no love on either side, simply in the attempt to repair a fault which he never really committed?"

"If I could be sure that Mary has indeed no love for me!" said Bertrand, flushing as he spoke. "My father on his death-bed wrung from her an avowal that she did love me—and me alone."

"Ah!" said Laura, composedly, "we know how much that is worth. People will, even in a general way, do anything to soothe a dying man's last hours, and I believe there is nothing Mary would not have said to please your father at that sad time."

"But Laura, Mary is true. She could not speak falsely, even for his sake."

"No, perhaps not; and I dare say she could say with truth that she liked you better than any one else because she literally knew no other; but she has no love for you now, Bertrand. I can tell that, alas! by the feelings of my own heart. At the same time, she glories in the martyr spirit, and if you were to press her to marry you because your father wished it she would very likely sacrifice herself and do it. But is my noble beautiful Bertrand to have a wife on such terms as that! oh, it drives me wild to think of it!" and Laura sprang to her feet, and paced to and fro, as if unable to control herself.

"Stay, Lurline!" said Bertrand; "you need be in no fear that I will consent to take a wife on any such terms as these; let me but have the proof that Mary does not love me for myself, and would only marry me out of reverence to the dead, and I shall consider myself free as the winds, so far as she is concerned. I can secure her material comfort otherwise than by a marriage with me, and then I shall no longer hesitate to seek my own happiness where alone it can be found; but this proof, Lurline, how am I to obtain it?"

"From her own lips if you choose. Will that satisfy you?"

"Surely it would, if quiet silent Mary could ever speak to me on such a theme!"

"Her silence and quietness might be your proof if you chose to accept it, Bertrand, for true love cannot hide itself or be silent, as to my cost I know," and the Lorelei drooped her head, apparently shame-faced, but speedily raised it, to say, with flashing eyes, "however, I will undertake that she shall remove your needless scruples herself to-morrow; for this I can tell you: ever since you have been here Mary has been making all sorts of schemes for her own future, wholly independent of you."

"Schemes? of what nature? Not marriage with Charles Davenant, Lurline! I cannot believe that!"

"Not now, perhaps; though I believe it will come later. But for the moment the sober Mary seems to be aspiring to a saintship, and to an emulation of Florence Nightingale. She has some plan of philanthropic self-devotion in her head, I believe."

"That is more like Mary, certainly!" said Bertrand.

"Ask her yourself to-morrow what her purpose



(*Drawn by* W. SMALL.)

"Mary started as if she had received a stab."—*p.* 540.

for the future is, and she will tell you. But Bertrand," continued Laura, bending her eyes keenly on his face, "tell me if Mary knows that you are aware of what she said respecting her love for you in order to quiet your father on his death-bed?"

"That I cannot tell, but I should think not; for so far as I know she never spoke to him again after he told me. He died next day."

"But she knows that you heard from him what his wishes were?"

"Yes, that she certainly does, for I told her so myself, and there it is, Lurline, that I consider my chief difficulty to lie. If I were to know certainly that she loved me, I should hold myself morally bound to her, because I told her in so many words that I knew his wishes, and that they were mine also, and I hoped they would be hers."

"When did you say that to her?" said Laura, frowning.

"On the night before we left our old home, standing by my father's new-made grave."

"And what was her answer?"

"She made none."

"What! do you mean to say she remained silent?" exclaimed Laura.

"Perfectly silent," he answered.

"Oh, Bertrand! and can you for a single moment imagine that she has any love for you if she could receive such a speech as that in silence. Ah, if it had been me!" and the Lorelei hid her face in her hands.

"My Lurline," he said, tenderly, "you and Mary are as different as fire and water."

He remembered as he spoke how his father used to quote the proverb, "Still waters run deep," with reference to Mary's character, and a misgiving crossed him whether he were not mistaken in the impression he had gradually been acquiring under the Lorelei's subtle influence, that Mary's disposition instead of having any depth, rather represented the shallow waters which most speedily take a coating of ice, and he said, somewhat anxiously—"At least, Laura, you see now how it is that I cannot, with any peace of mind, follow the bent of my own inclination, until I am well assured that I am not acting a dishonourable part towards her whom my father left in my care; but if she were indeed to tell me, of her own accord, that her hopes and wishes have all been turned quite away from me, I should be only too thankful to release myself and her from a mistaken bond, and feel that I was free to realise to the uttermost the glorious hope of happiness which has opened out for me this day."

"Then ask her yourself to-morrow, and you will be amply satisfied," said Laura, triumphantly; "you will find that her ambition is not to make one noble heart happy, as mine would be if I had a hundred lives, but to be known as a heroine of charity, like the lady-nurses in the Crimea. I should have thought you might have seen already that she wished to detach herself from you, if she could do so consistently with her desire to obey your father's wishes in all things, by the persistent manner in which she has avoided you, and the care she has taken to leave you alone with me, in the hope, no doubt, that you would come to prefer my society to hers."

"As I have done, most assuredly!" said Bertrand, with a rather bitter smile.

"Well then, till to-morrow I must leave you," said Lurline, turning round to him with a lovely, half-pathetic smile; "till then we can be no more to each other—at least, in outward appearance—than we have been, and after that, however it may be with you, for me it will be either perfect brightness or an endless gloom."

Then, bending her graceful figure towards the dangerous waters whence Bertrand had rescued her, she said, softly, "Good-bye, little lake! You very nearly were my resting-place to-day, and perhaps you will be soon."

"Lurline, no!" exclaimed Bertrand, almost angrily; "it is wicked to entertain such a thought for a moment!"

"I did not mean anything wrong, dear Bertrand," she said, looking up to him, pleadingly. "I was thinking of the dark waters of death. Do you think, Bertrand, after all that has passed to-day—I may say it—do you think it would be possible for me henceforward to live without you?"

Then, as if scared at her own words, she started from his side, and fled away through the trees, her beautiful white-robed form, with the floating hair streaming behind her as a shining veil, appearing and disappearing among the branches, while Bertrand stood watching her, entranced, till she vanished altogether from his sight like the fairy vision of a dream.

Now we must explain that the sole foundation for Laura's assertion that Mary Trevelyan contemplated going out as a lady-nurse or in some similar vocation of charity, was simply this: two or three weeks previously, at a time when Mary was already conscious, almost with despair, of the fascination Laura Wyndham was exercising over Bertrand Lisle, she heard Lurline, with a scornful laugh, read out to Mrs. Wyndham an advertisement she had found in the newspaper. It was to inquire for some lady who would voluntarily give her services for three months in an hospital for sick children, in order to allow the person permanently in charge there to obtain a season of relaxation and change of air. Laura had scoffed at the idea of any one born a lady being willing to undertake such a task, and said, contemptuously, that it would suit no one but an old woman out of the workhouse. Mary remained perfectly silent while these remarks were being made, but a little later she went up to Mrs. Wyndham, and asked her if she would allow her to cut that advertisement out of the

paper. Mrs. Wyndham gave her leave with a silent look of surprise, but Laura, who had overheard her, came bounding forward, and said, eagerly, "What, Mary, are you thinking of applying for such a delightful post?"

"Not now, certainly," she answered; "but if I have to seek a home for myself when I leave Chiverley, I should be glad to find one where I could make myself useful. I know nothing of this place, of course, and it would require much consideration before I even thought of it; but I think it is work I should like."

"I wish you joy of it!" said Laura, shrugging her shoulders, and there the matter dropped, and had never again been alluded to from that day till the moment when the Lorelei so deftly made use of it. She well knew how to weave every stray thread that could serve her purpose into her intricate web.

CHAPTER XXIV.

It was the night following that day when Laura had made her final and most successful attempt to enthral Bertrand Lisle absolutely and for ever, and the inhabitants of Chiverley Rectory were supposed to be all tranquilly slumbering away the hours of darkness, but there was neither rest nor sleep in Mary Trevelyan's little room: she was kneeling by the side of her bed, with her arms stretched out across it, and her head laid low between them, in an attitude which betokened a complete abandonment of herself to thoughts too sad with their weight of grief almost to be borne.

There had been a time when Mary Trevelyan thought she had almost attained the summit of earthly happiness; when, standing on the little bridge beneath the shade of the summer trees, with her hand in Bertrand's, she felt that he was about to utter the words which would have linked her life to his for evermore, and then, just at that crisis of her fate, had come the mournful melodious sound—the wail of anguish in the voice she knew so well, the voice of the syren, who, by every art, had been trying to lure him from her—and instantly it had been to him as though she existed not, and he had fled away from her to follow the beguiling sound, and she knew, she felt, that he would return to her as her true lover never more! for she had easily recognised that the cry, half-musical, half-sad, was no true shriek of terror drawn forth by some sudden danger, but rather the studied expression of some bitter sorrow, some dark foreboding, more like the poetical idea of the death-song of the swan than any real outcome of trouble or distress, and she well understood what it all meant for her. Somehow the subtle Lorelei had discovered how near in that instant she was to losing Bertrand altogether, and forthwith she had sent out the sweet appealing wail which drew him so quickly to her side.

And long they had lingered in the lonely wood, those two—hours and hours—while Mary kept her watch upon that deserted bridge, unwilling to leave the spot where he had stood with her, though no hope lingered in her heart, prophetic of its future, that he would ever seek her there again; and morning had ripened to noon, and noon faded to the sun's declining hours, and twilight came, but still she was alone; then slowly, wearily, she had returned to the home which sheltered them all alike, and there she had seen Bertrand with eyes that never quitted Laura's radiant face, and looks averted from herself, and manner constrained and cold. And now night had come, and she was alone with the dark terrible shadow that enfolded her, precursor of the deadliest evil her life could know, even now very close at hand; for weeks she had dreaded its coming, and had seen the danger, but hope had never quite left her, and it was hard to lose it altogether, even in this the saddest hour her life had known; but she was trying to steel herself for whatever might be coming upon her; she was trying to give herself up to her merciful God, that he might work His will upon her in any way He pleased. Mary Trevelyan was herself too single-hearted and pure-minded to be able to imagine that Laura had been influenced by motives of worldly ambition only, and although she could not but be aware of the absolute determination with which the Lorelei had set herself to win Bertrand, she yet believed that she did love him truly; and Mary was schooling herself to feel, as she lay there, that if indeed her Bertrand had given to Laura all his heart's love in return, she ought for his sake to be glad and thankful that they had learnt to know and prize each other; for surely Bertrand's happiness was that which she desired most in all the world; and if he was to find it best with Laura, and not with her—alas, not with her!—then ought she to rejoice that Laura was his own, that with her he would walk through sunny paths in life, while the poor Mary, who having loved him could never love another, went on to her distant grave ever and ever joyless and alone! It was a hard lesson to learn, and Mary's chest heaved with sobs, and her face was wet with bitter tears under the veil of her long dark hair, while her lamp burnt low and cast a dim light on her prostrate figure, when suddenly the door of her room was opened by a quick impatient hand, and shut again as rapidly, leaving the intruder by her side, while a voice clear and musical, but with a ring of sharpness in its tone, said authoritatively, "Rise up, Mary Trevelyan, and prepare to listen to me, for I have much to say to you, which is of great importance to us both."

Then slowly Mary raised her wan face, and looked round, to see Laura Wyndham standing before her, holding a lamp in her white hand, which sent a strong glow over her beautiful face, more brilliant than ever from the light of triumph which glittered

in her eyes, and the proud happiness which curved her lips in a meaning smile.

Without a word, Mary raised herself from her knees, gathered the white garments round her, which contrasted strangely with the scarlet robe over which Laura's fair hair waved in free luxuriance, and having placed a chair for her unwelcome guest, she sat down herself, and said, "I am ready, Laura; say whatever you will."

"I shall do that, even without your permission, Mary, for I have come to do for you an act of friendly kindness, which none have ever done for you before: I have come to tell you the truth."

"Has no one ever told me the truth before?" said Mary, raising her sad eyes calmly to Laura's bright face.

"No one," answered Lurline, "at least, in respect to that which most concerns you. Old Mr. Lisle deceived you, unconsciously perhaps, and Bertrand, scarce knowing what he did, has done so too; but the time has come when your delusions must no longer be suffered to exist, lest they wreck for ever a life that is too precious, even to yourself, to be so ruined."

"Of whom do you speak?" asked Mary, with lips calm as ever, but from which all colour had fled.

"Of Bertrand Lisle," answered Laura, and then she added, in a soft, clear voice, "who loves me, and whom I love."

Mary did not utter a syllable; it might have seemed that she did not hear the words which came to her laden with the weight of her own life-long misery, but for the convulsive movement with which she gathered her loose dress closer to her breast, as if to shield herself from the arrows which were about to pierce her heart. The Lorelei's keen eyes noted it all. She had seated herself immediately opposite to Mary, so that she might read each changing expression on her face, and she now went on, with a composure resembling the judicial calmness of a judge when summing up the case against one who is about to be condemned to death.

"I have said that I am come to tell you the truth, Mary Trevelyan, and, to show you that I have indeed a perfect knowledge of it, I will first go over the matter on which I wish to undeceive you, as I know it appears to you, and then I will reveal to you the real state of the case. You had lived for twenty-one years in Bertrand Lisle's home, without there ever having been the faintest hint of any idea of a marriage between you. On his death-bed Mr. Lisle told you that such a marriage was his dearest wish, that he believed or hoped you were beloved by his son, and in reply to his questions you distinctly said that you at least loved Bertrand."

At these words Mary Trevelyan started as if she had received a stab, and buried her face in her hands, while she said, in a tone of unspeakable pain, "Laura, who told you this?"

And the Lorelei answered, "Bertrand Lisle, who heard it from his father's lips."

And she knew that in uttering the cruel sentence she had laid the corner-stone of that edifice of her own happiness which she hoped to build up on Mary Trevelyan's ruined life.

Her victim remained silent, with her face hidden, praying in her heart that she might have grace not to blame one lying in the helplessness of death for his breach of confidence.

Lurline continued. "You were aware that Bertrand had a long conversation with his father the night before the old man died, and you could not doubt, after his statement to yourself, that he had told his son his desire for a union between you. When Bertrand therefore uttered some cautious words to you respecting his father's wishes, in the passing excitement of grief, at the new-made grave, you interpreted them as a sort of proposal of marriage."

"Laura, no!" exclaimed Mary, letting her hands fall from her burning face. "I did not! I could not! I never for an instant considered that Bertrand had bound himself to me."

"I only know," said Lurline, "that you managed to impress him with the idea that you wished and expected him to marry you, and he came here to see whether he could make up his mind to do it, as a duty his father had laid upon him."

"How could even his father's wishes make such an act seem a duty, Laura? Are you not mistaken?" said Mary, with trembling eagerness.

"Not in the least," said Laura. "I will now give you the true history of this affair which has been cruelly hard on Bertrand. Mr. Lisle imposed this duty upon him as an act of reparation to you."

"Of reparation to me? How? Why?"

"Because he had killed your father," was Laura's answer.

She could be absolutely heartless where her own interests were concerned, but she was not prepared for the piercing cry which burst from the pale lips usually so calm, as Mary, starting to her feet, shrunk back to the wall, and stood there trembling with horror-stricken eyes, as if she had seen a spectre.

Lurline rose, and drew her back to her seat, saying, "Don't mistake me, Mary; Mr. Lisle caused his death, but not wilfully. There was a quarrel and a struggle on board the ship coming home from Madeira, in which your father, trying to escape Mr. Lisle's violence, fell overboard, and was drowned. Your mother died that same night of her grief, leaving you a destitute infant, orphaned through the fault of Bertrand's father; therefore he adopted you and cared for you all his life, and therefore, when death took his protection from you, he imposed on his son the duty of giving you a home as his wife."

"And this was Bertrand's reason—this only?" asked Mary, faintly.

"Yes—good son that he was!—he tried to obey his father; but, Mary, he had never loved you or any woman enough to make him wish for a union till he came to Chiverley, and then he met his fate in Laura Wyndham. He has told it to me this day with bitter anguish, because he feared you would hold him bound to accomplish his father's reparation. He told me that he loved me, and me only; that a life spent with me would be perfect bliss, and without me utter torture, and I love him—with all my heart I love him!" Laura spoke now with genuine vehemence. "Oh, Mary! will you hold him to his bond? will you ruin his life for ever, and mine along with it? will you force him to marry you?"

"Laura, stop!" said Mary, rising, with quiet dignity, "you have no right to use such words to me; Bertrand Lisle is perfectly free from me. Since his happiness consists in a marriage with you, I will do all I can to promote it."

"But, Mary, you must tell him so yourself," said Laura, eagerly, "or he will not believe it. I told him you intended to be one of those noble heroines of charity—a lady-nurse, or something of that sort; but he was so convinced you wished to marry him, that he will only be at ease if he hears it from your own lips. He means to ask you, to-morrow, what are your plans for your future life, and all our happiness in this world depends on the answer you give."

"Then you may be quite at rest, Laura," said the low, calm voice; "you and he shall be made perfectly happy if words of mine can ensure it; and I thank you for telling me the truth. And now, may I ask you to leave me? I must be alone."

Something there was in Mary's manner which subdued even Laura Wyndham. She stooped silently, and kissed her on the forehead, and then, without another word, turned and left the room. Her work was accomplished, her victory complete!

(To be continued.)

TWO-EDGED PROVERBS.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A., AUTHOR OF "THE 'I WILLS' OF THE PSALMS," "THE FEET OF JESUS," ETC.

"ALL'S NOT GOLD THAT GLITTERS."

A SHORT time ago we tried to show our readers some of the truth, both as regards this world and the next, of the common proverb, "Gold may be bought too dear."

It were well if that proverb were as common as some others, but it is sadly crowded out of sight and hindered in beneficial operation by the hurry, worry, and bustle of this greedy and unresting age, when men hasten to be rich and "fall into a snare," and "pierce themselves through with many sorrows."

Now as one coal helps another in the fire, so one proverb may help another to perform its mission. Accordingly, we now, continuing this subject of gold, shall try to point out that much for which man frets and toils, and vexes, and wears himself out, is not gold, nor as valuable as gold at all, but a mere make-believe and sham—a mirage, and breath, and nothing else.

Now, to begin with, we live in a world of deceptions. In one sense this world is a terribly real world—a world of iron, and hard knocks, and naked, stern facts; but in another it is a world of glitters, sunbeams which you may chase but never catch; Will-o'-the-wisps, which you may follow only to be bogged up to the chin; make-believe diamonds which are only glass; glittering pinchbecks, which pretend to be, but are not gold.

Oh, the pinchbecks of the world, my spirit is weary of them! their glitterings are their only stock-in-trade, and a roaring trade they do.

Don't run away with the idea that you are a philosopher because you pick out the gloomy scenes of the world; and even, without the help of a pair of green spectacles, see the world a many-shadowed place. If you want to be a philosopher all round, you must go out into the world's sunshine, and look at its bright spots, and people, and things; you must have an ear for its fifes and fiddles and drums, as well as for the deep wailings of its orphaned and widowed homes—an eye for the dancings of the living, as well as for the stark cold outlayings of its dead.

Come away, then, into the glitters; they are dazzling and confusing, but we may be cool and steady, and see through them, nevertheless; paste set in pinchbeck, instead of diamonds set in gold, the world is full of it—"all's not gold that glitters."

And, first of all, what is "glitter?" It is the bright and outward show of things, that which is on the surface, what meets the eye, but what has not of necessity any relation of importance to what is immediately underneath. You may rub a piece of brass until it glitters like a piece of gold, or you may gild a piece of stick with so fine a wash of gold as to be valueless, and yet when burnished it may look as if it were all the real metal. The

whole thing is surface—it catches the eye, but there its value ends.

Now it will never do, if we want to estimate the reality of things, to pooh-pooh this glitter, and say, "We see through the whole thing, there is no more to be said about it;" for that is not the truth—there is a great deal to be said about it. This glitter is one of the strongest motive-powers in the world; it leads people of all ranks and professions and degrees by the nose; and how little it is to be dismissed as of no importance one can see from the terrible fact that it is able to blind men's eyes, so as to prevent their having a clear view, or indeed any view, of heaven itself. Dazzled, confused, lost, may be said to be the history of many a soul.

Glitter has many advantages; it starts with sundry things in its favour. And one of these things is, "the present"—the little speck of time which is considered of such importance in our little speck of life, and by our little specks of selves.

It is nothing that the glitter can shine but for a few moments, that in the very nature of things it must soon go out; it glitters *now*, and that is enough. And then there is the general unthinking verdict in its favour. Everybody says it is bright and beautiful; everybody sets value upon it; everybody says the person is to be envied who has it. The glitter of the star upon the veteran's breast has its admirers, so also has the glitter of his patent boots; it is enough for many that the thing shines, entirely irrespective of what the thing is.

It is hard to go against public opinion; and the public have gone in for glitter; therefore glitter twinkles and radiates, and flickers and dazzles, and, generally speaking, has it all its own way.

Then glitter has this important advantage—men often want it; they gild and varnish and electro on purpose to get it. They don't care for anything solidly good underneath it; and they have what they want—only they have it, and nothing more.

Glitter, then, being a mighty power in the land, and therefore by all wise men to be recognised as such, it behoves us to see what kind of power it is, and also what it does. It creates false opinions; and from those false opinions all the mischief flows.

There is glitter in wealth. Display, out-doing others, exciting the admiration (and perhaps there's no objection to the least touch in life of the *envy* also) of one's neighbours—servants, carriages, entertainments, clothes, being talked about, are all so much of the glitter of wealth.

But power is in the eyes of many much more glittering than wealth. It seems such a solid, substantial thing.

And in truth power does glitter. It enables us to carry out schemes, and confer favours, and it secures homage; and it sets the man who has it up upon a hill, and he becomes a somebody—one of the great ones of the earth. But unless a man uses it for carrying out designs of the truest good—lives above its accidents, its accompaniments, its glitter—it, too, is glitter and no more.

Many a man in power has lived to rue the day he yielded to its fascinations; and, surrounded with thwarted schemes, ungrateful friends, and spiteful enemies, has lamented that he allowed himself to be deceived by what was but so much outward show.

So in love; how often are men taken by the merest glitter! A man wants a wife; he sees a pretty face, perhaps he hears a song sweetly sung; he is taken just by some accomplishment which lies on the surface of education; he falls in love, as we say, and nothing will persuade him but that he has, as they say in mining countries, "struck gold." Now surely he has found the great nugget itself; henceforth, whatever may betide him in the world, he must be accounted amongst the richest of men.

Now this gold nugget has to wear. It is not to be put under a glass case on the drawing-room table; and the wear and tear of daily life will soon reveal the make-believe beneath. No doubt there are many real nuggets—women, yes, even girls, who are true to the heart's core, and who will be as excellent and attractive in daily life as ever they were in the matter of mere appearance or accomplishment—but the "many" in the abstract are but "few" when speaking by comparison. Alas! life in all its grades, from the homes of peers down to those of peasants, is full of once-glittering things with the shine all gone, and disappointment and indifference left as the sad real underneath.

Thus, women have been deceived in men, and men in women; and there remains for only too many married folk, with the glitter all gone, nothing but a dull toleration of each other; the miserable feeling as they look at each other—I married a sham; I was dazzled by a glitter, and find that it is not gold.

Follow out worldly position, worldly admiration and applause, and all such things, and you will find the proverb only too true, that "all is not gold that glitters."

The fact is, this power of glitter produces little else than evil in whatever direction it works. From it comes neglect of the real, the solid, the abiding; from it comes disappointment, often at the end of life, when the temper is soured, when opportunities of repair are gone; when the sham which was underneath must prove a burden for the remainder of our days. Effort in the wrong direction springs from it; the greater the effort, the more lamentable and unsatisfactory the result;

like the pursuit of the Will-o'-the-wisp, the more energy that is shown in it, the deeper a man becomes bogged.

And so we are taught what a precious thing it is to discern the solid, and to pursue it; not in all cases to walk by sight; to feel the weight of things, and be sure they are real gold.

And we are taught the value of measuring others by this standard. There is much which we may admire because of its brightness, its glitter; but when we come to the matter of serious personal dealing with it, that is another affair; then we must price things; we must estimate them as we would the no doubt dull-looking bars of metal in the vaults of the Bank of England, and not the gilded trifles we see in the shop-windows.

And as regards the other life, this proverb is tremendously, almost universally, true. The world is full of alluring glitters, dazzling the soul, filling it for a few moments with make-believes of happiness, and then leaving it to find out in the great hereafter of realities how easily it was befooled.

Whatever is the value of things here, they are but glitters as regards the great hereafter; and, taken with a show, men lose eternal life. If men put this question to themselves from time to time, Is this gold as regards eternity? they would escape many a snare which brings them sorrow, if not ruin itself.

In character, and religious profession, how many are there who are mere glitterers! they have a name to live whilst they are dead. They stand no tests; they will not depress the beam in any heavenly scale. The shine will pass muster here, but only the more surely to be proved worthless there, where all is seen in light.

No mere glitter can stand by-and-by; nor should we wish it so to do. Eternity to be happy must be real—Heaven, and the people and things in it.

May we be real in all things, pre-eminently in those of the soul; then, when the trial time comes, we shall shine with Heaven's own light. Then shall the righteous shine forth in the kingdom of their Father—"shine like the stars for ever and ever!"

CAGED.

PART I.

"DO, Lina, like a good girl, tell me where you found the goldfinches' nest!"

"Why do you want to know, Maurice?"

"Because there's a boy at our school would give anything for a young bird. He would train it to lift a bucket full of water—in a thimble you know—and do lots of other tricks."

"But I don't like to show you the nest if you're going to rob it. After all the poor mother's care and trouble it would be very cruel."

"You don't understand, Lina," replied her brother, impatiently; "I only want to take one young one out to give Jem for a pet."

"But the little bird would be much happier flying about in the air than shut up all its life in a small cage. You wouldn't like to be imprisoned yourself, Maurice."

"I must say, Lina, you're very ill-natured, and if I find the nest without your help, I'll take every young one in it!"

However, his sister would not tell him where the nest was, and Maurice went off to consult with his younger brother how they might discover the secret.

"I have a guess," said Edmund. "Lina goes nearly every evening up the river walk, and I heard her complain the other day that the little wooden bridge was greatly broken, and hard to cross. You may be sure the nest is on the island."

"More likely it is in the garden, for finches build in fruit-trees."

"Yes, and in shrubs too; there are plenty of places round the old hermitage."

"Well, if you think so, let us try; suppose we get up early to-morrow morning and search the island before school-hour; we can take our breakfast with us, so as not to bring the young birds home if we get them."

"Remember, Maurice, I must have one for a fellow I know, who would give a splendid knife, nearly new, for a pet goldfinch."

"Yes, yes, we'll divide fair when we see how many are in the nest; never fear, we'll easily dispose of them all; but if they're not fledged we'll have to wait a while."

According to this plan, the boys got up an hour earlier than usual the following morning, and, taking some bread in their pockets, left word they were gone for a walk and would not be back till after school.

"I say, Eddy, I don't like the look of the sky, the clouds are black and angry, and I never saw the river so high."

"That's because of all the rain for the last few weeks. I declare it's a regular flood; see how the current dashes on. I hope the old bridge is standing."

The stream ran for more than a mile through meadow and pasture land, until gradually widening into considerable breadth, a picturesque little island appeared in the centre, planted with a few shrubs

and trees which, when in full leaf, concealed from view a half-ruined rustic hermitage, where Lina and her brothers spent many happy hours long ago, playing "hermit" turn about, and paying one another visits.

"It's all right!" shouted Maurice, when the boys arrived within sight of the island; "the bridge is still standing; let us cross!"

"It's tottery enough then," replied his brother, when they were half-way over; "it won't be able to stem the force of that torrent long."

"Never fear, it was there before we were born, and has stood many a flood since. Come on, 'twill do our time."

On reaching the island, the two boys were soon engaged in a careful search amongst the small shrubs for the goldfinch's nest; and so absorbed and interested were they in the occupation, that they neither heeded nor perceived the increased roar of the torrent, until some large drops of rain drew their attention to the state of the weather.

"I say, Maurice, if we don't look sharp we'll be soaked through, and have to sit in our wet clothes at school. Come into the hermitage till we see if there's any chance it would clear up."

"Stop, stop, Eddy; I have found the nest!"

"Really! and where?"

"In this thick branch of Tartarian honeysuckle; and there are four young birds just in right order for training!"

"Well, take it quick, and run for shelter, the rain's coming on awfully fast."

Ruthlessly Maurice tore the beautifully formed nest from the fork of a branch where it lay concealed by the light green leaves and clustering pink flowers of the Tartarian honeysuckle, and followed his brother to the ruined hermitage, without a thought of the grief he was causing the parent birds, or of the four bright little creatures he intended consigning to life-long solitude and captivity—creatures formed by their Divine Maker to "fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven."

Edmund eagerly examined the prize. "We have them now!" he exclaimed, in spite of Lina's precautions. "Put the nest down, Maurice, near the door, where the little ones will have air and shelter. Listen how they're chirping; I'm sure it's with hunger. When the shower's over we'll go out and look for worms, 'tis such fun to see the bills gaping."

"Shower, indeed, Eddy! I tell you it won't be over to-day!"

Seating themselves on a broken bench, the boys gazed at the gloomy sky, and disputed about what they had better do, for school-hour was drawing near, when Maurice, raising his finger to impose silence, and pointing to the nest, exclaimed, under his breath, "I declare the mother-bird has found it out already, and here she comes with breakfast for the family!"

It was a great amusement to the boys to see the parents fly back and forward with food for their young ones, and drop it into each little gaping throat turn about; when, just as this entertainment was over, they were startled by a loud crash!

"What can it be?" whispered Eddy, turning quite pale.

"A tree blown down, I suppose," said Maurice.

"Oh no! there's not wind enough for that; let's go out and look what's the matter."

"But the young birds will escape, for I see they're able to climb the edge of the nest. Put your hat over them."

Eddy did so, and, hastily rolling his handkerchief round his head, rushed out after his brother, heedless of the rain, which, however, had considerably lightened. The same dreadful idea had occurred to them both, and making for the bridge their worst fears were confirmed, for the frail supports had been swept away by the furious torrent, and now, broken by the fall, it drifted rapidly down the stream!

The boys gazed at each other with a blank look of horror! "Oh, Eddy!" exclaimed Maurice, "this is a precious fix; a nice trap to be caught in!"

"Sure enough," replied his brother, as he watched the fragments of the old bridge floating down the current, "we're fairly caged now!"

(To be concluded.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

210. What people are stated to have been most clever in ancient times in "cutting down timber, &c.?"

211. What passage of Scripture was the Ethiopian eunuch reading when St. Philip joined him in his chariot?

212. Mention any prophecy of Elisha's which was delivered with an accompaniment of music.

213. Quote any passage which shows the prosperous condition of the people in the beginning of Solomon's reign.

214. What peculiarity of dress was much used by the Scribes in our Lord's time?

215. How many years was Solomon in building the Temple?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 512.

198. The mention of it by the man of God who came to Eli (1 Sam. ii. 27, 28).

199. Fifty thousand pieces of silver (Acts xix. 19).

200. Seven years and six months (2 Sam. ii. 11).

201. "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. xiv. 40).

202. "From Dan even to Beersheba" (1 Sam. iii. 20).

203. The preaching of Christ crucified (1 Cor. i. 23).

204. He bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the bow (2 Sam. i. 18).



(*Drawn by* H. C. Selous.)

THE EVIL DREAM.

THE sewers were choked, on either hand the wall
Was green with damp, and clammy with the steam
Of exudation; where the stones might fall
No thrifty hands replace them, ev'ry beam
In every squalid house was black with rot,
And ev'ry door was open to the rain,
That fell not plenteously upon this spot,
But in unwholesome mist of scanty drain.

Ever about the place there hung a fume
  Of fearful palpability, the sense
Grew sick upon it, and the dreamer, whom
  Grief there had driven, sought to fly from thence,
But somewhat held him now to wander on
  Thro' lanes unholy, under arches vile,
With that green damp, that foully hung upon
  Stone, brickwork, wood, and shatter'd house-top tile.

But worse was there, for, as the dreamer dreamed,
  The habitants would sometimes pass him by,
Wretches that in their woeful aspect seemed
  Fit only for such place—the sunken eye,
The haggard gaze, and hunger-stricken cheeks,
  The form that sickness bowed, and ague cramped,
The sullen carelessness that would not speak,
  The brow that want and ignorance had stamped.

Huddled about the doorways women sat,
  Bereft of woman's softer gentler mien;
Love's light had faded from their eyes, and that
  Sweet nurturer, fair Hope, no more was seen
To dwell with them; the little children, pale
  With hunger and disease, were crouched around,
And infancy in long and mournful wail
  Made the place sadder with the doleful sound.

But suddenly came one who brightened all
  The dismal faces, and the women cease
Their harsh repining, little children crawl
  Forward to share his greeting, which is peace
And helpfulness combined; "God bless you, sir!"
  The mothers say, and then the squalid place
To give him joyful welcome is astir,
  As tho' he brought them riches in his face.

And I, the dreamer, knew him for their friend
  And mine; for when I heard his quiet voice
Tell me my evil dream was at an end,
  And when I heard them for a time rejoice,
When on their gloominess the sunshine fell,
  Shining more brightly for his presence there,
The dream was o'er, and broken was its spell,
  And I awoke to bless the morning air.

T. H. S.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXIV.—"DOROTHY."

"WE might take a walk," George Blakesley said.

"No," she pleaded, humbly.

"Yes, come a little way," he said, and they passed the house, and went on under the dim trees. "I want to ask you something. Can't it really be this year, Dorothy?"

"No, no! oh no!"

"Why not?"

"I don't know; I can't tell you. Let me be free a little longer. And I must go in. Turn back, oh do turn back, George!"

She had hardly ever called him by his Christian name before, and he gave in to her immediately on hearing it. Yet when they reached the house he was still loth to enter.

"Will you come into the garden and talk there?" he asked.

"Yes, if you will let me go in and speak to them all first," she answered.

She wanted to see what they were doing.

"Then I will wait for you under the sycamore-tree;" and he passed through the house and out into the garden.

Dorothy opened the door of the sitting-room, and walked in. It was dark, and yet there was the sound of some one within.

"Netta," she said.

"It is I," said a voice, that, in her present mood made her almost shiver. "Come in, Dorothy." It was Mr. Fuller. "I am alone," he said. "Your father is in the study, and has called Netta to him for a minute or two, and your mother has a headache, and is lying down. Come in, child, and don't stand like a frightened ghost by the door!"

"It is so dark," she said; "and I am going into the garden; Mr. Blakesley is waiting for me."

"Never mind him," he answered, impatiently; "I want to know how you like your new relations?"

"Very much," she said, awkwardly, thinking how strange his manner was.

"Come in," he said again, impatiently; "do you think I am going to eat you? Or are you afraid Blakesley will if he catches you talking to me?"

"No," she answered; "I am not a bit afraid."

"Well then," he said; and going up to her, he took her hand, and drew her further into the room, till in the grey light he saw her pale face and flashing eyes. "Come and tell me how you got on with your new relations. You have quite forgotten me. I said Blakesley would cut me out, you know, dear."

"No, he never did, never!" she exclaimed. "You forgot *me*, and liked Netta better because she was beautiful and——"

"No," he said, "remember how I kept your rose."

"I don't care," she answered, proudly; "that was no sign you remembered me; perhaps you merely forgot to throw it away, and afterwards, you know, you liked Netta."

"How can you be so silly, child! I only wanted

her to sit for me because she was pretty. You were always my friend. Don't you remember what chums we used to be, Dorothy? You were quite fond of me till the interloping Blakesley came and cut me out."

He had roused the fire sleeping in the girl's nature at last, and she turned round and faced him.

"I was very fond of you when I was a child!" she exclaimed. "You were very kind to me, and the dearest friend I ever had, and I shall never forget you as you were *then*." Her voice softened as she spoke of the old days; but she put her hand to her throat for a moment, as if to steady it, and then went on as hard as before. "But when you came back, though I was the same, you had changed. I had the old feeling still, and you pretended to be the same, though you were not. And then you told, or as good as told me, that I was in love with you, and you told Netta so as well, and tried plainly to make me understand that it was hopeless. I wonder you dared! If it *had* been true!"—she could not say that it had not been; but this he never guessed—"if it had been true you should have died rather than said so—it was mean and cowardly and contemptible!"

"Dorothy!"

"So it was. I have never forgiven you for it! I never shall! I shall never like you again as long as I live; I could not; and you have given me the bitterest remembrance of my life. It has spoilt my world too; for I used to think you such a hero, Mr. Fuller; and when I lost my faith in you I lost it in all others as well; you dragged down everybody in your fall."

"Why did you tell me this to-night? I have——"

"Why, because you dared to talk to me in a manner to which you had no right, forgetting that I am engaged too, and perhaps shall be married soon;" she felt cold at the very thought; "and that you are in love with my sister."

"No——"

"Yes you are, you are, and engaged too, I believe!"

"Dorothy, your sister will be married to Sir George Finch in less than a month, and is going out to India. She told me so to-night, and I am waiting here to say good-bye to her."

"Netta going to be married, and going to India!" exclaimed Dorothy, the meaning of his strange manner flashing on her now.

She stood dumb with surprise.

"Yes."

"But she doesn't care for him. Why, I heard——" she hesitated. She did not like to confess what she had overheard.

"He is rich," he said, scornfully; "and she cares for that." It was such a pained voice in which he spoke, though he tried to steady it; and the girl before him understood his feelings better than he imagined.

Things had been altogether rough on Adrian Fuller that evening.

"I am so sorry for you, Mr. Fuller," she said, simply.

"You need not be, child. I dare say it is much better. She will be here again directly, so say good-bye to me, Dorothy; you won't see me again for many a long day. I shall go abroad for a couple of months, or a couple of years, if I can get anything to do."

"Good-bye," she said, the old feeling rushing back for a minute; "I am sorry I told you what I did to-night; but I didn't know of this then."

"No, Dolly, of course not," he answered, using the old pet name, which only Tom gave her now, "I have been a great scoundrel to you. Perhaps we shan't see each other again; good-bye;" and he shook her hands, and then, unable to say more, Dorothy turned and went; but when she had got to the hall he spoke, and she stopped, and he came out. "I shall keep the rose," he whispered; "I shall keep it as long as I live, Dorothy."

And all this time George Blakesley was in the garden waiting for her.

CHAPTER XXV.—THE BEGINNING OF AN END.

"Dorothy," called Mr. Woodward, as she passed the study door, "I want you."

"Yes, papa; but Mr. Blakesley is waiting for me in the garden."

"Never mind, dear, I will not keep you a moment."

She entered, and found her father sitting before a pile of papers, and with a careworn look upon his face. Netta was there, and looked as if she had been crying; but after a minute she rose, and left the room.

"What is the matter?" she asked, a feeling of fear creeping over her.

"When are you going to be married, Dorothy dear?" he inquired, kindly.

He was a dear old man, and fond of his children, little as he troubled about them—fonder far than his wife was of them.

"Oh not yet, papa dear; let me stay at home a little longer!" She was quite distressed; everybody seemed conspiring to hurry her into the bonds of matrimony.

"I want you to let it be soon, my dear," he said, almost entreatingly. "Netta is going to be married to Sir George Finch next month, and I should like you to have Blakesley the same day, if possible." The tears came into her eyes, and rolled slowly down her cheeks. He looked at her in surprise; he, as is so often the case with fathers, knew nothing of the state of his daughter's heart. "What is the matter, dear?"

"I want to stay with you a little longer," she pleaded.

XUM

"No, dear, it is much better you should be married. The fact is, Dorothy, I fear things are going very badly with me; the paper is not doing at all well; nay, worse, I think, since it was altered and enlarged. I hoped we should make a fortune," he said, in a pained voice, that touched his daughter sorely; "and that I should be able to provide for your mother and all of you—I don't want to lose you—and instead of that I have ruined you all."

"But mamma's money?"

"All lost, I fear. Two thousand pounds go a very little way in a large speculation when everything goes out and nothing comes in, and we have had two actions for libel, and unless things take a great turn for the better a crash must come; and it would be a great relief to see you and your sister married."

"Not both of us," she said.

"Yes, Dorothy dear; for Netta is going to India, and seems terribly afraid lest Sir George should find out that we are likely to be poorer. But I think you would be different, and Blakesley is a good fellow, so that if the worst came about you could give Sally a home for a little while." She looked up at him in surprise. "Yes, dear," he said, in answer to her dumb inquiry, "we may have to leave here."

She stood still, staring blankly at him, then she thought of the garden and the underwood in the bygone summers, and she looked round at the cosy room, which Netta's influence had never altered or disturbed, and at her father—a kind, careless father, who had never said a cross word to his children in his life. How bitter it would be for him to go away from the dear old house, and to see his home broken up, she thought! She stooped, and put her arms round his neck, and kissed him.

"Very well, dear papa," she said, softly, and clung a little closer.

(*To be continued.*)

THE OCCUPATIONS OF HEAVEN.

BY THE REV. JAMES SPENCE, D.D., AUTHOR OF "HOURS WITH DANIEL," ETC.

"They serve Him day and night in His temple."—Rev. vii. 15.

OUR ideas of heaven, to be at all intelligible to us, must be taken from our views and experiences of this earth by way of resemblance, or comparison, or contrast. Every view or vision of it which we have in Scripture gives us the notion of a place or definite locality. "I go," said the Saviour to His disciples, "to prepare a place for you." It is an actual region, not a dream or a fiction, not a land of shadows or of echoes only, not a voiceless vacancy, but a "better country," a "city which hath foundations." Go forth in some starry night and look up into the heavens, and as you behold the stars in groups and constellations which bedeck the empyrean like distant lights hung out by God to illumine the abyss of darkness, you get some idea of the immensity of the universe. Somewhere in this immeasurable span is He who spoke to His friends on earth the words we have quoted, adding, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." Wherever Christ is, then, there His people will be. Astronomers begin to speak of some central globe, or system, some region in the bright effulgence of the milky way, which, perhaps, may be regarded as the imperial capital of the universe. But though science may not have discovered it, and though it may be vain for us feeble creatures to conjecture where, yet we are sure that heaven is a locality in the universe of God, and the faith which looks at things unseen can in a sense realise it from the descriptions given of it in Divine Revelation, and from the fact that THE MAN CHRIST JESUS is there. The thought that heaven, our future home, is a defined region in immensity is necessary to the satisfaction of our faith and the clearness of our hope. "The spirits of the just made perfect" are now also with Christ waiting for the redemption of the body. Just as truly as He was in a place when He tabernacled on earth, suffered, died, and rose again, so truly did He ascend to a place whence He will come again to receive His people unto Himself that they may be with Him for ever. Let it then be settled in our thoughts, for the encouragement of our faith, that the home of our future life will be a region worthy of our coming glory—worthy of Him who is gone to prepare the place for us—"New heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness"—as definitely real and local as those which now are. This truth is manifestly involved in all the splendid imagery used by St. John in his descriptions of the "new Jerusalem," the "city of the living God," with its foundations and its gates, its walls and its streets, its river and its trees, when he records the visions of the Apocalypse. It will bear the same relation to our spiritual being and our perfected manhood as Jerusalem in Palestine or any other city, as a present home, bears to this earthly life.

Another thought demands our consideration and remembrance. The words of our Lord when He said, "In my Father's house are many mansions," suggest the idea of home, and home involves the further idea of society. The saints in heaven, therefore, will not be merely an aggregate mass of

souls like a multitude of separate atoms. There will be order and organisation. It will be "the general assembly and Church of the first-born," with "an innumerable company of angels," a multitude of redeemed men "which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues." Everywhere in Scripture the idea of numbers is associated with heaven. "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels." The voice of the inhabitants of heaven is as "the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings." Thus we reach the idea of a vast family at home, angels and saints together, principalities, authorities, and powers, all in order, all perfectly happy, all in union and pervaded by love—for sin, the disturber of peace and the destroyer of harmony, has no place there—and all occupied. Occupied, but how? The question is interesting and not unimportant, though it would be easy in attempting to answer it to go beyond what is written. Let us try to avoid this mistake, while endeavouring to find some truths which shall help our thoughts and stimulate our hearts in relation to this inquiry.

We sometimes speak of time and eternity as if they were in absolute antagonism. In the abstract it cannot be so. Eternity is the endless duration of time; and in heaven, wherever it is, there must be a past, a present, and a future—the succession and duration of time. What then will be some of the occupations of the saints in glory? That they will be many and various I think cannot be doubted, but all suited to our redeemed nature and our renewed powers. God loves variety. This truth is most impressively taught and most beautifully illustrated on earth; and as the Divine Being is "without variableness or shadow of turning," His delight in variety will be continually manifest in the activities and occupations of heaven. True, toil for daily bread belongs only to this sin-stricken world, and all the handicrafts by which man gains a livelihood here will end with this life and this world; but occupations suited to our perfect tastes and emancipated powers in all their variety will employ our time in our Father's house above.

1. There will be *intellectual* occupations. We can be in no doubt that the Divine life in man, begun through regenerating grace in this world, will have its elements, activities, and pursuits continued hereafter. Here the Christian has to grow in knowledge and grace, pre-eminently in the knowledge which makes wise unto salvation—"the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." This intellectual and spiritual exercise will be continued in heaven. And what a field of intellectual and spiritual attainment and exercise is before us, in the personal glory and redemptive work of that Lord "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." The power of thought here is a marvellous thing; it is the men of thought who govern the affairs of the world and promote the advancement of mankind. So in heaven there will be the study of truth, glowing and growing spiritual research, progressive acquaintance with the attributes, the works, and the ways of God. We are assured that even now the angels are learning, that they "desire to look into" the things connected with the sufferings and glory of Christ (1 Peter i. 12), and that the principalities and powers in heaven know from the redeemed Church "the manifold wisdom of God." And if angels are so occupied, we may well believe that the saints will share in these exercises. Indeed, we know from the subject of converse between Moses and Elijah on the occasion of our Lord's transfiguration, that the spirits of the just made perfect find themes for meditation, research, and highest converse, in the wondrous ways and glorious workings of their King in Providence and Redemption. It must be so. The saints must learn, in varied degrees, with their varied powers; and the science of heaven, or rather we may say the sciences of heaven, will form fitting study and high occupation for beings redeemed from evil and freed for ever from all carnal tendency. Will there, for instance, be nothing equivalent to flowers in the Paradise of God? We know that there is the tree of life on either side of the river of the water of life, with its leaves and its twelve manner of fruits; and to contemplate the works of beauty, power, and wisdom in every department of the Creator's dominion will be the delight of all His children in their eternal home. We know that there is music there—"harpers harping with their harps," representing what we know as instrumental music here, and accompanying the choral swell of angelic and human voices which sing the new song as the voice of many waters, and in majestic roll, as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." The exercise of memory there will be marvellous, as, without any fear to haunt us or any reminiscence to trouble us, we survey all the way our Father led us, and see the solution of difficulties, and the beauty, harmony, and mercy of Providences and experiences which were mysteries to us here. There we shall see, as it is impossible for us now to see, how in this life all things were arranged to work together for good to us; and the study of this will be an exhilarating exercise and a high delight. Nor can we conceive now what disclosures of truth will be made, what discoveries we shall reach, to what elevations of knowledge we shall soar; but that we shall be occupied in learning—when there will be so much to know about God, His ways, and His works—there can

be no doubt. There will ever be depths in the Divine nature unfathomable by us, and heights of wisdom and power in the Divine works which will make us always learners; and the thought is an attractive one that in heaven, where we shall know as we are known, the pursuit of the knowledge of the things which our Father has made will be one of our high and holy occupations. And all such exercises will be blessed through perfect all-pervading love; for there knowledge will not exist as a separate or independent attainment, but vanish into devotion and life. Thus will love itself be strengthened and holiness confirmed; and every fresh discovery of the Divine perfections in the works of creation, the evolutions of Providence, or the grandeurs of Redemption, will fit us for higher attainment, and lead us to loftier adoration.

2. The occupations of heaven will be *reverential*, and largely take the character of *worship*. In a sense every act and every engagement will be worship; but much of the time in the heavenly life, if we may use the terms, will be spent in adoring homage. In the visions of the Apocalypse, which disclose to us so many aspects and exercises of the celestial state, how much is there of adoration and song and thanksgiving to God and to the Lamb. The praises of God are ever being celebrated in some way and form; the elders, representatives of the redeemed Church, cast their crowns before the throne, and ascribe glory to the Lord; saints and angels unite in the new song, and the choral swell of the holy universe in worship and adoration will be in majesty, "as the voice of many waters and as the voice of a great thunder." How blessed will it be to engage in that worship, to sing that song, to mingle our voices in that mighty concert which fills heaven with the harmonies of perfect praise!

3. The occupations of heaven will be also *ministerial*. There will be service—ministry of various kinds, adapted to the tastes and capacities of the redeemed. "One star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead." So also it must be in the future home of the blessed. Angel means messenger, and we are assured that often in the history of redemption have angels been sent on messages from heaven to man. We are informed that they are "ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." Nor are such services limited to the angels. Once and again in the Revelation St. John informs us that the messenger who told him the things which he was to write—"the true sayings of God"—said, when the apostle was about to worship him, "See thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant and of thy brethren the prophets" (Rev. xix. 10; xxii. 9). Saints in glory, then, as well as angels, were employed in such service. And will it not be so hereafter? We cannot doubt it. The law of Christ's kingdom here on earth is, "To every man his work;" and this will be the law of His kingdom in heaven for ever. For high and holy service in Paradise, the activity as well as the suffering of the present life is intended as a preparation. Very different in some respects will our employments there be from what they are on earth. As flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven, all material handicrafts will have for ever ceased; there will be no toil there for daily bread, and no wants to be provided for as here. But all moral and spiritual activities must be the same, only perfected in their exercise and changed at least in some of their objects.

Interesting thoughts are here suggested. The population of heaven, as far as human beings are concerned, will be immense—"a great multitude, which no man can number." And of this mighty throng a great proportion will necessarily be those who left this world in infancy and childhood. "Of such," said the Saviour, "is the kingdom of heaven;" "in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." How delightful the occupation to teach and train these youthful human spirits! The duty of training them while they lived on earth devolved not on angels, but on men; and in heaven to the extent that they will require enlightenment and education, it is most consonant with all that we know of God's dealings to believe that they will be committed to others of their own race, of wider experience and higher attainment. What a vast difference must there be now in Paradise between the attainments of the apostle Paul, and, indeed, many of whom we have known in the Church on earth, and the young Christian only a few months "in Christ," who has just, through fatal illness, been removed to the home above? Can you conceive any occupation in heaven more attractive, happy, or delightful, than for the more experienced to instruct the young and less experienced in the ways of God, unfolding to them mysteries which have been solved to themselves, and leading them on and up to still higher attainments in the knowledge of truth by the ever-flowing waters of the river of life? Christ Jesus as a child here on earth, though perfect in His childhood, grew in wisdom and in stature, and was subject to His earthly parents, who instructed Him and brought Him up at Nazareth. So will childhood grow in heaven. There will be ever diversity there—a diversity which suggests a vast field of occupation and exercise, each one of the saints contributing in some way to the felicity and progress of all. The very idea of a home and a family in heaven in the Father's house with its many mansions indicates order, inter-dependence, and help. The stronger will aid the weaker, and those with higher attainments will

instruct and teach those who have had fewer opportunities or have smaller powers; and the varying gifts of Nature, the diverse discipline of experience, and the distinctions of grace, will fit all the saints for different and delightful employment.

Further: the visions of the Apocalypse in their revelations of battle and conflict between the hierarchies of heaven and the powers of principalities of darkness, seem very much to show that we belong to a militant universe. "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not" (Rev. xii. 7). And whatever may be thought as to the exact meaning of the vision of the Rider on the White Horse, clothed with His vesture dipped in blood, and His name written on His vesture and on His thigh, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS, with the armies in heaven following Him (Rev. xix. 11, 16), there cannot be a doubt that Christ Jesus is this Leader, Captain, and King; and in the armies which follow Him are numbered saints who have been good soldiers of His cross on earth. They are co-workers with God, engaged with Christ in the conquest of evil. And even after its final subjugation in our own world, there may be other worlds to be conquered, and the redeemed, who have themselves triumphed through grace, may be engaged among the hosts of the Lord and on His side. In the very last visions of our future home and of heaven given us in the Bible, we read of the gates of the celestial city being left open, not that the redeemed may go out, for they go no more out; but it may be that other fallen or wandering races of created beings may come in. Also we read that the tree of life in the celestial city flourishes, and that its leaves are "for the healing of the nations," as if healing there had to be, and would be, extended to other populations of the universe. Wonderful, diversified, and glorious then will be the occupations of the saints of God after they have entered their heavenly home; in the presence of their Lord fashioned like unto Him, and co-workers with Him, world without end!

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER XXV.

BERTRAND LISLE had not, of course, the smallest suspicion that any conversation had taken place between Laura Wyndham and Mary respecting himself; nor could he ever have conceived it possible that revelations of so terrible a description could have been made to the adopted daughter of his father, especially in such cruelly-distorted shapes. He could not therefore in the least account for the peculiar impression made upon him by Mary Trevelyan's appearance, when he saw her for the first time on the following morning. It was in the breakfast-room, where all the rest of the family were assembled, that they met, and there was nothing in Mary's manner, or in the few words with which she answered those who spoke to her, that was at all different from her usual gentle stillness; and yet it was with a strange shivering sense of pain that Bertrand gazed at her, for it seemed to him precisely as though he were looking on the face of one newly dead. Dead, surely, in some sense, she was to him. The heart, the soul, where, once at least, he felt that he had reigned supreme, were now, he was conscious, wholly locked away from him, as if the grave itself had consummated their separation. What it was, so like to death, that had passed over her, he could not tell; but, as his glance rested on the set immovable expression of her face, and noted how the dark eyes, that ever had turned to him with such soft tenderness, were now fixed and solemn under the shadow of some heavy thought which held her wholly in possession, he felt, with a conviction none the less sure that it was indefinite, that for him at least Mary Trevelyan lived no longer. He had scarce time, however, to dwell on the impression thus unaccountably made upon him, before the Lorelei flashed into the room, all brightness and joy; and, as his eyes turned with delight to her radiant face, the quiet figure of Mary Trevelyan seemed to fade away from his thoughts as completely as he felt she had even now passed out of his life.

It was a lovely summer morning, and as they all passed into the hall when breakfast was over, they saw through the open door the sunlight streaming on the green lawn and waving trees, seeming to invite them into the sweet fresh air; but it was with no small astonishment, in the case of all save Lurline, that Mary Trevelyan was seen to pass, with her noiseless step, through the little group, till she found herself face to face with Bertrand; and then she said, in tones which were perfectly distinct, though soft and low,

"Bertrand, will you come and walk with me in the garden for a little time? I wish to have your advice on some arrangements I propose to make."

XUM

Such a request from the silent retiring Mary seemed very strange, for she had never sought Bertrand in any way since he had been at Chiverley; but he could only agree at once, with ready courtesy, to her request; while the others went their ways in different directions. Laura, so far from manœuvring, as she generally did, to prevent Mary and Bertrand from being alone together, now did her best to facilitate their interview. Only, with the subtle instinct of that artfulness which was her fatal gift, she turned to John Pemberton, and whispered, "Dear old John, it is a long time since you have had any music; shall I sing to you this morning, while those two are out?"

With trembling delighted eagerness he implored her to do so, for she had greatly neglected him of late; but, deceived and betrayed as he was, Pemberton never dreamt that her object was simply, by this expedient, to maintain her influence over Mr. Lisle throughout his interview with Mary. And so it was, that during all the time that Bertrand spent with Mary Trevelyan, in the very crisis of her fate, the Lorelei's voice of haunting sweetness rose and fell upon the summer air, wafted to him through the open window of the music-room, and beguiling him ever with the memory of her loveliness and genius, even while the noble heart of the gentle girl who walked by his side, was almost breaking in the anguish of uttering words that were to part them for ever.

As Bertrand and his companion walked down the steps from the hall-door, to go out into the garden, Mary Trevelyan raised her eyes to the heavens with one long earnest appealing gaze, while she asked, with her whole heart, for strength to accomplish the dread task that lay before her. She had laboured all night long, after Laura's visit, to steel herself for its performance with a composure which should prevent Bertrand from feeling one shadow of remorse or pain, in seeing himself freed from her wholly and for ever. And she knew that not only must she have courage to go bravely and calmly through their final interview, but she must brace herself for days, and perhaps even weeks, of endurance, while she would have to stand by and see his happiness with Lurline; for, much as she longed to escape even then from Chiverley, she knew that her flight at such a moment could not fail to reveal to him and to all that very truth, as to her own feelings, which she most wished to conceal.

But who has ever cast so much as one feeble glance to the Father's throne in vain? The eyes which Mary Trevelyan raised to heaven grew bright and calm, and the strength and peace of pure self-sacrifice filled all her heart, when she found herself at last alone with Bertrand Lisle in a retired part of the garden, while the sweet voice of the Lorelei floated round them in soft entrancing strains.

"Bertrand," said Mary, "I have asked to speak to you because, as you are soon going to leave us, I wish to have your approval of the plans I have made for myself when I shall leave Chiverley. I know," she continued, quickly, as she saw that he was about to speak, "that your dear father, in his care for me, made you in some sense responsible for my welfare; but, whatever schemes he may himself have formed for my future, his one wish certainly was that I should do that which most commended itself to my own inclination and feelings—is it not so?" And she lifted her eyes calmly to Bertrand's.

"Doubtless it is," he answered, hesitatingly; "but Mary, he very much wished you to have a safe and happy home."

"I know he did," said Mary, "and that is just what I have provided for myself, in the way that suits me best. I have a great desire to try and be of some use in relieving however small a proportion of the suffering which is so rife in this sad world, and I have found a post where, I think, I could carry out this wish effectually; it is in a hospital for sick pauper children, where the managers are in want of help, and they would no doubt be willing to accept mine."

"But, Mary, is this really the life you would prefer to any other?" said Bertrand, uneasily; "it would be arduous work, and you would be alone, away from all your friends."

"I have not many friends, as you know, Bertrand," she answered, with a sad smile.

"You have me," he said, in a low tone, and for a moment the ring of tenderness in his voice almost overthrew her composure; but at that instant Lurline's soft singing came more distinctly to his ears in the silence, and Mary saw his eyes light up, and his lips part in a fond smile, as he turned his head to listen.

When Mary's answer came, it was perfectly calm. "Yes, dear Bertrand, I have you as a friend, and as such I am sure I shall have you always; and I hope, when I am at the hospital, that I shall hear from you, sometimes, that you are very happy, for you know well that your happiness is very dear to me; and therefore you will forgive me if I speak of that which concerns your future, as well as my own."

She paused for a moment, breathing hard, and gathering up all her courage; then she turned, put her hand into his, and, looking up to him with a faint sweet smile, she said, softly, "Bertrand, my first and dearest friend, I hope and pray that you may have with Laura Wyndham every joy this mortal life can give you!"

"Oh, Mary!" he exclaimed, grasping her hand forcibly; "who has told you this? what is it you know?"

"I know that you love the beautiful Lurline, and that she returns your affection to the fullest extent," she said, still smiling. "As there is nothing to prevent your marriage, I trust it will soon take



(*Drawn by* WILLIAM SMALL.)

"She put her little hands against his breast, and pushed him back."—*p.* 555.

place, and that you will find in it all the happiness even I could wish you."

"Listen, Mary!" he exclaimed, vehemently; "I do not deny that I love her, but it has been—strange as it seems to say so—almost against my will. She has dazzled and bewitched me, and taken me captive irresistibly. But, believe me, I came here with very different thoughts and wishes. Mary! indeed I was sincere when I spoke to you at my father's grave, and still even now——"

He stopped abruptly. Lurline's lovely voice still softly singing was thrilling through his heart. He could not say that he had any wish but to make her his wife as speedily as might be. Mary understood him; but her earnest prayer had earned for her great grace, and she was able to answer very gently, "Dear Bertrand, I ask this one favour of you—that you will wholly forget the past, except as regards our childhood's friendship, which I hope may continue between us to the end. A new life is opening out before us both; give me your good wishes, as I have given you mine. I trust your married life may be most brilliant and most happy; and I pray that my own in loneliness may be blameless and peaceful."

"Yours will have the blessing of the great God upon it!" he burst out, passionately; "I think you are an angel, Mary, and it will be well for me and Laura if you give us your prayers out of the holy home where you will spend yourself for others."

"That you may be very sure you will have, ever and ever while I live," she answered, with a bright sweet look, which glorified all her face. "And now, dear Bertrand, that all is settled, you must go to Lurline, and set her heart at rest. Some other time I will tell you all the details of my future work."

And gently bending her head, while in her heart she gave him a last farewell as her one love, her Bertrand, who should have been her own, she passed away from him with her soft tread and her graceful movements, and soon had vanished from his sight among the trees.

Bertrand watched her till the last fold of her dark robes had disappeared with a sense of aching regret in his heart, even amid all the joyful exultation with which he felt that Laura was now his own. He strove to stifle the mingled remorse and tenderness which Mary had roused in him by resolving to force upon her half his fortune, which yet he knew well she would never consent to touch, and an expression of uneasiness and gloom was still upon his face, when there was a rush of light feet down the gravel path, two little white hands seized his half-frantically, and the beautiful bright eyes of Lurline plunged their gaze into his own, while her sweet voice rung out in beseeching tones, "Oh, my Bertrand! Tell me: is all well? Have you discovered that she does not love you? and are you free to make me all your own?"

"Yes, darling Lorelei!" he exclaimed, forgetting all but that he saw her lovely face before him. "All is settled, and you are my own now—wholly and for ever. Soon, very soon, you shall be my precious wife."

Then Laura breathed a long sigh of relief, and let her head fall down upon his hands—her end was gained, and all her long toil was over.

CHAPTER XXVI.

As Mary walked away through the garden (after the conversation with Bertrand), so gay in its summer brightness, it seemed to her as though a darkness that could be felt had fallen over all the world. She raised her eyes in meek serenity to the cloudless sky, and murmured, "Yes, the sunshine has all died out from earth, but the love of God shines ever bright in heaven!" And thither, thenceforward, she resolved to turn her heart and soul, striving to serve her dear Redeemer in His suffering children on the earth, and looking on through the long, dim, cheerless life, and the shades of death, to the day when she should pass the last deep waters, and find Him waiting her upon that other shore.

When the family came out on the lawn, after dinner that day, Mr. Wyndham, drawing Laura forward, placed her hand in that of Bertrand, who had formally asked his consent to the marriage, while Mary stood a little apart in the shade, and looked with a gentle sweetness at the brilliant Lorelei, whose rapturous smiles and joy-lit eyes gave added radiance to her beauty, and absorbed Bertrand's attention so exclusively, that he never even noticed the quiet figure in her dark robes with the shadows from the trees beneath which she stood falling all around her. Lurline saw her, however, and exulted in the thought of the prize she had won from her, to the full satisfaction of her highest ambition. Strange would it have been if, in that moment, she could have been given a glimpse of an hour that lay yet far in the dim vista of the future, when she herself, so bright, so brilliant now, would cling, heart-broken and penitent, to her over whom she had triumphed, and find in her pure teaching of a higher wisdom than the subtle Lorelei had ever known the only consolation of the life her own selfishness had poisoned and destroyed. Neither of them dreamt of such a possibility at this time; but it may be that even now it was Mary Trevelyan who was most to be envied, for there was in her quiet spirit a depth of peace full of a sweetness Laura's exulting joy could never know.

It was far otherwise, however, in the case of one who was much more truly Lurline's victim than high-toned Mary Trevelyan. John Pemberton, standing also a little apart, looked on at the scene of betrothal with a bewildered expression, half of terror, half of anger, which, however, was directed rather

against what he held to be Bertrand's senseless presumption, than to any idea that there could be faithlessness towards himself on Laura's part. The poor honest fellow's implicit trust in this artful woman was very touching; he believed her to be simply incapable of falseness or wrong-doing of any kind; and he kept saying to himself, with pain and astonishment, as he saw Bertrand assuming the manner of a successful lover, "Why does not my Lurline tell him that she is mine; that we shall be married if ever it is possible; and if not, we shall still belong wholly to one another?"

After a time Mr. and Mrs. Wyndham sauntered away, Mary having already disappeared; and when John Pemberton saw Bertrand drawing Laura closer to him, as one having an exclusive right to her, a hot indignation took possession of him, which he could not repress, and he took two or three hasty strides forward, intending to call Mr. Lisle to account for his unjustifiable boldness. But Lurline saw his movement, and understood it. An explanation between Bertrand and John was the very last thing she desired; so she broke suddenly away from her future husband, and running with her light steps up to Pemberton, she put her little hands against his breast, and pushed him back, saying, "Dear old John, don't be foolish! I will explain everything to you. Go quietly away now, and you shall hear from me to-night."

"But, my own Laura, I cannot leave you with that insolent man! By what right does he——"

"Hush, hush!" she interrupted; "you do not know what you are saying; wait till you understand it all. Dear John, you do not want to make me unhappy, do you? and you will, if you stay here now; go in the house now, and I will see you again."

"Make you unhappy! Oh, Lurline, I would rather die!"

"That is right; then leave me now altogether, and trust me to make everything plain to you."

His faith and loyalty towards her were so entire that he obeyed at once. He pressed her hand tenderly, turned, and walked into the house; while Laura flew back to Bertrand, as if she were a bird released.

"That poor old fellow," she said, laughing like a happy guileless child, "I shall have to train him into better habits—he is so used to being always with me."

Bertrand had witnessed her short interview with Pemberton in no very serene mood, and he now said, frowning darkly, "Laura, tell me the truth, have you ever given that young man reason to think you would marry him?"

"Marry my adopted brother! how is it possible, Bertrand? It is unkind of you to say that," she added with a charming look of pretty vexation; "if you loved me as well as I love you, I do not suppose you would fancy I could ever have seriously thought of any one but yourself."

Of course this amply satisfied Bertrand, and the two walked away together into the garden to enjoy their first hour of freedom since their formal engagement.

That night, when John Pemberton went to his room, he saw a letter in Laura's bold characteristic handwriting on his table. He looked at it with a strange feeling of dread before he touched it. The Lorelei was not a person who committed herself to paper, and it was almost the first time she had ever written to him. He carried a lighted candle in his hand, but the window was wide open, and the moonlight streamed in upon him as he set it down and took up the ominous missive. He opened it at last, and stood reading it, while the pure silvery light from without struggled with the red glare of the flame within the room. Lurline began with many expressions of endearment to her beloved adopted brother. She liked to think, she wrote, how certain it was that their sweet fraternal affection would never diminish or fail—how entirely they were one in thought and feeling—how sure she was now, and always, of his sympathy and approval in all that she thought and did. She was delighted, therefore, to feel at the present moment quite secure of his willing agreement in what she proposed to do. She knew how earnestly he desired her happiness, and since it was but too plain that they could never be united, as dear John had wished, she well understood that he desired nothing so much as to see her safe in the love and protection of some good man, and this conviction on her part of John's wishes, coupled with the fact that it would be wrong needlessly to break a heart that was devoted to her, had decided her to become the wife of Bertrand Lisle; but she need hardly tell her beloved John that she had only given her consent on the condition that she was allowed by her husband to continue all her affectionate intimacy with her adopted brother, and thus there would be no difference whatever in their happy relations together; this being the case she was sure that dear John would not distress her by manifesting the smallest dislike to her change of position, and she relied on his delicacy of feeling to meet her future husband next day with all the cordiality of feeling which Mr. Lisle was ready to bestow on him. Then she concluded by saying that she was ever and ever his most loving sister, Lurline—all the adjectives in the last sentence being strongly underlined.

Twice John Pemberton read this cruel and heartless letter slowly through to the very end, then he let it fall from his grasp to the floor, and, sitting down on the side of his bed, he buried his face, white and cold as with the chill of death, within his trembling hands. He felt that he must think this matter out, till he had arrived at a complete comprehension of what the words written on that paper

meant for Laura and for himself in connection with all his existence, both here in this mortal world and in that which was to come. There was no question of the actual sense of the carefully-chosen language which announced that Laura Wyndham had engaged herself to marry Bertrand Lisle, but he had to ascertain whether the inner meaning, lying hid beneath all the subtle sentences, was simply this, that Lurline—his almost worshipped Lurline—his ideal of perfection, was false to the very heart's core, had been false from the first, and that to a designing unscrupulous woman, clothed in a form of wondrous beauty, he himself had delivered up all that had been life to his heart and soul before. Could it be possible? he asked himself, as he sat there trembling from head to foot; for an earthquake upheaving all the earth around him, and flinging the house down in ruins about his head, could not have given him a greater shock than the sudden revelation of the terrible delusion—terrible indeed in its consequences to him—under which he had been living. It had come upon him like a thunderbolt, for his simple loyal nature always led him to have entire faith in the goodness of others till a contrary opinion was absolutely forced on him, and Laura, in particular, he had set on a pinnacle of virtue where he scarce thought even the ordinary weaknesses of human nature could have any place in her soul.

This for Laura Wyndham, well named after the beguiling syren of the legend, but what of John Pemberton—John Pemberton, once dedicated to the ministry of Christ?—once, with the pure enthusiasm of a true devotion, anxious to offer up his whole life and strength and power in willing sacrifice to bring the light and knowledge of his Master's name to those who sat in darkness, and who had cast away all the noble purpose of his highest love to spend year after year in demoralising worship at that false woman's feet—what of him?

(To be continued.)

"ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."

BY THOMAS ARCHER.

WITH THE POOR AND NEEDY *(continued)*.

STILL threading our way through those dim alleys, where each one looks like a *cul-de-sac* but yet may be the devious entrance to another more foul and forbidding, we leave the "Hope for All" Mission Room resounding with infant voices, all murmuring the simple lessons of the day. That room is seldom empty, for there is also an evening school where a large class of older pupils are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic; there is also an adult class, and a "mothers' meeting," to which poor women are invited that they may be taught to make clothing for themselves and their children from materials furnished for them at wholesale prices in such quantities as their poor savings can purchase. The visiting "Bible woman" is the chief agent in these works of mercy, since she brings parents and children to the school, and reports cases of severe distress to be relieved when there are funds for the purpose. Not only by teaching and sewing, however, are the hopeful influences of the place supported, for in this big room the people of the district are invited to assemble to listen to lectures, readings, and music, to see dissolving views; and in the summer, when fields are in their beauty and the hedgerows are full of glory, there is an excursion into the country for the poor little pallid children, while, strangest sight of all, a real "flower show" is, or was, held in Chequer Alley. One could almost pity the flowers, if we had any pity to spare from the stunted buds and blossoms of humanity who grow pale and sicken and so often die in this foul neighbourhood.

But we have strange sights yet to see, so let us continue our excursion in and out and round and round, not without some feeling of giddiness and sickness of heart, through the "Pigeons"—a tavern, the passage of which is itself a connecting link between two suspicious-looking courts—round by beershops all blank and beetling, and silent; past low-browed doorways and dim-curtained windows of tramps' kitchens, and the abodes of more poverty, misery, and it may be crime, than you will find within a similar space in any neighbourhood in London, or out of it, except perhaps in about five streets "down East," or in certain dens of Liverpool and Manchester.

One moment. You see where a great sudden gap appears to have been made on one side of Golden Lane. That gap represents houses pulled down to erect great blocks of building for warehouses or factories, and it also represents the space in which above 4,000 people lived when the population of this square quarter of a mile of poverty and dirt was 22,000 souls. This will give you some idea of the consequences of making what are called "clean sweeps," by demolishing whole neighbourhoods before other dwellings are provided for the evicted tenants. One result of this method of improving the dwellings of the poor is that the people crowd closer, either in their own or in some adjacent neighbourhood, where rents are low and landlords are not particular how many

inmates lodge in a single room. Remember that whole families can only earn just enough to keep them from starving, and cannot afford to pay more than half-a-crown or three-and-sixpence a week for rent. They must live near their work, or they lose time, and time means pence, and pence represent the difference between eating and fasting.

"The model lodging-house!" See, there is one, and it is nearly empty. How should it be otherwise? The proprietors of such places, whether they be philanthropists or speculators—and they are not likely to be the latter—can never see a return of any profitable per-centage on their outlay while they enforce necessary sanitary laws. The top rooms are half-a-crown a week each, and the lower "sets" range from about six shillings for two to eight-and-sixpence for three rooms. The consequence is that the few tenants in this particular building are frequently changing their quarters. Some of them try it, and fall into arrear, and are ejected, or want to introduce whole families into a single room, as they do in these surrounding courts and alleys, and this, of course, is not permitted. Imagine one vast building crowded at the same rate as some of these two-storied houses are! Ask the missionary, whose duty takes her up scores of creaking staircases to places where eight or ten human beings eat, drink, sleep, and even work, in one small room—where father, mother, children, and sometimes also a brother or sister-in-law, herd together, that they may live on the common earnings; places where children are born, and men, women, and children die; and the new-born babe must be clothed by the aid of the "maternity box," and the dead must be buried by the help of money advanced to pay for the plainest decent funeral.

I do not purpose to take you to any of these sights. You could do little good unless you became familiar with them, and entered into the work of visitation. Even in the published reports of the organisation to which we are now going the "cases" are not dwelt upon, only one or two are given from the experiences of the missionary, and she speaks of them simply as examples of the kind of destitution which characterises a district where deplorable poverty is the result sometimes of drink, or what, for want of a word applicable to the saving of pence, is termed improvidence; but frequent also because of sickness, and the want even of poorly-paid employment. "In such cases," says the report, "almost everything is parted with to procure food and shelter *outside* the workhouse."

One of the two "ordinary" cases referred to was that of a poor woman who was "found lying on a sack of shavings on the floor, with an infant two days old; also a child lying dead from fever, and two other children crying for food. None had more than a solitary garment on. The smell of the room was such that the missionary was quite overcome until she had opened the window. Clean linen was obtained, and their temporal and spiritual wants at once looked after." This was in the Report to the autumn of 1873; but cases only just less distressing occur daily still. This foul and neglected district, which lies like a great ulcer upon the great opulent city, the centre of civilisation and benevolence, seems to be as far from us as though it were a part of some savage or semi-heathen land under British influence. Indeed, in the latter case, there would be a probability of more earnest effort on behalf of the benighted people, on whose behalf meetings would perhaps be held, and a committee of inquiry and distribution appointed. Still, let us be thankful that something is done. Twenty-nine poor mothers have had the benefit of the maternity fund and clothing, the Report tells us. "They are very grateful for this assistance in their terrible need. Frequently the distress is so great that two changes of clothing are given to mother and babe, or they would be almost entirely denuded when the time arrived for returning the boxes. Our lady-subscribers at a distance may be glad to know that blankets, sheets, flannel petticoats, warm shawls, and babies' clothing will always be acceptable." Thus writes Mrs. Orsman on the subject, for the mission is known as the Golden Lane Mission, and more popularly as "Mr. Orsman's Mission to the Costermongers." Perhaps these words scarcely denote the scope of the work; but costermongers must be taken as a representative term in a district where, in an area of a square quarter of a mile, there are, or recently were, eighty public-houses and beershops, and a dense mass of inhabitants, including street-traders or hucksters, labourers, charwomen, road-sweepers, drovers, French-polishers, artificial-flower-makers, toy-makers, with what is now a compact and really representative body of costermongers, working earnestly enough to keep to the right way, and, as they always did, forming a somewhat distinctive part of the population.

Fourteen years ago Mr. Orsman began the work of endeavouring to carry the Gospel to the rough-and-ready savages of this benighted field for missionary enterprise. He held an official appointment, and this was his business "after office hours." About the results of his own labour he and his Reports are modestly reticent, but at all events it began to bear fruit. Others joined in it; a regular mission was established, and, with vigorous growth, shot out several branches, so wisely uniting what may be called the secular or temporal interest with the spiritual and religious, that the Bread of Life was not altogether separated from that need for the bread which perishes. These branches are full of sap to-day, and one of

them is also full of promising buds and blossoms, if we are to judge of the rows of ragged—but not unhappy—urchins who fill this large room or hall of the Mission-house.

It is only the first-floor of two ordinary houses knocked into one, but a great work is going on. The parochial school was once held here, and now the room is full of children who might still be untaught but for the effort which made the Ragged School a first consideration in an endeavour to redeem the whole social life of the district. Wisely enough, the School Board accepts the aid which this free day-school for ragged and nearly destitute children affords to a class which the Education Act has not yet taught us how to teach.

In four years, out of ninety-five boys and girls who entered situations from this school only one was dismissed for dishonesty, and it was afterwards found that he was the dupe of the foreman of the place at which he worked.

Well may Mr. Harwood, the school superintendent, be glad in the work that he has learnt to love in spite of all the sordid surroundings. There is life in the midst of these dim courts—a ragged-school and a church, which is poor, but not strictly speaking ragged. In fact, "the patching class" for ragged boys, which meets on Thursdays, from five to seven in the afternoon, remedies even the tattered garments of the poor little fellows, who, having only one suit, must take off their habiliments in order to mend them. Occasional gifts of second-hand clothes are amongst the most useful stock of the schoolmaster, as anybody may believe who sees the long rows of poor little fellows, like our juvenile guide, with two odd boots, which are mere flaps of leather, and attire which it would be exaggeration to call a jacket and trousers.

The school-room is also the church and the lecture-hall. It will hold 300 people; and the Sunday-evening congregation fills it thoroughly, while, on week-nights, special services, and frequently lectures, dissolving views, and attractive social gatherings, bring the costers and their friends in great force.

The chief of the costermongers is the Earl of Shaftesbury; and here, standing as it were at livery in a quiet corner of a shanty close to the coal-shed, is the earl's barrow, emblazoned with his crest. This remarkable vehicle, and a donkey complimentarily named the "Earl," which took a prize at a Golden Lane donkey show, designate his lordship as president of the "Barrow Club," a flourishing institution, designed to supersede the usurious barrow-lenders, who once let out these necessary adjuncts to the costermongering business at a tremendous hire. Now the proprietors of the barrows, going on the hire and ultimate purchase-system, are prospering greatly. There are free evening classes, mothers' meetings, a free lending library, a free singing class, a penny savings bank, dinners to destitute children, numbering more than 10,000 a year, a soup-kitchen, tea-meetings, and other agencies, all of which are kept going morning, noon, and night, within the narrow limits of these two houses made into one. It is here too that the annual meeting is held, an account of which every year filters through the newspapers to the outer world—"The Costermongers' Annual Tea-Party." The records of this united and earnest assembly have been so recently given to the public, that I need not repeat them to you as we stand here in the lower rooms, whence the big cakes, the basins of tea, the huge sandwiches of bread and beef, were conveyed to the 200 guests. But as we depart, after shaking Mr. Harwood by the hand, let me remind you that it has been by the hearty human living influence of religion that these results have been effected. The stones of scientific or secular controversy have not been offered instead of food spiritual and temporal. The mission-hall has been made the centre; and from it has spread various healing, purifying, ameliorating influences. From this we may well take a lesson for the benefit of another organised effort which appeals to us for help—that of the London City Mission. This institution is trying to effect for various districts and several classes of the poor and ignorant in and about London that introduction of religious teaching which Mr. Orsman began with amongst the costermongers and others in the benighted locality where now a clear light has begun to shine.

At a recent meeting of the promoters of the City Mission work, held at the Mansion House, it was stated that the 427 missionaries then employed by the society were chosen without distinction, except that of fitness for the office, from Churchmen, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Wesleyans, and Baptists, while the examining and appointing committee were composed of thirteen clergymen of the Established Church and thirteen Dissenting ministers.

Anybody who is accustomed to visit the worst neighbourhoods of London will know that these missionaries go where the regular clergy cannot easily penetrate, and where even the parish doctor seldom lingers. Every missionary visits once a month about 500 families, or 2,000 persons. They read the Scriptures, exhort their listeners, hold prayer and Bible meetings, distribute copies of the Scriptures, see that children go to school, address the poor in rooms when they cannot persuade them to go to church, visit and pray with the dying, lend books, hold open-air services, endeavour to reclaim drunkards (1,546 were so restored during the last year), admonish and frequently reclaim the vicious, raise the fallen, and

place them in asylums or induce them to return to their homes, and work constantly for the great harvest of God to which they are appointed.

Then there are special missionaries appointed to visit bakers, cabmen, drovers, omnibus men, soldiers, sailors, and foreigners of various countries. They also go to tanneries, the docks, workhouses, hospitals, and other places; and there is a vast harvest yet without a sickle to reap even a single sheaf. When will the time come that, to the means for carrying the sustaining comfort of the Word to men's souls, will be added some means of helping them to realise it by such temporal aid as will raise them from the want which paralyses and the degradation which benumbs?

CAGED.

PART II.

AFTER the brothers had seen the last of the old bridge, as it floated down the stream, they walked slowly and silently round the little island; not, indeed, with the expectation of finding a way of escape—knowing already only too well there was no possibility of crossing any part of the river, even when less swollen than at present—but in the forlorn hope of seeing some one on the opposite bank who might help them out of their dilemma.

Alas! there was no house near, and few people passed along that lonely path.

"This is an awful fix!" said Maurice, after they had made a tour of their prison.

"We shall be late for school, that's certain!" replied Eddy.

"School, indeed! I tell you we're lucky fellows if we ever get off this weary place. Why, days—aye, weeks—often pass without any one going through these fields!"

"Farmer Brown will take a look at his meadow before long, you may be sure."

"No, no, Eddy; 'tis not near fit for cutting; by the time it is mown our bones will be bleaching here in the sun!"

Edmund shuddered at this terrible suggestion; then exclaimed, with a smile of hope, "You forget, Maurice, that Lina comes every evening to look at her bird's-nest."

Oh, don't talk of that wretched nest; it got us into all this trouble!"

"I'm afraid it was our own fault; and you see, we have been caged in place of the birds."

For several hours the boys wandered round the island, stopping occasionally to gaze at the opposite bank and strain their eyes over the distant fields; but all was silent and desolate. At length another heavy fall of rain drove them back to the hermitage for shelter.

"Look at the old finch perched on my hat," said Eddy. "Oh, she's flown away! I suppose she wants to feed the little ones again; I may as well let her at them." And lifting the hat with which he had covered the nest some hours before, he found all the poor little birds quite dead—their bright young lives ended! Yet better so than to have endured the fate intended for them of endless captivity.

"Smothered!" exclaimed Maurice, gloomily, as he threw himself on a seat at the far end of the hermitage.

Eddy followed his example, and there they remained, brooding over their strange condition, while the rain plashed on the broken roof, and the sky grew every moment darker and more dismal.

Then the mother goldfinch flew in with a worm in her mouth, and lighting on the edge of the nest, held the tempting morsel, turning about, over the heads of the young ones, wondering why they did not gape as usual. This process she repeated several times, then, letting the worm fall, gently stirred the poor dead birdies with her bill, and finding them still and cold, gathered them under her wings, and lay down, trying to bring back life and warmth by covering them with the soft feathers of her downy breast. Even the boys could not help feeling touched at the sight, and silently watched what the poor mother would do next. After a long time she rose, and flying off, returned presently with more food; but finding this as unsuccessful as the last attempt, fluttered over the nest a while, as if to consider the matter, then, seeming to understand it all but too well, she hovered mournfully round, uttering the most plaintive notes.

"Eddy," said his brother, "I can't stand this any longer; it's too melancholy! It puts me in mind how mother will lament when she hears that we died on this island!"

"No doubt we'll be found before that time, Maurice, so keep up your heart; but, indeed, I'm sure poor mother will fret enough about us when we don't go home this evening."

"Come, let us throw away the nest of dead birds, for I can't bear to see the way the old one is going on."

And Maurice got up, and running to the river, flung the nest into the stream as far as he could reach. Away it floated, bearing along the memorial of their cruelty.

"I'm getting frightfully hungry," said Eddy; "but we won't give up hope, Maurice, till after Lina's hour for coming."

At home no question was raised as to the absence of the boys till dinner-hour; and even then, as they were often late, it was not considered anything remarkable.

In the evening Lina set off for her usual visit to the goldfinch's nest, and had just reached the river path when her attention was attracted by some object floating down the stream, and on examining more closely, she perceived it was a nest, half upset, with one little dead bird tangled amongst the wet lining, so delicately woven of hair and down. "It is my nest, I am sure!" she thought. "Oh, who could have been so cruel!" Hoping to find herself mistaken, she hurried on, when, turning into a field, she met Farmer Brown, and told her story, pointing to the floating nest.

"No use going on, Miss Lina," he replied, "for the bridge was carried away in the great flood last night. I saw the broken pieces of it this morning down a good way below this." Then, seeing Lina's look of disappointment, he added, "But we'll throw a good broad plank across for you some day, soon, and I'll warrant you'll find your pet birds safe enough. There's many another finch's nest in the country besides that one."

Lina had to content herself with this comfort, and retraced her steps homeward, little thinking how anxiously her visit was expected by the poor prisoners on that desolate island.

Darkness approached, and as the boys had not yet returned, their mother became anxious, and sent to the school-house in the hope of obtaining tidings of her sons; but when the answer arrived that neither of them had been there that day, her uneasiness was changed into alarm. Messengers were despatched in every direction to make inquiries, but nothing was discovered. All sorts of real and imaginary dangers presented themselves to the mind of the poor mother, and her agony during that long night could only be alleviated by placing her loved ones in the care of One "who slumbereth not, nor sleepeth."

Lina, who had been wandering about restlessly during the early part of the night listening for the sound of returning footsteps, came to her mother's side, and said, softly, "I have been asking God to tell us where the boys are, and I am almost sure I have found out, for an idea has just occurred to me." She then related how she had seen the floating nest, and what the farmer had told her about the bridge.

"But, Lina dear, if the bridge is gone, how could your brothers have got to the island?"

"Just what I thought, too, mother; but now I remember the farmer could not tell exactly when it was swept away. Perhaps they crossed over in the early morning, and could not get back."

"What you say is possible, dear; we will try."

They did so without delay, and as soon as the light had sufficiently returned, Farmer Brown's plank was thrown across where the bridge had been, and the boys were found stretched on the cold damp floor of the old hermitage, exhausted with hunger and misery, for all their hopes of rescue were gone; and yet, in the stillness and gloom of that solemn night, many thoughts, unheeded before, had forced themselves on their minds. They had sought protection and pardon from their Heavenly Father, and offered up from the heart their first real prayer. In short, a new life commenced for these two boys, which their friends always dated from the memorable time they had spent "caged" on the island. S. T. A. E

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

216. It is stated in the Book of Leviticus that when a man was recovered from leprosy he should show himself to the priest and offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to God. On what occasion did our blessed Lord order this to be done?

217. Where is the earliest mention of salt as used for flavouring food?

218. What was it Herod desired the wise men to do for him?

219. Quote a passage in which our Lord tells us what is the greatest proof of human love.

220. Where do we find the expression, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places?"

221. What proverb does our Lord mention, as being in use in His days?

222. What great work was undertaken by King Hezekiah in order to provide a more abundant supply of water for the city of Jerusalem? Quote passage.

223. What two persons are mentioned as having denied the doctrine of a future resurrection?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 528.

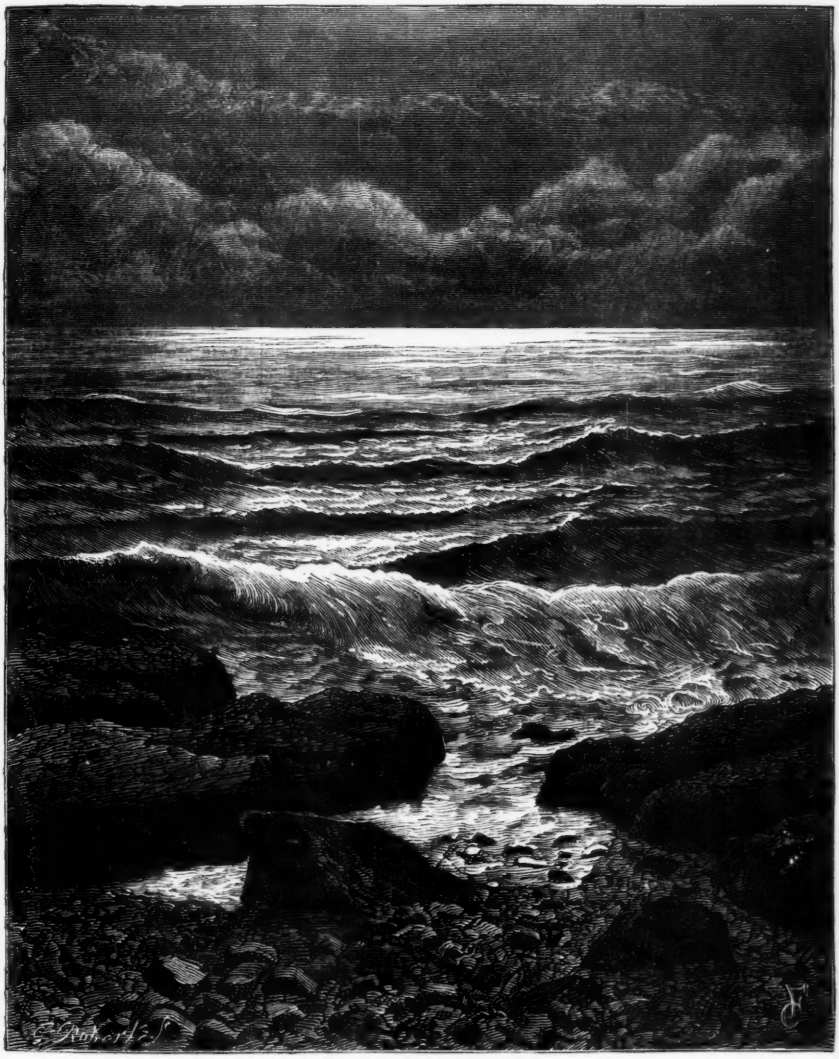
205. "It bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruits every month" (Rev. xxii. 2).

206. "Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold I cannot speak: for I am a child" (Jer. i. 6).

207. "Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: nor by the earth; for it is His footstool" (Matt. v. 34, 35).

208. "For the Lord hath spoken of David, saying, By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel out of the hand of the Philistines, and out of the hand of all their enemies" (2 Sam. iii. 18).

209. Herod (Luke xiii. 32).



(*Drawn by* FRANK CARLESS.)

MUSIC AND POETRY.

HOW wondrous is the power, how wide the reign
Of the angelic spirit that commands
Forth issue from the lifeless lyre the strain
Obedient to the touch of mortal hands!
And powerful and mystical as she,
A sister spirit, rules the human heart,
Tuning its million chords in harmony,
Which murmur to the Æolian breath of art.

And, twined in flowing wreaths, these sisters smile
Upon the earth, and glad its busy throng;
E'en in the shade of ocean's farthest isle
Are felt the spells of poetry and song.

For the great ocean, in its free career,
Sings a wild song in concert with the winds,
Breathing a poetry of mystic fear,
Which in the human heart an echo finds.

Whispering sweetly to the gentle breeze
That steals across its bosom, and doth bear
Its message to the shade of forest trees,
Its secret to the lovers wandering there.

That mighty ocean with its music tells
Its harmonies to heav'n, and when the storm
Bursts from the caves of air, its language swells
To bolder tones, and prouder grows its form.

And the great voices of the air and sea
The noblest hymn of all creation pour,
Worthy the symbols of eternity
And Him their Maker, whom we all adore.

Then borne to land, upon the pebbly beach,
The breeze and ocean, as twin children, light,
And unto man a tale of love would teach;
But chiefly in the silence of the night,

When all the turmoil of the world is hushed,
And all the sorrows of mankind are stilled,
As though the mighty human soul were crushed,
And that the earth, as one vast tomb, were filled;

When no rude murmur from the toiling herd
The hallowing sense of Nature's courtship mars,
When scarce a leaf in azure space is stirred,
And the sole watchers are the peeping stars;

Then steals the distant surges of the sea,
Kissed by the breeze and kissing in return,
Then rolls the alternating melody,
The laughing shrieks and the low sighs that mourn;

The echoing murmur of the waves that wake
The thunder of the cliff and damp its brow,
Mingled with whispers when the ripples break
In dancing foam upon the sands below.

Oh, that omnipotence would raise the veil
From human eyes, and open mortal ears
To the grand hymns that load the midnight gale,
Unselfish music to the heavenly spheres!

Oh, that the heart of this too selfish world
Were one with Nature's, generous and free,
That all its cares were on the shore unfurled,
And blended with and buried in the sea!

Would that o'er every human sorrow, lost
Deep 'neath the billows, from mankind estranged,
The winds might sing, as joyously they crossed
From land to land where late the spectre ranged.

Then were the sleep of weary eyes unslept,
The rest of toil unsought, and pain no more;
Then were the tears of bitterest woe unwept,
For joy that reigned for man on every shore!

J. T. N.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXVI.—OUT IN THE GARDEN.

DOROTHY went out into the garden at last. This had been such a long strange day, she thought; but, thank goodness, it would be over soon, and then she could creep away, and, in the darkness, think it all over. She walked up to George Blakesley, in a dazed sort of way, and stood before him.

"I thought you were never coming," he said.

"I have been talking to Mr. Fuller and papa," she answered, "and now I have come;" she sat down on the rickety seat beside him; "and it shall be—what we were talking about to-night—whenever you please," she added, meekly.

"My dear child, my dear little child!" he said, trying to draw her to him, but she shrank back.

"Oh no," she said, "don't do that; and I'm not a child any longer. I feel like an old woman. There is something all wrong in my life," she added.

"It will be right presently," he said, hopefully. "What made you change your mind so soon, Dorothy?"

"Papa wished it," she said, frankly and gravely.

"I see—I fear things are going wrong. He has made some mistakes over the paper lately. He is quite right to wish to see you safely married."

He said the words to himself, not to her, but she heard them, and they stung her pride; she said nothing, only turned her face a little more away, and began absently making pictures in the shadowy outlines beyond the garden. It was very dark; she could scarcely define a single object beyond the fence, and the sycamore-tree above her waved gravely to and fro in the breeze. It was a warm night, but she shivered with cold and wretchedness, and looked down longingly at the garden, and thought how terrible it would be to leave it. And then to be married! To go away from home and her dear old

father, over whom a sorrow was stealing, and from Tom and Will and Sally. Will was getting on so well with his studies, and Sally could draw figures in a way that was quite wonderful, and then there was Mr. Fuller. She did not even want to see him any more, she thought, she felt so angry with him, and so ashamed of herself and all that had passed between them. To go away from home and from the dear old garden, to be married to George Blakesley for ever, to take this for her life and all her hopes and dreams, and never to look for anything more! Oh, it seemed dreadful! she would give the world to be free. She should never care for Mr. Blakesley, never.

"Dorothy!"

She woke from her reverie with a start.

"Yes;" and she did not look round. Suddenly she felt a hand put softly over her eyes.

"You are crying, Dorothy." He had been thinking of the future also, and building up air-castles just as Dorothy once had built them; but they fell with a crash when he felt the tears upon her cheeks. "Look round at me," he said, kindly. "Don't be afraid of me. Now, tell me what is the matter. Are you crying because you are going to marry me, my child?" She hung her head, and hesitated; but she could not tell a falsehood. "Does the prospect distress you so very much, Dorothy?"

"Yes," she said.

"Why did you ever accept me?"

"I don't know. I was very unhappy. Oh, please forgive me, George, I have been very wicked," she broke out; "I will marry you now, and papa wishes it; but, oh, I would give the world to die!"

"Rather than marry me, dear?"

"Yes," she said, sadly. "But it's too late; now, too, when I have seen your aunts, and everybody knows. Let it go on now——"

"No," he answered, gravely; "you shall be free, my child. It is no use caring for what people say in a matter of right and wrong. I have been wrong to force you as I have done. But I'm so fond of you, my dear little girl!" and the tender voice touched her a little, as it always had done.

"Oh, forgive me!" she said.

"Yes, I quite forgive you," he said, softly. She never dreamt how much he suffered. "You cannot help your feelings, my child. There, there," he said, soothingly, as he felt her tears fall upon his hand, "don't be so distressed. You are quite free; and I will go away and never worry you more. I think it will be much better for you." She began to doubt him almost, he was so calm.

"Do you love me, then, so very much?" she asked, wonderingly.

"With all my heart," he answered in a low voice.

"Yet you give me up?"

"Because I love you so much that your happiness is more to me than my own."

"Oh, how good you are, George!" she said, passionately; "I can't think how it is I don't love you, but I don't, and I believe I have no heart; I think I'm made of stone, and I don't believe we ever love the right people." The last words slipped out almost before she was aware of it, but he heard, and stood silently considering them over.

"I will not worry you any more," he said; "and when we meet again we will be friends."

"Yes," she said, eagerly. "Don't go altogether."

Then he looked round at the old familiar garden, and stared once more at the girl's troubled face.

"Good-bye," he said; "will you kiss me before I go, dear? you never did in your life." She put up her lips and kissed him, gratefully; yet in the readiness with which she complied there was a hopelessness of any stronger feeling, that saddened him more than all before. "Good-bye," he said again; "my Dorothy, my dear little girl," and he went, and left her alone under the sycamore-tree.

She stared after him, almost dazed, and listened till the last faint sound of his footsteps died away, and then she put her hands over her face, and bent it down upon the other side of the seat. She could scarcely realise that she was free, that after all she was not to marry George Blakesley, and have the door of her dream-world shut on her for ever. He would never come again, or talk to her about their future life, and where they would live, and what they would do, and she should never see the faded beard coming down the garden-path any more, and reflect that she must walk beside it through every day to come, and that she must like no other face so well as that one Tom had so often called "washed-out." It was a great relief to be free, and yet she gave a long sigh, and was a little sorry. Had he not loved her better and more than any one else had? and now she might go through the world alone, and without any one to care for her. Her encounter with Adrian Fuller that evening, too, had made her long never to see *him* again. Oh, she was so thoroughly alone in the world, and the old question came back once more, and with a bitterness she had never felt that it held previously, "What do we live *for*?"

Then suddenly she remembered her father's position, and that he had said that if she married she could take care of Sally, and now that was impossible. She started, and stood upright, considering what she should do, and how she should tell her father what had happened, and what would become of Sally. Now that she was free, all her old love for her brothers and her quaint little sister came back with a rush.

"I *will* take care of Sally, I *will!*" she cried passionately to herself.

"Dorothy!" called Mr. Woodward, out of the study window, "I want you;" and she went, half-trembling, and fearing to tell him the news.

(To be continued.)

DAVID RAISED TO THE THRONE.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM HANNA, D.D., LL.D., EDINBURGH.

IF asked to picture David at the lowest ebb of his earthly fortunes, we would take him as he stood weeping over the ruins of Ziklag, casting a bewildering look of astonishment, if not of terror, around upon his band. He had been dismissed from the Philistine army at Aphek, as one meditating treachery; and could he well acquit himself of the charge? The words of Achish, as he sent him off, laid all the blame of his dismissal on others, and indicated the absence of all suspicion of David's faithful allegiance on his own part—"I know that thou art good in my sight, as an angel of God." These words must have stirred strange feelings in a breast so open and ingenuous as was that of David. He may have wondered at it—been glad and grateful for it—that, at the very crisis of the affair, when he was shut up to the alternative of being treacherous either to Achish or to his country, such a singular mode of deliverance had been provided; but those who saw him lead his band away from Aphek, would notice no elation of spirits in him? He had lost self-respect; that foundation of conscious rectitude and purity of purpose on which, in all his dealings with Saul, he had so securely reposed, had given way. He had played the part of the hypocrite, and could not but despise himself for doing so. It would be but a dull journey the three days' travel down to Ziklag; and at its end what a fearful sight! That city of habitation, into which, after the houseless wanderings of so many years, he and his companions had gathered their wives and their children and all their goods, towards which they had already begun to feel as towards a second home, was then before them, a mass of smoking ruins, their wives and their little ones gone they knew not whither, all trace of the spoilers lost. "Then David, and they that were with him, lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep." Not slight the pressure that forced such men to weep, and that wept out of them all their strength. But there was something more to pain David than the spoiling of Ziklag—his loss of Abigail and Ahinoam. For the first and only time his band showed sudden signs of mutiny. Dark looks were thrown upon him, bitter words were uttered; they spake even of stoning him to death upon the spot. Cast out from his own country, dismissed by the Philistine, deprived of those nearest and dearest to him, of whose fate he was left uncertain, to be treated thus at last by the very men who had placed themselves voluntarily under his command, and who had hitherto exhibited such a deep and unfaltering an attachment, it made David's desolation complete and overpowering. There was open to him but one resource, and on it he threw himself—"He encouraged himself in the Lord his God."

But while turning penitently and trustingly to God, he did not fold his arms in indolent despair His band's wrath against himself he turned off by rousing them to instant action for the recovery of their own wives and families. Encouraged by the response got from God, he and his six hundred set out, and, getting on the track of the spoilers, pursued them with such exhausting speed, that two hundred of their number were knocked up and left behind. The Amalekites were overtaken, and surprised. It was a nearly wholesale slaughter, and the entire spoil that they were carrying away was recovered.

It was on his return from this successful pursuit that David heard of the bloody battle of Gilboa and its results. The death of Saul and his three eldest sons removed all legal obstacles between David and the throne to which he had been divinely designated. That throne was now his by right; it remained only that he should make it his by possession and occupancy. It had been upon certain well-defined conditions that Saul had originally been placed upon it: these conditions he had broken, and so incurred its forfeiture. Not only was this forfeiture openly proclaimed by the great prophet, but Saul himself, and ere he died all Israel, knew that his successor had already been selected by him in whose hands, according to the theocratic constitution of the new kingdom, the election lay, and had been solemnly anointed to that office. At the first institution of monarchy in Israel, not the slightest hint had been given that it was to be hereditary, that it was to descend from father to son. Saul, once dead, no son or descendant of his, by any plea that the Hebrew constitution recognised, could claim the vacant throne. It was true, that in other lands the principle was admitted and acted upon, that the eldest son should in ordinary circumstances succeed his father; and as one of the main elements in the Israelites' desire to have a king was that they might be like the nations around them, they may have been quite prepared to give effect to that principle, and, had no divine interposition taken place, might have been ready at once to recognise Saul's grandson as his successor. Such interposition, however, had taken place, and by it such predisposition on the part of the people had been over-ruled. Besides, and independently of this, Jonathan, when standing next in the natural succession, had, for himself and for his children, by solemn oath and covenant, denuded himself of all his rights, and

transferred them to David. Had matters taken the same course in Judea that they did in Egypt or Assyria at Saul's death, the son of Jonathan, Mephibosheth, should have inherited the throne. His father's voluntary renunciation barred that claim. There was no one who, on the ground either of sacred or civil right, could offer any competing claim as against that of David. Let us put ourselves, then, in his position, when the tidings of what had happened upon the bloody field of Gilboa were communicated to him, and imagine how we would have acted. The Philistines had triumphed in the north, the wreck of Saul's defeated army had fled across the Jordan; disorganised and terror-stricken, the whole land lay panting for a leader who could revive her spirit, reorganise her forces, and raise her once again to union and to strength. Even though he had had no divine right to plead, how tempting the opportunity to such a man as David, placed as he then was! Had he seized the favourable moment, had he put himself at the head of his chosen and well-tried troops, had he, without a day's delay, announced himself as Saul's successor, it had been an easy thing for him to place himself on the vacant throne. The prestige of his name would have told widely in his favour; the terror of his fierce band would have overawed opposition. He could easily have been at Mahanaim before Abner had had time to rally the routed Israelites, or to concert any plan as to the future. There might have been reluctance in some quarters to receive him at once as king, there might have been opposition in others; but the hostility that his wisdom, gentleness, and generosity failed to disarm could easily have been repressed by force; or, if the great talent and generalship of Abner had raised up in the north and east an opposition with front and head enough to meet him in open battle, who can doubt what the issue of that battle would have been? Easily, as it appears to us, by a few weeks' or few months' efforts, David might at first have made the throne his own. And he might have defended his doing so on the ground that he only used the power his position gave him to make good the ordinance of Heaven. And had the sovereignty of Israel been a thing that David ambitiously coveted, had his great aim been to get the power and use it as other tyrants did — conquering enemies, rewarding friends, extending boundaries, keeping royal state, exacting tribute, requiring homage—this would have been the part that David had acted, this the course he had pursued.

But what, instead of this, do we see? The first hours after the sad intelligence from Gilboa, instead of being given to instant action, are consecrated to grief. The hand that should have grasped the sword laid hold of the harp, and from heart and tongue and instrument there flowed that dirge which, so long as there is an ear on earth to relish rhythm, and a heart on earth to beat responsive to generous pity and true and tender love, shall survive to tell how David mourned the death of Saul and Jonathan.

But there was action too. The very first step however taken by David at this time was to inquire whether he should go up to any of the cities of Judah; and if so, to which. But what made him ever hesitate? Why feel the need of divine guidance here? One would have thought the way was very plain before him. There might be doubts and difficulties as to what he should do when once in Judah, to resolve which priest and oracle might fitly be called in, but about the propriety of his at once forsaking Ziklag, and showing himself openly among his countrymen, there surely could be little hesitation.

Two motives may have prompted David's conduct upon this occasion. The great epoch in his life he felt had come. The great change in his position and responsibilities was at hand. He was to cease to be a private citizen, to cease to live for his family alone, his friends alone. He was to live for his country, to live for it by ruling it. He could not take one step in the course that led to a position so sacred in his eyes—no, not even the first and most obvious one—without seeking and obtaining the direction of Heaven. That direction, in direct and most explicit form, it was in his power to get. The high priest, with the ephod, was by his side. Before, therefore, he took any counsel with his warriors—before perhaps he had taken any serious counsel with his own spirit—he applied to Abiathar, and asked him to inquire for him of the Lord.

Yet another motive may have been at work, one which, if we are right in attributing it to him, does him infinite honour. David knew that in the public inauguration of Saul as king of Israel there had been the conjunction, the happy blending together of the two elements—the primary designation by God, the after approval of the people. Samuel, who presided over the installation of the new monarchy, did not suffer Saul to assume the title or act in any way as king till the original nomination was ratified by the popular consent. There was no Samuel living now to whom David could go for counsel, no prophet of the Lord to present him in the Lord's name to the people as the nominee of Heaven. Was David to do this for himself? Was he to summon the tribes, and plead before them his right to the throne, grounding it upon his early anointing to that office by Samuel, which they would have to take upon his own testimony? His delicate sense of propriety forbad it. The tribes knew well enough about his choice as Saul's successor. It was for them now, and not for him, to make the first movement. He hesitated even about pre-

senting himself among them. It might look as if he were inviting them to act; or, if he went up to Judah, accompanied by a powerful band of warriors, it might look as if he meant to awe them into submission, or was even prepared to make good his claim to the throne by force of arms. This was what David would never do. He was prepared, though still with a trembling sense of his own insufficiency for executing so high a trust, at God's call to undertake the government of the country. But he was not prepared to employ coercion, to plant or support his throne by the vulgar appliance of brute force. So it might be in other lands, but he was not prepared to set up such a despotism in Israel, and to play the part of a tyrant. He would reign over a willing and united people, who spontaneously and without physical constraint accepted him as their king, or he would not reign at all.

The first question, therefore, that he put to the divine oracle was, whether he should go up to Judea at all or not. Not content with the reply that he should go, he then put the further question, 'Whither shall I go?" We are at first somewhat surprised at the particularity of the inquiry. It was not a usual thing to ask for directions so minute and specific. Generally they were the broad questions of peace or war, advance or retreat, putting the hand to, or withholding it from, such an action, that were submitted; and yet a slight reflection may satisfy us that it must have been a very difficult and delicate question to decide, supposing he was to enter Judea, toward what part of it he should in the first instance go. The course that would naturally have suggested itself, as that most likely to secure the concurrence of the great body of the Israelites, would have been a rapid march to the northern and eastern districts. On the adhesion of his own tribe, that of Judah, he could safely count. It was almost certain that if opposition arose anywhere it would be headed by Abner, the bold and able general of Saul, and be fomented by the tribe of Ephraim. A rapid march to the north, a quick passage of the river, the securing the favour of the trans-Jordanic tribes, before they had been dealt with by the friends and adherents of Ishbosheth, was the course that a wise and selfish policy would have adopted, but, though he held in his hand a title to the crown, David had no ground to think that it was the will of God that he should make good that title in such a way as this. He asked, therefore, and he got the required direction. He was told to go up to Hebron, one of the oldest cities of Palestine, the central town of his own tribe of Judah. He did so, and on arrival there, the men of Judah, of their own accord, came forward and anointed him as king.

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL.

BY THE REV. W. M. STATHAM.

"LUCK."

"WHAT'S that you say, Alfred, "Some fellows never get on because they never get a chance, and other fellows are always having jolly good luck?" So you are beginning to put down your failures, are you, to the score of chance, comforting yourself with the foolish idea that the goose that lays the golden eggs has never laid any in your particular garden; and that you have had no opportunity of making even the proverbial mistake of killing the said renowned old goose? I tell you what it is, my dear fellow, you are mightily mistaken about this same luck. If you take the trouble to study human life, you will find that God helps those that help themselves. If you go on as you are doing now, you will be a second Micawber, waiting for something to turn up. While rolling about on the meadows of life in your hours of ease and stargazing, you will be like a precious old sheep that gets on to its precious old back, and can't manage to get up again without somebody's special aid and intervention. Life is not like a game at whist, where you don't know what will turn up trumps, for duty faithfully followed always turns up a good trump, and always holds a good hand. Circumstances may indeed sometimes favour an idle loafing set of waiters on Providence; but what value are the circumstances if the *man* is not right himself? Money may only help him to a quicker ruin of his digestion and his reputation. A more prominent position may only be what Young calls "the height which is the gibbet of his name." Freedom from the claims of industry may only feed a longing which tempts into unlawful indulgences a mind which is not toned up to work. Happiness does not consist in what a man *has*, but in what he *is*. Make yourself an earnest, educated, well-trained man, and you won't sing a miserable ditty to the goddess of Fortune. You would think it lucky, perhaps, Alfred, if some distant relative left you a large fortune, or if some plenty-crowned merchant gave you his mercantile business and belongings. Not at all! There is an old philosophical distinction between cause and condition, which I would have you very carefully ponder. If you put a marble into the ground in-

stead of a melon-seed, not all the rain and dew and sunshine and good soil can ever make other than a marble of it. The *conditions* are there, but not the *cause!* And if you surround a lazy indifferent man with all the best opportunities which the golden favours of Fortune can give him, you cannot alter *him* through *them!* It is the old story of a bramble-bush from which you cannot gather grapes, and of a thistle that will not supply you with figs. If a man is not an able commander, it is of no use to give him well-trained armies to lead to battle. It certainly did not make a man a true bishop when, in the olden days, at Milan and elsewhere, some popular favourite had the mitre conveyed to him by the acclaim and shouting of a wild mob. Fitness, that is the great lesson of all life, and then, when the door of opportunity opens, you can enter her palace with a smile. Place a man in the foremost position of the forum, let the audience all turn attentive to his presence, but is he an orator? Clothe him with professional robes, and put him in the academic chair, but can he teach? Open *all* the doors of opportunity, is he fit to enter any of them, and claim his place? Luck indeed! How many have been ruined by this self-same so-called good luck! Was the German war won through good luck? or the occupancy of the woolsack? or the poet laureate's wreath? The fact is simply this, Alfred, when you see another man's success, envy sometimes says, "What a lucky fellow!" But study says there must be secrets of power, perseverance, skill, and will, that you have not noticed. Fancy Turner's supremacy in painting attributed to good luck! Look, too, at Reynolds, who stayed sometimes thirty-six hours before the canvas at a sitting! Good luck may raise a man to a false position, but it does not keep him there, or even if it does do that, it makes him ridiculous wherever he is. Yes, there is a law of compensation in the universe, and the poor soul pays heavy penalty for this same good luck. His bad grammar would not have been noticed much where he was, but now that he is knighted by what you call "a lucky fluke," his friends nearly choke over their wine when they try to hide their sense of ridiculosity. With simpler surroundings ignorance would have been hidden, but framed in gold the picture is too prominent to be passed by. Luck! Does a man ever learn navigation by luck? or a language? or self-restraint? or water colour drawing? or the way to be happy? Certainly not! Character, culture, a good conscience, and a good name—these are not the gifts of your "jolly good luck." No, and I can think of nothing more contemptible than the expression a man is "down on his luck." In nine cases out of ten, or ninety-nine out of a hundred, the real fact is that he is "down on his laziness," or "down on his ignorance," or "down on his conceit," or "down on his imprudence," or "down on his fickleness." Oh, it's all very well, you say, to declaim against luck, but there is a such a thing as luck. Even the Scriptures say, "By chance there came down a certain priest that way," and "Time and chance happeneth to all." Exactly, Alfred! But a very different meaning has the word "chance" in those passages from that which you attach to it; and, remember, my argument is not that opportunities do not vary in quantity and value, for it is evident that they do. Some persons find a hundred gates open to ten in other folks' lives. And probably these very persons would tell you that their difficulty lay in choosing amid these varieties. But of what use are a hundred gates opening to admit the racer unless he can run? or the warrior unless he can fight? or the painter unless he can paint? or the physician unless he can cure? or the leader unless he can lead?

When Peter the Great learnt ship-building, he did not believe in luck; and when Palissy found out the art of white pottery, he did not worship luck; and Paganini did not play the violin by luck! The fact is this, that young men who don't rise, might rise, only they are not ready. The young clerk can't take the foreign correspondence simply because he hasn't chosen to spend his spare time in learning French or German. Don't let him, therefore, complain of low wages, for probably he gets as much as he is worth.

If the dentist can't take out my teeth skilfully, I'm not going to say, "You, my dear sir, are a dentist, and that's enough for me." Certainly not! If I can afford it, I'll give a guinea to the man that takes the tooth out well, rather than a shilling to the man that "screws" it out. If a youth applies for any situation, and makes his appearance with a dirty collar and smelling of bad tobacco, don't let him lay the loss of the place to bad luck, but to "other than that."

There is a large class, especially at the present day, of youths who are "loungers;" and one wonders, as one looks at them, what the world wants with them at all. Who are you, my young sir? and what does the world want with you? How much would the world be poorer without you? You think many things that have good honest hard work in them are "borish." But are you not the bore? People that are giddy think that everything they look at goes round. And people that are useless enough in themselves think everything a bore, except ease and pleasure. Luck! I warn you, Alfred, to look at the results of this same belief in luck. It often means sweepstakes and gambling, and a sulky sort of belief that you are a more valuable article than you are. Look around you at the enormous waste of force in this England of ourselves; undeveloped science,

invention, skill, art, and industry, and do not let us be listening again to any more talk about chance. Mr. Ruskin tells us that "*Turner got in his earlier years half-a-crown a day and his supper, and he learned to paint upon that.*" Exactly, and I believe that there is no hope of our exorcising the contemptible spirit of envy and desire for other people's "luck" till we face fairly and candidly the fact that the first great call of God and the nation to us is that we be faithful to the powers within us, and then to await the possibilities, or chances if you like, without us. The happiest noblest lives have not been what the world calls "lucky" ones. We have to remember, after all, that to do God's will, to render faithful service in our day and generation, and, above all, to be true Christian men and women, valiant for purity, integrity, and right, to be unselfish and brave, to be thankful and contented, to be ready for the best possible here, and to be matured for the everlasting best hereafter, these constitute the aims of every worthy spirit, and are matters not of chance, but of faith, and duty, and integrity, and loyalty.

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER XXVII.

SALLY, the red-cheeked housemaid of Chiverley Rectory, had one great virtue to which possibly her healthy complexion might be attributed, she was an early riser; and on the following morning, even the summer dawn—so swiftly overtaking night—had scarce filled the sky with crimson light, when she was already to be seen on her hands and knees, busily engaged in cleaning the steps at the front door. In the course of this operation she was suddenly startled by hearing a step coming along the hall at that untimely hour, when, generally speaking, all the inmates of the house were buried in slumber. She looked up, to see Mr. Pemberton, with a face almost livid in its paleness, and with dark lines under the eyes that evidently had been sleepless all night; he had a travelling bag in his hand; and Sally rose to her feet, feeling terrified, she scarce knew why; he had always been civil and kind to her, and she had a great respect for him, and felt pained to see how dismally ill he was looking.

"I hoped to find you here, Sally," he said; "I want you to do me a service. Will you tell Mr. Wyndham from me that I have been obliged to go away very suddenly, and that I will write to him fully on the subject in a day or two? My luggage is all ready packed in my room, and I should be much obliged if you would have it sent to the station by the carrier. Good-bye, Sally, I wish you well!" and he gave her a piece of gold, which she almost dropped in her dismay.

"Dear heart, Mr. Pemberton!" she exclaimed; "surely you are not going away for good, you as has been one of the family, so to speak, for such a time; the house would seem quite strange without you."

"Yes, Sally, for good or for evil, I am going right away; no one will ever see me here any more!" and shaking her rough hand, he went past her down the steps, through the shrubbery to the gate, and then took the road that led direct to the station. It was a lovely morning, with exquisite freshness in the air, and dewdrops glittering on every blade of grass; but John Pemberton walked with his head bent, feeling unworthy so much as to raise his eyes to the pure cloudless sky, for he counted himself nothing less than a renegade from the true fealty and devotion he once had vowed in such sincerity to his crucified Lord. "I will arise and go to my Father!" he had said to himself that night, when all the piteous record of his faithlessness seemed to have been rolled out before him; but he did not feel that he could dare approach even to that most merciful God, until, by some hard service, some sharp discipline, he had proved himself now to be sincere, with a deathless truth, which no human hand could touch or mar The first step assuredly was to put away from himself for ever the sight of that face whose bewitching beauty had beguiled him to such fatal loss; and though he knew that it would be like tearing asunder his very heartstrings to leave the roof which sheltered Laura, he resolved that the morning sun should not find him still within the walls of her home. Like Lot fleeing from the city on which the vengeance of God had been denounced, John Pemberton went his way for the last time from Chiverley; but the thought that bowed his head with shame, and held back his soul when it would have risen in swift progress to God, was the bitter knowledge that he only left Laura now when she was already lost to him, that it was too late for him to make the sacrifice of her love for the dear Lord's sake; he had been put to the test, and failed, and never more perhaps would the opportunity be given him of making a worthy sacrifice to the cause of his Divine Master. Thankful he might be, and was, that the strong hand of his God had plucked him out of the snare in which his feet were



(*Drawn by* WILLIAM SMALL.)

"Mary's soft voice whispering soothing words into her ear."—*p.* 572.

set, and flung him down, wounded and bleeding, where he was free to turn once more to holiness and truth; but the power to give the first fruits of his young heart freely to his Maker was gone beyond recall, for they had all been lavished on one who was false to her God as she had been to him. And so it was that on this fair summer morning John Pemberton walked away from that fatal house, heart-stricken and ashamed, with all the beauty and glory of his life reft from him for ever by the selfish cruelty of a heartless and designing woman. Well for him that He who bade us forgive until seventy times seven is ever watching for the wandering soul's return, and, a thousandfold more merciful than man, is ready to crown his faintest aspirations with a love that cannot deceive or fail.

Sally delivered her message to Mr. Wyndham when the family were seated round the breakfast-table, which he received in blank astonishment. He was too apathetic and depressed ever to take note of what was going on in his household, and he did not in the slightest degree connect John Pemberton's unexpected flight with Laura's intended marriage. His wife, woman-like, was quicker-witted, and she said, with unusual energy, "I do hope John Pemberton has not left us altogether; we cannot afford to lose a pupil."

Bertrand, meanwhile, was looking at Lurline with no very pleasant expression of face. He had never been able to divest himself thoroughly of an uneasy suspicion that she had not dealt fairly by this young man, whom she chose to call her brother; and as he glanced from her to Mary's sweet pure face, he could not help reflecting how impossible it would have been for him ever to have had such a suspicion of her. So soon as breakfast was over he drew Lurline out into the garden alone with him.

"Tell me the truth, Lurline," he said, with much greater sternness of tone than had ever been used to her before; "can you assure me that your past conduct with John Pemberton has had no share in his sudden departure."

"Oh, you darling Bertrand!" she exclaimed, flinging herself upon his arm in the most caressing manner, and clasping both her hands round his, "can you not understand that the poor fellow loved me too tenderly, whether as a brother or not, to be able to see me with complacency wholly monopolised by you. I dare say he was afraid he would not always be as cordial to you as he would wish to be to my future husband, so he thought it best to go away for a time, till he got accustomed to the change. I think he was quite right, and I am very glad we shall have no one to disturb us."

"But would he have felt thus if you had not at some time given him hope? I must know, Laura."

"You know that I told him he should be my adopted brother, you do not call that giving him hope, I suppose? I think it is very hard, Bertrand," added Laura, with a movement of her bright eyes, as if she were winking tears off their long lashes, where, however, no moisture was to be seen; "I have told you that I never loved any one in all the world till I saw you, and I think that ought to be enough for you, it is not my fault if other people loved me more than I wished; why do you blame me for it?"

Her aggrieved tone touched Bertrand's chivalrous nature at once, and he was too completely enthralled by her to retain even the lightest suspicion against her after her denial, so in a very few minutes John Pemberton was as entirely forgotten by them both as if he had never existed, and it was not long before his name ceased to be ever heard at Chiverley Rectory. Two days after his departure there arrived a letter from him to Mr. Wyndham, enclosing a year's payment in advance of the sum for which he was received as pupil, and merely saying that circumstances had obliged him to alter his plans for the future, so he should be unable to return to the Rectory. He then thanked Mr. and Mrs. Wyndham for their kindness, and begged to be remembered to Miss Trevelyan. He was too honest to speak of Laura as a mere ordinary acquaintance, so he did not mention her at all; and as his letter was read out by Mr. Wyndham before Bertrand Lisle, she bore him no grudge for the omission. Perhaps the only person who thought of poor John Pemberton with regret, or with anything like appreciation of the misery that had fallen upon him, was Mary Trevelyan, for she remembered what Charlie Davenant had prophesied of the fatal result of his love for the Lorelei. It was becoming almost impossible for her to believe now in Laura's goodness and truth as she had done so long; the reality of her selfishness and intriguing disposition was beginning to force itself even on her pure mind as an unmistakable certainty, and one of the sharpest pangs she had to endure in the dreary days that preceded Bertrand's departure was in the growing conviction that he—to win whose happiness she would willingly have died—was about to join his fate to one who was in no sense worthy of him, and therefore but too likely to cause him disappointment and distress. Terrible days these were indeed for poor Mary; she had steeled herself to endure them without taking flight, as John Pemberton had done, lest she should betray her real feelings, but she found them very hard to bear. Laura was absolutely determined that Bertrand Lisle should not leave Chiverley till every arrangement for their speedy marriage had been made, and all day long Mary was doomed to hear discussions on this subject, and to listen to Lurline's exulting plans for spending their honeymoon in Paris, as being the place where she could have the most unceasing amusement. There was some little difficulty in fixing the time of the wedding, as Bertrand was uncertain when he could get leave, but after some correspondence with the Foreign Office he found he could be allowed two or

three weeks in September for this special purpose, provided he returned at once to his post. He determined therefore to leave Chiverley the morning after the receipt of this letter, which had settled all their plans so definitively that there was no longer any occasion for his remaining. And so it was that on just so fair a morning as that which had witnessed his arrival, Mary Trevelyan rose from her sleepless bed to the full consciousness that the visit from which she had anticipated such unutterable joy was over; that the last day was come, and that the result to her had been simply the crushing out of all hope of earthly happiness from her loyal and faithful heart.

Bertrand was to start immediately after breakfast, and, of course, Lurline was going to drive with him alone to the station. There was no question of Mary having any claim to join him now; but she felt that it was more than she could stand to take leave of him in presence of Laura and the others. As he went up-stairs, therefore, after the meal was over, to make his final arrangements before starting half an hour later, Mary suddenly came swiftly and noiselessly towards him from the other end of the passage. Putting her hand in his, she said, with her low voice tremulous in spite of her efforts, "Dear Bertrand, I shall not see you again; let me say now how unceasingly I shall pray that you may have every blessing and happiness this life can give you!" and before he could answer, before he could even speak a word, she was gone. He tried to follow her, but her light steps carried her quickly away, and she had disappeared completely before he could reach her. When he went down to the pony-carriage she was nowhere to be seen, and he drove away without looking on her face again. Little, indeed, did he dream of the strange scene in which it should be given him to see Mary Trevelyan once more.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Most of us must remember the 15th of July, 1870—that day fraught with such tremendous consequences—when over the restless waters, where many of us have passed on business or pleasure, that terrible war-cry sounded which was in truth the death-knell of such myriads of our fellow-creatures. Aliens to us in race and nationality as both the contending powers were in the Franco-Prussian struggle, yet probably there were few homes even in England where some sympathetic note of terror or grief was not struck by that ominous heading to the foreign telegrams, "*Declaration of War.*" To many an English heart it brought a dire prophecy of evil for friends and relatives in sunny France or kindly Germany; and assuredly, if it sounded the knell of unnumbered lives, far more did it ring the dirge of all the joy of life for thousands upon thousands, who have even yet to mourn the sacrifice of precious lives, the destruction of happy homes.

The news was known nearly all over the country early on that day, but Mary Trevelyan was one of the few who did not hear it till late in the afternoon. We find her again in a very different scene from that in which we left her. She is in a long lofty room, with large windows letting in the air and sunshine, and rows of little white beds down either side, each one of which is tenanted by some poor child, suffering all of them more or less in body, but patient and cheerful in the atmosphere of kindness that surrounds them. Mary Trevelyan is moving about from one to another with her noiseless step and sweet smile. She wears a simple grey dress of some soft material, whose folds make no rustling sound, with a little white muslin apron, but no cap or veil hides her smooth dark hair, folded plainly round her pretty head, for she has joined no society or religious order whatever, but has merely taken charge of the little hospital for three months, while the Lady Superintendent recruits her health at the sea-side. The period of her stay has already almost come to a close, and in another week she resigns her charge to the established authority.

Mary had offered herself for this temporary work immediately after Bertrand Lisle's departure from Chiverley, and her services had been gladly accepted, with a request that she would enter on her duties at once. She had been only too thankful to do so. She had gone through the ordeal of the few days that Bertrand had remained at the rectory after his engagement, from the delicate consideration for him, and maidenly pride as regarded herself, which prompted her to conceal from all the utter waste and ruin he had brought upon her happiness, by looking on with apparent composure at his devotion to his future wife; but when he was gone, and the necessity for this cruel self-restraint was over, the companionship of Laura, in whose sincerity it was impossible for her any longer to believe, became simply terrible to her. Every word the false-hearted Lorelei said, only served as a fatal proof to Mary how certain it was that she would never make Bertrand happy, for her whole conversation turned on the gaiety and amusements outside her home, in which she intended to spend her married life. Mary could not sympathise with such unhallowed visions, and took refuge in silence, which irritated Laura, to the discomfort of the whole household; and when the proposal came for her immediate departure, to enter on her new work, she saw readily enough that it was welcomed with satisfaction by every inmate of the rectory. Charlie Davenant had not returned, and nothing more had been heard of John Pemberton, and poor Mary, with all her quiet strength, could not help feeling dreary enough on the day when she left the house where none regretted her, and where she had endured the loss of all that made life dear to her. She went for that first night to the house where Mrs. Parry lived, and when, at the close of her long

solitary journey, she found herself in the arms of her faithful old friend, and heard her exclamations of dismay at seeing how ill and wan her dear child looked, then all poor Mary's long-continued self-control gave way, and clinging to the familiar hands that had tended her infancy, she cried aloud, in utter abandonment of grief, "Oh, nurse, my heart is breaking—my heart is breaking—how am I to bear it!" Then Mrs. Parry broke out into vehement indignation against the Wyndhams. What had they done to her darling, her sweet lamb? She knew they were a cruel heartless set! She had hated leaving her there, and she could see they had well-nigh driven the life out of her, and so on, with many strong words, till Mary wearily implored of her to stop.

"Do not blame any one, dear nurse, and do not ask me any questions; only let me rest my head on your lap a little while, as I used to do when I was a tiny child," and slipping down from the good woman's hold, as the nurse sat in her easy-chair, she laid her head on her knees, and there let herself weep silently, but unrestrainedly, till she was quite exhausted. Mrs. Parry asked no further questions, but soothed Mary with gentle caresses and tender words, till the paroxysm of grief had subsided. Then she persuaded her to go to bed, and gave her a good-night kiss, as she used to do in her childhood's days, and finally watched by her till she saw her fall into a slumber of complete exhaustion. It was Mary's last exhibition of weakness; when the next day dawned she had recovered her composure and her strength, and no word as to her own trials ever again passed her lips. Mrs. Parry continued to cherish a secret and most bitter rancour against the Wyndhams generally, which she was wont sometimes to confide to the ancient cockatoo, when the sight of Mary's sweet patient face made it impossible for her to keep silence; but the quiet dignity of her child, as she called her, effectually closed her lips in any other way.

After one day spent with her old nurse Mary had come to her post at the hospital, and she had found in her duties, fatiguing and often irksome as they were, a degree of solace and consolation which she could hardly have believed it possible anything on earth could have given her. The suffering children, whose pain she soothed, whose spirits she cheered, and whose little grateful hearts she completely won, soon learned to cling with touching tenderness to their dear Miss Mary—they had found her surname so hard to pronounce that she had willingly taught them to call her by the simpler name—and, young as she was, no mother could have entered more entirely into all the wants and troubles of these forlorn little ones, than she did before she had been many days in charge of the home some good Samaritan had provided for them. She has not had the heart yet to tell them how soon she is to leave them, and she is thinking how hard it will be to part from them as she walks down the ward, speaking a few bright words to each, till she reaches the bed of a poor little girl of four or five years old, whose broken limb she proceeds to arrange in preparation for the examination of the doctor, whose afternoon visit she is expecting. The little one is frightened at the idea of the damaged foot being touched, and tears begin to gather in the round blue eyes, which Mary notices without making any remark; but she immediately begins to tell her a charming story of the gambols of a kitten, who is the plaything of the ward, and who has been performing wonderful feats with a bandage roll, and gradually the innocent lips relax into a succession of smiles, and the two little arms are thrown round her neck, while the child exclaims, "Tottie loves Miss Mary!"

"Dear Tottie," says Mary, "I am sure I love you," and while these tender words are passing between them, the door of the ward swings on its well-oiled hinges, and the hospital doctor comes in—an elderly man, with a shrewd, kind face, and a decided and rather sharp manner, which softens to a beautiful gentleness when he addresses the suffering children. For no fee or reward does he minister to their necessities, save the answer of a good conscience, and Mary and he feel equal respect for each other, and are excellent friends. She follows him from bed to bed, giving a clear concise account of what has occurred medically in each case since his last visit, and then, note-book in hand, she takes down all his directions for the hours which must elapse till he comes again. Tottie's foot is made more comfortable than it was before, at the cost of a little temporary pain, which she bears bravely, with Mary's hand clasped tight in hers, and Mary's soft voice whispering soothing words into her ear; and when all the cases have been examined, Miss Trevelyan moves down the ward with the doctor, hearing his closing directions. He has reached the door, and shaken hands with her, when, just as he is going to descend the stairs, he looks back over his shoulder and says, "Perhaps you have not heard the great news: war is declared between France and Prussia." He nods to her, and is gone before she has time to ask a question, but she has heard and understood the full import of the one brief sentence. She turns back, and walks slowly down the ward to the other end, where a large window looks out on one of the London parks, and as she passes through the rows of white beds some strange change must have taken place in her aspect, which makes itself felt even to the uncomprehending consciousness of the children, for the little hands that are stretched out as usual to catch hold of her dress and bring her nearer to them, are drawn back instinctively, and while their eyes follow her with wondering glances, they let her go unmolested on her way. She stands before the window, and looks out on the summer sky, which is calm and bright, as if no thunder-clouds

could ever darken its serenity, and watches, without hardly being aware of it, a bird cleaving its way swiftly through the impalpable ether, as if on some hasty errand; but swifter far even than the passage of its light quivering wings, has been the flight of her own true spirit to the presence of him for whom, in her silence, she cares with an ever-loving sympathy, day by day, and hour by hour—Bertrand—her Bertrand no longer—but still the one love of her life. What will this momentous news be to him? She knows it all well, by the instinct of her true affection, as none other upon earth can know it, and her heart sinks within her with a leaden weight of terror, for she understands that the very fact of an enemy confronting France will raise up all his patriotism, stifled rather than slumbering, like a giant in his strength, and that he will fling himself into a convulsion of anxiety to share the perils of his own true country. His duties as an employé of the English Government will seem to him like the galling fetters of an iron chain, but his strong sense of honour may lead him to consider himself still bound by them if France is triumphant, and seems to have no need of aid from any save those who are outwardly, as well as in heart, her sons; but if she should prove unfortunate, if reverses should befall her, and her mighty foe should wound her to the heart, then Mary knew that it would be to Bertrand Lisle as though a blow had been struck at his mother, and that all other considerations would be flung to the winds in order that he might fly to her aid, and give her his single life at least, if he could do no more. Mary looked up to heaven, and her lips moved in an earnest prayer for his safety, the first of the unceasing supplications for his preservation which were to rise from her heart night and day through all the trying time to come. Then she thought of Lurline. The marriage would have to be postponed, that was certain, whether Bertrand joined the French army or not. He would certainly not entangle himself with such a binding tie while France was in peril; but, except the immediate anxiety for his safety, it ought to make little difference to Laura; if she loved him truly she would be ready to wait for him as long as might be necessary, and to marry him ultimately, under whatever change of external circumstances. How earnestly did Mary pray that Lurline would now give him all the heartfelt sympathy she would herself have accorded to him had she stood in the place of his future wife, letting no thought of herself or her claims upon him add a feather-weight to the anxieties which would at once oppress him. Mary knew nothing of what was going on at Chiverley; none of the Wyndhams had taken the trouble to write to her, and she had received but one letter from Bertrand. It had come only a week or two after she had left the rectory, accompanied by a business-like dispatch from his solicitor, and it was written to tell her, in the most delicate manner, that he had settled upon her a part of his income, and that the lawyer enclosed her the deeds which secured it to her. She answered it by declining gently, but most absolutely, to receive even the smallest amount of money from his hands. She returned the legal documents, and assured him that she required nothing whatever, as all her wants were supplied in the new life she had chosen for herself. It might be that her determination had offended him, but, anyhow, he had never written to her again, and she knew nothing whatever of his movements. Many sad and anxious thoughts disturbed poor Mary's faithful heart as she stood there looking out on the tranquil sunshine; but suddenly an idea passed into her mind which woke a light of fervent joyfulness in her dark eyes. Remembering how women were allowed to go out from England to help the victims of the Crimean War, it occurred to her that some similar organisation might be employed in aid of the wounded in France. "If so I shall go," she said to herself; "I shall go to help Bertrand's countrymen—perhaps—perhaps himself!"

(To be continued.)

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. SECOND SERIES. NO. 1. BIRTH OF A PRINCE.

Chapters to be read—Matt. i.; Luke i., ii. (parts of).

INTRODUCTION. All persons fond of birthdays—children especially; marks an event in our lives; shows we are older, and ought to find us wiser and better. In this lesson will speak of a birthday—whose? Promised so long before: first to Adam and Eve (Gen. iii. 17), then to Abraham (Gen. xxii. 18), afterwards more definitely by Isaiah (Is. ix. 6), even the place of his birth mentioned (Micah v. 2); now time for his birth at last come. What is to be born as? Prince, as foretold by Isaiah. Saviour, friend of all. King universal. Surely will be great preparations for such a wonderful event. We shall see.

I. THE ANNUNCIATION TO THE VIRGIN. (Read Luke i. 26—38.) Who was the last prophet? nearly 400 years since Malachi prophesied. God's voice been silent. Now at last silence broken. Angel or messenger descends. What was his name? To whom did he go first? Where was Zacharias at the time, and what was Gabriel's message to him? (Luke i. 17.) Now again sent not to announce the forerunner, but the Prince Himself. Picture the

scene: the Virgin in her little room behind the carpenter's shop at Nazareth; the appearance of the angel, his salutation, highly favoured, *i.e.*, graciously accepted; his wonderful message, even the name of the Son given, and His title, office, and kingdom. No wonder she asked, "How shall this be?" Is reminded how that all is possible with God. What does she answer? (ver. 38). Notice the following points in her character for imitation. She was (1) *Humble.* Not flattered by the angel's dignified salutation, but rather troubled by it. They that humble themselves will be exalted. (2) *Believing.* She asked for information, without doubting the truth of what she was told. At once accepted the statement as true, because coming from God. Let her be an example to girls especially. Lowly in her own eyes, like St. Peter's model woman (1 Pet. iii. 4), believing without questioning, because believed in God. Was thus honoured by becoming mother of Jesus.

II. Annunciation to Joseph. (Read Matt. i. 18—25.) How was he told of the wonderful event? Remind how often God used dreams to announce coming events, such as Joseph's and the butler's dreams, Nebuchadnezzar's, and many others. By whose power was Christ conceived? Having no earthly father, was indeed the Son of God—so a divine name given to Him, meaning "God with us"—just as a human name, Jesus or Saviour, announced to His earthly mother. What did Joseph do after this message? What did this show? Wonderful faith seen in ready obedience. What a happy home that cottage at Nazareth must have been. What a pious, simple, believing carpenter, and humble, believing wife! A home which the Lord hath blessed!

III. The Birth. (Read Luke ii. 1—7.) What had the prophet Micah foretold as to the place of Christ's birth? But where did Joseph and Mary live? How, then, was the prophecy to come true? What proclamation was there? Who was Cæsar Augustus? So, because Roman emperor wished to take a census, Mary and Joseph must go—where? Why to Bethlehem? Let the children notice the mean circumstances of Chist's birth: no pomp, or display; no courtiers in waiting, as when a prince is born; no friends to congratulate; no beautiful clothes ready; no nurse; but the manger for a cradle, the cattle around, the stable for a lodging. What does all this show? (1) *Poverty is no disgrace.* Jesus was born as a poor child, though Lord of all. Our true worth is not the amount of money, but of goodness that we possess. (2) *The lowliness of Christ.* He wanted to come as a man; to go through all the stages of man; might have come in any way—as God in majesty on Mount Sinai, as an angel in human form to Abraham, Elijah, and many others. Chose rather to begin life just as we do—with pain and suffering and hunger and want. This His own deliberate choice (Phil. ii. 6) and shows His wonderful condescension. (3) *The sympathy of Jesus.* Children sometimes fancy that they cannot understand; that grown-up people forget their feelings as children, &c. Christ was a child—a perfect child—man and yet God. He cannot forget; can therefore feel for all, sympathise with all, and help all children.

IV. Practical Lessons. (1). *Contentment.* All sometimes disposed to complain of lot in life. So poor, friendless, uncared for. Who could appear more so than Christ at His birth. Therefore bear patiently. (2) *Thanksgiving.* Who was this babe? Therefore is my Saviour. God with me. What must I do to Him? Love and adore the Father who sent and the Son who came to save the world.

Questions to be answered.

1. Name any prophecies of Christ's birth.
2. Describe the visit of the angel to Mary.
3. What was her character?
4. What two names were given to Christ, and what do they mean?
5. What lessons do we learn from Christ's birth as regards Him?
6. Name two practical duties for ourselves.

"OUT ON THE HILLS, AWAY."

"COME out and see what Tom has brought you, Mabel; 'tis something you'll like very much, I am sure!" And, helping his sister to rise from her seat—for Mabel, poor child, had been lame all her life—Frederick led her to the hall-door, where the gamekeeper's son stood, holding in his hand a basket, the lid of which moved up and down mysteriously.

"What have you got? Is it alive, Tom?"

"Yes, Miss Mabel; I caught this little leveret out on the moor, and I said to father, 'What a good pet it would make for Miss Mabel, because she's not able to run herself.'" And Tom opened the basket as he spoke.

"Oh, thank you! I like it so very much! Dear, soft little creature!'" exclaimed Mabel, lifting the leveret tenderly, and gently stroking its long ears, while she returned to her couch.

No need to seek amusements any more for the lame child, for the new pet was an endless source of pleasure, as it lay in her arms, or frisked round the room playing all kinds of funny pranks. She fed it with her own hands; and Frederick supplied a wonderful variety of delicacies from the garden.

Tiny—for so Mabel had named the little hare—as he grew older displayed a good deal of sagacity and affection for his young mistress. He seemed perfectly to understand that she was not able to run after him like the other children, and his plays with her were always of a quiet nature.

When the weather permitted, Mabel spent a good deal of time in the garden, where, seated in a sheltered position, she watched the gambols of her favourite with almost as much delight as if she could join in the races and scampering.

Yes, Tom had judged rightly in his choice of a pet for the lame girl.

Frederick, who was a great carpenter, surprised his sister on her birthday with a pretty little wooden house, which he secretly placed in a corner of the garden, for Tiny's comfort, where he could sleep or find rest and shelter at any time; and Mabel was very particular to have a nice soft bed of hay always spread there fresh and clean. Under these circumstances one might suppose that Tiny had everything hare could wish, surrounded by luxuries, and loved and petted by his young mistress, but

> "Nature works in every breast
> With force not easily represt,"

and the narrow confines of a garden, pleasant as it was, did not satisfy Tiny's roving propensities. Why should he not see a little more of the world, like the rest of his race—now, too, when he was old and strong enough to exercise his own will, and follow his inclinations?

One day, while these longings were strong within him, he perceived the back door of the garden open, a thing which had never happened, in his memory, before. No one was near, for he had wandered a long way from Mabel's seat. He could hear her gentle voice calling, "Tiny! Tiny! where are you?" but knew full well she was not able to follow. The opportunity was too tempting to be neglected; affection and habit did, indeed, make him hesitate a moment whether to obey the call and return, or not; but one look at the green field outside decided the matter, and quickly passing the threshold, he set off full speed across the smooth sward—on, over hill and dale, until he reached his native heath once more.

Meantime Mabel, surprised that the hare did not run as usual to attend her summons, continued to call, until the name of "Tiny" resounded from every corner of the garden.

At length her mother came out, attracted by the unusual cries, and found the poor little girl lying on the grassplot, exhausted by the efforts she had made to leave her seat, and crying as if her heart would break. Raising her tenderly, the mother anxiously inquired what was the matter.

"Mamma, mamma!" she sobbed, "he is gone! my Tiny is gone! If he were in the garden he would surely come, for he knows my voice so well."

"Sarah must have left the back door open when she carried in the vegetables."

"Oh, mamma! why did he leave me? I am afraid he could not have loved me, although I did all I was able to make him happy." And here a fresh burst of tears gushed from her eyes at the idea of Tiny's ingratitude. All efforts at consolation were useless until the violence of Mabel's grief had exhausted itself, and even then, though apparently calmer, she felt Tiny's loss more and more each day. No one but a child deprived of the usual sources of amusement and companionship can imagine how the heart clings to a pet animal. Mabel pined for her hare; all its pleasant frolics and affectionate ways came continually before her, as she sat in the now solitary garden, or lay on her couch, alone, hour after hour, while Frederick was at school, and her mother necessarily occupied with household matters.

Months passed on, and the little girl, whose life was always, more or less, one of pain and weariness, was now entirely confined to bed by an unusual accession of illness. Everything that care and affection could suggest was done to alleviate her sufferings; while for weeks she lay hovering between life and death. However, notwithstanding her weakness and delicacy, God was pleased to spare Mabel's life through this dangerous illness; and though her strength was long in returning, yet before the fine autumn weather had quite departed she was able again to sit under her favourite apple-tree in the garden, and be wheeled occasionally in a small Bath-chair through the fields and lanes.

One day, about this time, Frederick was given an unexpected half-holiday, and running home in high spirits, found his sister on her couch near the window, looking pale and languid.

"Mab," he exclaimed, bursting gaily into the room, "call Sarah to get you ready quickly; I came home on purpose to take you for a long drive in the little chair. We will go far away to the moor which you used to like so much long ago."

"Oh Fred, how nice!" she answered, her pale cheek flushing with pleasure. "I shall be ready very soon, and we will gather lovely flowers on the heath.

The day was bright and breezy. Wild bees hummed, and butterflies hovered over the latest-blowing branches of heather, harebell, and stately foxglove, which here and there adorned the narrow path through the wide moor. Every now and then they stopped for Frederick to gather the flowers eagerly pointed to by those thin white fingers, and soon Mabel had her lap full of the choicest, and was enjoying her expedition thoroughly.

"Fred," at length she said, "I think I hear voices. What could bring people to this wild place?"

"I hear them too, Mab; and now I can see men and dogs at a distance. It must be a coursing match.

Tom told me there was to be a great one some day soon. We shall come in for the sport."

"But I don't like to see dogs hunt and kill poor little hares. It makes me think of Tiny. I do hope they will not find him!"

"Not much fear, Mab; there are plenty of hares in the world besides Tiny. Here come the greyhounds in full chase." And Frederick ascended a hillock the better to see, but Mabel hid her face in her hands.

"Fred, tell me when it is over," she said.

"How the hare does turn and double! Still the dogs are gaining on it. Now—now it is caught and killed! and here they all come in this direction!"

"I am so sorry the little hare did not get off, Fred!"

"They have found another already, Mab, and quite close to us, too! Such a splendid course! with a fresh pair of greyhounds; do look!"

Mabel raised her head, as the the poor hunted animal, having exhausted every device of turning and winding, took a direct course across the moor, straining every muscle, and gasping painfully for breath, while the dogs bounded on, gaining rapidly at each stride. A few moments more would have ended this contest of speed, when the tired hare, seeing the Bath-chair exactly in the path, made a spring, and took refuge in Mabel's lap. It was the work of a few seconds to cover up the panting creature with wild flowers, and gather up her dress so as to form a complete screen. The dogs, not seeing their prey any longer before them, were at fault—for greyhounds hunt by sight, not scent—and wandered up and down in a restless, puzzled manner. Just then some of the gentlemen belonging to the coursing party approached.

"What shall we do, Mab?" asked her brother; "for they will surely ask if we have seen the hare."

"We must only tell the truth, Fred; but I won't give it up to be hunted again."

She had scarcely ceased speaking when they were saluted by several of the neighbouring gentlemen, who expressed pleasure at seeing Mabel out again after her long illness.

"And so you have come to see the sport?" said one. "Now, perhaps you could tell us something of the hare; for it disappeared just here, as suddenly as if the ground had opened and swallowed it up."

"Look at the poor little thing," replied Mabel, as she removed some of the wild flowers; "it came to me for protection, and I think it must be my own pet Tiny."

"Like enough," muttered Tom, who was standing behind holding the greyhounds, "the very same leveret, grown big; for wouldn't it be afraid to go to Miss Mabel if it didn't know her?"

The whole party looked with surprise and interest at the little animal curled up so snugly and confidingly in Mabel's lap, and congratulated her on the recovery of her favourite. Indeed, a happier little girl could not be, as she was drawn home by her brother through the flowery fields—brighter to her now, in the grey of evening, than when the morning sun shone so brightly and the gay butterflies sported and the bees hummed.

"Do you know, Fred," she said, "that all this reminds me of the story of the sheep that wandered off—

"'Away on the mountains wild and bare,
Away from the tender Shepherd's care

—just as we do from God. It did not love Him well enough to stay in the fold, but He loved it all the time, and went to seek it 'out on the hills,' where it would have perished had He not saved and brought it back; and then there was such joy!"

"But, Mab, you did not go out to look for your pet."

"No, for I couldn't know where it had strayed to. The Good Shepherd can always see His sheep—that is the difference; but I loved Tiny all the while he was away; and now I feel such joy at having found him!"

By this time the hare had ceased panting, and in a few days regained its usual health and sprightliness. The house in the garden was once more inhabited; and though Tiny frisked about the walks and grass-plots, he never again attempted an escape to his native hills and moors. S. T. A. R.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

224. What present was given to Gehazi by Naaman the Syrian?

225. Why did St. Paul boast so much of the liberality of the Church in Achaia?

226. Where is it stated that adders are poisonous? Quote passage.

227. By what means did Rahab aid the escape of the spies sent to Jericho?

228. Which of the Apostles were present at our Lord's transfiguration?

229. What two kings disguised themselves before entering into the battle, and were both slain by archers?

230. Quote a passage in which St. Paul tells us how to know his Epistles.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 544.

210. The Sidonians (1 Kings v. 6).

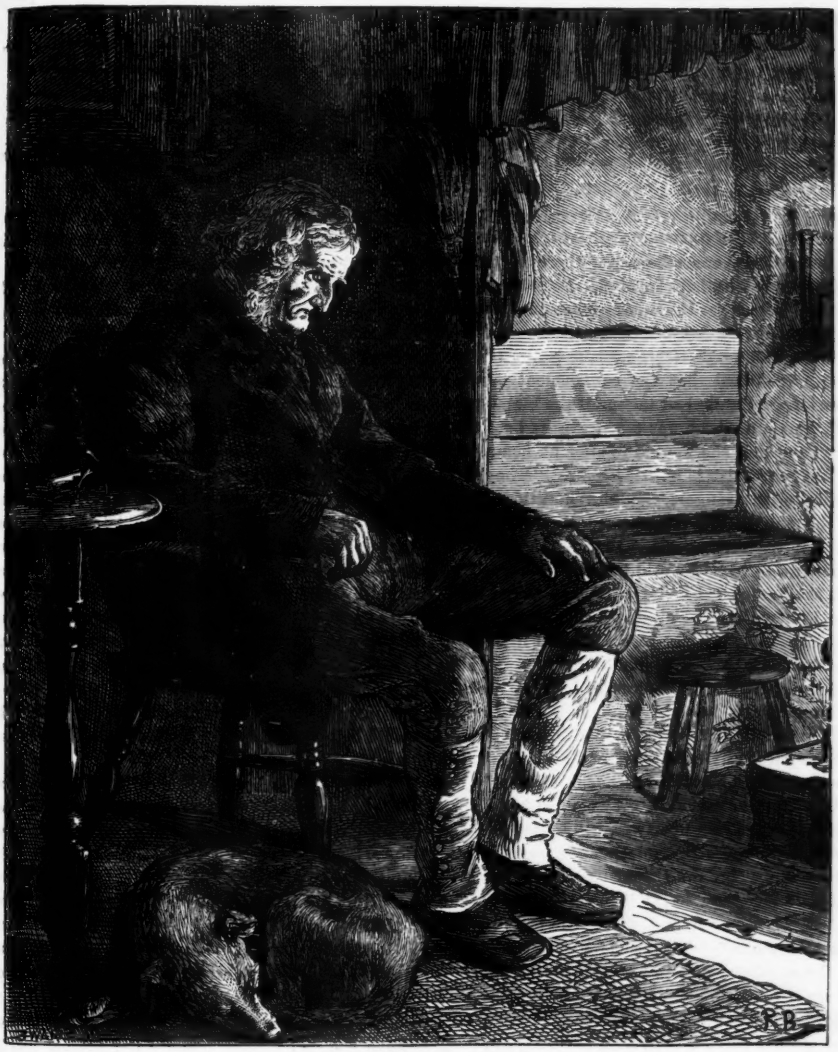
211. "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer so opened He not His mouth, &c." (Acts viii. 32, 33).

212. 2 Kings iii. 15—19.

213. "Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry" (1 Kings iv. 20).

214. The wearing *long robes* (Luke xx. 46).

215. Seven years (1 Kings vi. 38).



(*Drawn by* ROBERT BARNES.)

FOURSCORE AND FIVE.

FOURSCORE and five! and in my chair I sit;
The dying embers flicker and grow red;
And busy shadows in the firelight flit,
Shades of the happy years long past and dead.

I see *her* face, who 'neath the daisies sleeps,
Bride of my youth, loved wife of fifty years;
A recent grief oft o'er its loved ones weeps;
But I! ah, no! mine lies too deep for tears.

The smoke curls upward, and again there throng
About me faces soft, and young, and fair:
Kate with her merry burst of mirth and song,
And blue-eyed Nellie with her golden hair.

My boy, my cherished first-born, who hath lain
Forty long years beneath the Atlantic wave,
From those red ashes smiles at me again,
Speaks to his father's heart from out his grave.

Fourscore and five! The scene is closing fast;
Lonely I muse, for time hath o'er me flown,
Plucked the green branches, o'er the old tree passed,
And left the withered trunk to die alone.

A. H. BALDWIN.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXVII.—DOROTHY ANSWERS HER OWN QUESTION.

"HOW generous he was; there never was any one half so kind," Dorothy said to herself, as she went to her own room at last.

She was thinking of George Blakesley. He had told Mr. Woodward that the engagement between them was over; but he had taken all the blame upon himself, saying that he was too grave and staid for Dorothy, and that she wanted to stay at home with her brothers and sisters a little longer. "They were not going to be strangers, though," he said, and he hoped he should still be allowed to come to the house.

"Poor little girl!" he said tenderly to himself, as he left the house; "I believe she has lost her heart to that Fuller, though I always thought that he was after the Beauty. I wish she would put a little more earnestness into her life, and think of something beyond the garden and her story and poetry books."

"How generous he is!" thought Dorothy again. And she sat down by the window, and looked vacantly out at the garden and the trees, and all she loved so well, and soon might have to leave. Presently she looked up at the clear hard grey sky, with the stars shining brightly down upon her. "I used to think they were little holes in the sky once, and the light of heaven shone through them. I should like to go to heaven," she thought; "it must be so beautful there. I might just as well die. I'm sure I am of no use to any one." Then suddenly, almost with a start, the question came to her lips—"But should I get there if I did die?" and it was a long time before she answered it, with sad bitter tears chasing each other down her cheeks. "Why, I never did anything good in my whole life, never! What right have I to heaven? I am very selfish, I have always lived to please myself, and thought of myself, and had dreams and hopes all for myself. Oh, what shall I do!" She went away from the window, and sat down beside the bed on which Sally was sleeping. She thought of all George Blakesley had said by the fire-light on the evening he had first told her he loved her; how some great man, she did not remember his name, had said that we should regard the world as a workshop, in which we should make something good and beautiful; and the longing she had felt at the time, and forgotten ever since, came back. He had said, too, that work was the noblest of all occupations, and that there was always plenty to do to make life better for others; and that if we did not make some one the happier or the better for our being in the world, we were only so much human lumber, taking up light and life and room to no purpose whatever. "I can't think what he ever loved me for," she thought; "he must have seen how selfish I was. I would give the world to be better, and to make something beautiful!" and then suddenly she heard Sally breathing, and remembered her father's wish that she should take care of her. "And I will," she said, firmly, to herself; "I will learn to work and to take care of her and of others too, and in trying to make their lives better I shall make my own so too. Oh, how wicked I have been!" and she burst into tears again, and, almost without knowing it, sank on her knees, and prayed that God would help her, and make her hands and heart strong to work.

"I believe that is the secret of it all—I have not thought enough of God. George said half the teaching of Christ was summed up in working and in helping others." Suddenly it flashed upon her, "Perhaps this is what we live *for*—to make other lives beautiful, till in their reflected light our own become beautiful also. I believe I have found out the secret at last," she thought. It seemed to Dolly as if new feelings came to her in that long hour she sat alone and made these resolutions for a new life, and she looked back almost wonderingly at the past days, in which she had fretted because her mother had not loved her very much. "I never gave her any reason," she thought; and then a longing came to go to her before she went to sleep that night.

She knew that her father was still in his study, and her mother alone in her room, so she slipped softly along the short corridor, and listened for a moment at the door. There was a faint sound, as of some one sobbing.

"Mamma!" she said, opening the door gently.

"What is the matter?" Mrs. Woodward asked, surprised.

Her children had never been very demonstrative towards her, and she never dreamt of Dorothy's errand.

"Mamma! dear mamma! what is the matter?" and with all the pent-up longing for love which still was in the girl's heart, and the aching feeling of all the past still strong upon her, and all the disappointment it held, she went forward and flung herself down by her mother's side. "Oh, dear mamma, tell me what it is!"

"We are ruined, Dorothy, quite ruined! Your father has lost all the money, and will be in the bankruptcy court soon, and we shall have to go away from here. He has lost my money, and all——"

"But don't grieve so, dearest mother," she said, kissing her as in all her life she had never kissed her before. "We are all with you, and we will work."

"Oh, what can you do, dear?" asked Mrs. Woodward, touched by the tenderness of the daughter whom she had always neglected for her prettier sister.

"I can work, and I will. I'll teach, or beg, or go to service, if you like. Mr. Blakesley says I write a nice hand; perhaps I can do something with that."

"But you are going to be married, you forget that," she said, sorrowfully, for she was beginning already to lean upon this girl who had only just resolved to bear the burden of other sorrows besides her own.

"No, mamma, I am going to stay with you, and take care of you and Sally and papa."

Dorothy was right—she was no longer a child, but a woman. Then her mother turned to her, and caressed and thanked her for her kindness, and told her she had always neglected her for Netta, who had been quite angry when she found that ruin stared her parents in the face.

"But it will not hurt her," said Dorothy. "She is going to make a grand marriage, and going to India."

"Yes; but she is so ashamed that Sir George should know we are poor, and that she cannot have her friends here any longer, or have a grand wedding."

"But Netta has money of her own."

"Only the interest of a thousand pounds, and she has to buy her trousseau. You had better go now, dear, and I am so grateful for your kindness," and she put her arms round her daughter's neck, and kissed her. Then Dorothy went back to her own room, and sat down, and though she cried again that night, they were not such bitter tears as before; and she woke in the morning with the keen sense of having found something new and strange — the answer to her own long-weariful question, "What do we live for?"

CHAPTER XXVIII.—DOROTHY AND NETTA.

"NETTA," asked Dorothy, as she helped the Beauty to look over her garments, a few days later, "are you happy?"

"Yes," she answered, shortly.

"Do you love Sir George?"

"Oh, I don't know, I suppose so; don't talk nonsense, Dorothy!" she answered; "I'm going to marry him, and that's enough."

"Should you have had him if he had been poor?"

"No, certainly not," and the tears came into the Beauty's blue eyes, though she tried to hide them from her sister. "But I can't bear poverty, and I am not fit for it—it would kill me."

"Netta, I want to tell you something. It was not my fault, but once I overheard you talking to Mr. Fuller, and he called you 'darling.' Did you love him?"

"What right have you to ask?" Netta was trembling and pale, not angry, as Dorothy had expected.

"Because I think I should like you better if you really did care for him," she answered in a low voice.

"Then, I did—I do still, though I hate myself for it. I began to flirt with him, to tease you, Dorothy, and then I fell in love with him. I never meant to marry him, unless he got rich, and I soon saw he never would. He would have dreamt of his love for me for ever, but he would never have found strength to work for me. I hate your dreamers," she flashed out, "who pass their time dreaming dreams they have not strength to realise, and who blend all their lives into their foolish musings until all realities that are not hard, and do not touch their sense of pain, become a part of them."

"Yet you loved him, Netta?"

"Yes, I did. I took him from you, I know that, but it is a good thing. He would only have made you a dreamer like himself, until you woke to hard realities. I did love him, Dorothy, but I always despised him a little too. I always shall. And I could not face poverty. I am very selfish, I know that, yet my selfishness did you good. He was very certain that you were in love with him, too, Dorothy, quite sure of it, and he has the worst kind of vanity, which prides itself on not being corrected.

"Oh, Netta, how can you speak so of a man you say you love?"

"I don't know. Perhaps I don't love him; not so much as I do myself, that is certain, for I could not give up luxury for any man living. I can't think how you can be content to stay at home and face poverty—it is such a terrible thing!" Then suddenly she got up. "You forgive me, don't you, Dorothy, and, see here, I will give you this ring."

It made Dorothy think of the bracelet she gave her nearly three years ago.

"No," she said, and refused to take it, but Netta made her, and afterwards Dorothy always wore it in remembrance of the day on which Netta had asked her forgiveness.

"Mr. Blakesley," said Dorothy, when, a week later, he paid them an awkward visit—he had so wanted to see her again—"I want you to help me in something." She felt so shy and hesitating in telling him what she had to say.

"Yes, what is it?"

"I want—I want to know, do you think I could earn money in any way? I want to work."

He gave her no approbation, which she had half expected he would—expressed no surprise, only answered, in his usual quiet manner, "Yes, of course you can work, if you wish to do so."

"But do you think I can earn any money?" she asked; "and what can I do?"

"Why are you in such a hurry for money?

"Because we are poor."

"I see. Yes, you could work; you know French, and you play pretty well, or you would make a good reader or amanuensis."

"And how should I set about this?"

"You might advertise, for one thing. I'll ask all the people I know, too, if they know of anything."

That was all he said. He seemed no longer to take any vivid interest in her. She was a little piqued and angry, but still she did not falter, she had made a step in the right direction, and she meant to persevere.

"Mr. Blakesley," she said one day, "I wish I could get out of the way of dreaming so much."

"Dreams are good in a way," he answered; "we may grope on in a dream, seeking for an idea that is worth realising, and finding it at last."

"But perhaps we have not strength to realise it.

"Then the fault is ours," he answered.

A fortnight later and Netta was married, and sailed for India almost immediately afterwards.

"Dorothy," the Beauty said, "I shall never see Adrian again. If you ever marry him—and you may, for I think, unfortunately, he liked you, and you will never care for George Blakesley—tell him some day that, heartless as he thought me, he spoilt my life. If he had loved me better than his ease, he might have made me a different woman."

"What a terrible thing it is!" thought Dorothy. "I see now that, by not trying to do some good in the world, we are not merely passive, but are letting wrong grow up under our feet;" then she caught sight of her face in the glass, and thought how it had aged lately, and she felt that her heart had aged much more.

(To be continued.)

MAN'S WAY NOT IN HIMSELF.—I.

BY THE REV. JAMES SPENCE, D.D., AUTHOR OF "HOURS WITH DANIEL," ETC.

"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself."—JER. x. 23.

THESE words may be understood in either of two ways, both of which are true and important. They may refer to man's providential path in life, the ordering of which is in the hands of God, who alone knows what is best for us; or they may refer to man's moral and spiritual path through the world, the keeping of which was lost by our first father Adam, and the direction or safety of which is not now in the hands of man. The design and idea of the prophet seem specially perhaps to refer to the former of these truths. He acknowledges the supreme controlling power of Divine Providence in the affairs of men, and particularly with regard to its bearing on the military march of the Babylonian monarch. Nebuchadnezzar was at that time contemplating an expedition, to chastise the Egyptians for venturing to approach his dominions with hostile intentions. Such was his purpose; but the design that Jehovah meant him to accomplish was the punishment of the Jews for departing from His service and worship. Accordingly, in the context, the Jews are called upon to prepare for their migration as captives to Babylon, with the announcement that Nebuchadnezzar did not come of himself against them, but by direction of the providence of God.

Sacred history affords many illustrations of this view of the truth, that man's way is not in himself. The way of Abram was not in himself when summoned to leave the country of his nativity and kindred; he went out, not knowing whither he went, that he might be the father and founder of a wonderful people, and that in his seed all the nations of the earth might be blessed. The way of Moses was not in himself, when taken from the ark of bulrushes; he was reared by Pharaoh's daughter, amidst all the luxury and learning of the Egyptian court, that he might be fitted to be the leader and lawgiver of God's chosen nation. The way of David was not in himself when feeding his father's flocks on the plains of Bethlehem; he was being trained to be raised to the throne, and to become the sweet singer of Israel. The way of Saul of Tarsus was not in himself, as he sat at the feet of Gamaliel, and was receiving all the culture of a well-born Jew, and the education that became a free Roman citizen, to fit him for his future career as the apostle of Christ to the Gentiles.

On the other hand, the words of the prophet may refer to the fact, that man has wandered

from God, and cannot of himself now either find or walk in the way that rightfully should be occupied by his true nature. Thus, the Jews had departed from God, and had unmistakably shown that their true way was not in themselves. It really matters very little as to which of these views of this text of Scripture we take, for the one fact in relation to man is based on the other. His way, providentially, is not in himself, mainly, if not exclusively, because his way spiritually and morally is not in himself. He cannot direct his own steps or guide his own course, because he has thrown himself out of harmony with God, and severed the tie which bound him to perfection and safety as an obedient and dutiful child of the Infinite Father.

I. This language may be viewed as an acknowledgment on the part of man—"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself."

1. It is manifestly implied that man has a way,—that there is a way belonging to his manhood, a way at once peculiar to it and worthy of it, a way in which he should walk before God, and in relation to Him. No one doubts this. Every creature which God has made has a way. To what department soever of the animal creation any creature belongs, there is a way or manner of existence in accordance with its nature, a way for which it was formed and fitted, and in which alone it can reach the highest good and the full enjoyment of its being. There is no exception to this amidst the multitudinous forms of life with which the Almighty Creator has filled the universe. In the fishes that move in the water, in the fowls that wing their flight in the airy empyrean, in the cattle that browse in the meadows, in the wild beasts that roam the forests and jungles in search of prey, you find in each species a way consistent with its nature, a way more or less clearly defined, in which the creatures reach the design of their being, and the true enjoyment of their existence. The way of the leviathan that plays in the deep is not identical with the way of the horse, that "paweth in the valley and rejoiceth in his strength;" nor is the way of the eagle, that "makes her nest on high," and "dwelleth upon the crag of the rock," to be confounded with the way of the ostrich, "which leaveth her eggs in the earth and warmeth them in the dust;" nor is the way of the butterfly, that has sprung from the worm, the same as the way of the bee, which gathers honey from the opening flower. Nor, surely, is the way of man to be confounded with the way of any mere animal, however marked may be the attributes of its sagacity or instinct.

No; man has a way which belongs to himself, and characteristic of his true manhood, a way peculiar to his nature, just as the ways of the lower creatures are peculiar to them. But how different and how superior his must be! According to the nobleness of his origin, capability, nature, and destiny, will be the distinction and peculiarity of his way. Remember his origin, and in the fact that he was created in the image of God, a living, rational, responsible being, you may see that which will indicate the nobleness of his way. Remember his capability, with a mind that can soar through the universe in quest of wisdom, and a heart that may throb with the pulsations of a Divine affection, and a conscience that may echo the voice of God in his soul, a finite being fitted to hold converse with the Infinite, and you may judge somewhat as to the elevation of his way. Remember his position, as lord of the lower creation, with dominion over the creatures, with power to replenish and subdue the earth, and you see that which points out the majesty of his way. Remember his prospects, with a destiny before him for weal or for woe, which time does not measure and which death cannot close; and you will be convinced that the way of his manhood cannot be exclusively or chiefly amid the secular, sordid, or social interests of this changing state.

2. With such relationships, capabilities, and prospects, then, the way of man must be an elevated and noble way. It will be the way of a godly allegiance in the uprise of his spirit, the homage of his mind, the love of his heart, and the obedience of his life, to God his Creator and Father. What other way can be worthy of manhood, but that in which the centre of its attraction, the source of its power, and the object of its devotion and hope, are found in the living God? "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord." And with such grasp of thought and force of affection in his being, should not his way be the way of reason and spirituality, giving to his rational and moral nature its rightful supremacy? If he were made to be ruled by impulse or instinct, then sensuous delights and carnal gratifications might be the chief good of his life, but with an intellect that is as the candle of the Lord, and a heart that may heave with the life of Divine love, and a conscience that may rule him as with the voice of God, and a will that may bend the very elements to do his bidding, surely man's way must be spiritual, if it is to be natural, amidst the realities of the invisible and under the shadow of the Almighty. And should it not be the way of royalty, of a manly dominion, the path of a king, not of a slave, a way in which he shall show that he is the vicegerent of God and the intelligent priest of the great temple of Nature?—a way never to be confounded with unreason, mere animal instinct, or brute disposition or force. Surely, in him the rational shall not succumb to the sensual, nor the spiritual to the carnal, nor the attribute of dominion to the bonds of corruption and sin. And with such a destiny before him, born to live for

ever, must not his way be the way of wise forethought, making the present a preparation for immortal honour, a becoming portico to a temple that shall be luminous with Divine glory and vocal with Divine praise for ever and ever? With such a prospect, surely the way of man will not be the way of reckless and improvident thoughtlessness; there will be no forgetfulness of the future in the passing interests of the present, no denial of the powers of the world to come in absorption by the concerns of this world.

Such *should* be the way of manhood—the way of godliness, spirituality, royalty, and holy anticipation; the way of a king, I repeat, not of a slave, the only way worthy of his position and powers and prospects. And when he came forth from his Creator's hands at first, this way was in him.

3. But now the way of man is not in himself. Here is the proof of his degeneracy, and moral degradation, the evidence of his fall. There was a period in human history when man's way was in himself, but it was very brief. Though made at first upright, he has "sought out many inventions," and now his way is no longer in himself.

Other creatures around him have their way in themselves. Instinct or impulse directs them unwillingly, so that following their nature is really the mode and law of their existence. This is manifestly the case, to whatever department of the mere animal creation we look. The bee that flies from flower to flower in the garden, or amidst the blooming and fragrant heather on the mountain side, and returns to its hive laden with honey, to build its cell, according to true mathematical principles, has its way in itself. The lark, which, in the dewy morning, soars aloft from its nest in the grass to greet the rising sun with its grateful song, has its way in itself. The cattle that feed by the water-courses, and the lambs that play in the green fields, and the coneys that dwell among the rocks, and the beasts of prey that roam the desert, have all their way in themselves, in which their instinct and nature guide them safely, happily, and surely. But alas! it is not so with man, the loftiest and most important creature of God on the earth. His way is not now in himself, so that, in this sense, he may be said to be the lowest.

Further, you see that these lower creatures, when left most to themselves, will most surely go in their own proper way. The birds that sing among the branches and make the groves vocal with their melody, do not find their true way when placed in the cage, that they may fill the parlour or the drawing-room with their pleasant song. The lion, that finds his real life in the forest or the wilderness, living on his prey and roaming at large as the king of savage beasts, has not his true way when caught by the snare of man and made in fierce restraint to pace an iron cage in the menagerie or zoological gardens for our instruction or amusement. No creature on earth can fairly or happily live out of its own allotted course. All have their way in themselves, and most impressively show that way when they are free and left most fully to themselves.

But it is very different with man; for when he is left most fully to himself, he is most likely to go farthest astray. His way is not in himself; and the history of the world proclaims that man, when left to himself, becomes most unmanly, and the human being becomes most inhuman. Professing himself to be wise, he becomes a fool, and shows that the worship and service of the creature are more attractive to him and mightier over him than the worship of the Creator.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. SECOND SERIES. No. 2. VISITORS.

Chapters to be read—Luke ii. Matt. ii. (parts of).

INTRODUCTION. Remind how friends always like to be told of any happy event,—like to come and see a new-born babe. But had this poor mother many friends? Few would trouble much about the birth of a child to a poor woman in a village. Still, some there were to take an interest: who were they? Yes, the angels knew of the birth; knew who He was, and why He was coming into the world; they proclaim the news—to whom? We shall see.

I. THE SHEPHERDS OF BETHLEHEM. (Read Luke ii. 8—20) (*a*) *The place.* Ask whose city this was said to be. Remind of Jesse, David's father, living there; of David minding *his* flocks in perhaps the same fields; killing the lion and the bear; watching the stars by night, and composing a Psalm on the subject; the heavens telling God's glory and the meanness of man; made lower than the angels, and then crowned with glory. Compare Psalm viii. 3—5, with Heb. ii. 9, to show how the prophecy was fulfilled by Christ. In these fields are shepherds. What are they doing? Wild animals still about by night (see John x. 12). What do they see? what can it be? The moon? it is stronger than that. Picture them gazing with wonder and awe at the light getting clearer and brighter each moment. Now a

bright form emerges, it is coming towards them; it is beginning to speak. Picture them holding their breath for fear; keeping close together; straining their ears to listen. What does he say? Fear not; good news to you and all—a Saviour, the Lord. A sign that it is not all fancy—a babe in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. Then the whole air seems full of angels; a whole chorus of sweet soft voices in the midnight air. They can catch the very words; what are they? Glory on high, peace on earth. What do they propose to do at once? Of course, they must go and worship this Saviour. They set off, too excited to trouble about the sheep. They find it all true. They quickly go about, telling every one the good news, just as it was told them, and do not forget to "praise God, from whom all blessings flow."

PRACTICAL LESSONS. (1) *God comes to His people*, as Christ to the world, as the angel to the shepherds while doing their duty, so to all. Christ comes before we can come to Him. He first loves us; is held out to us; preached to us. Do we then come to Him, believe in Him, accept Him as our Saviour, worship Him? If not, perhaps He will leave off coming and calling to us. (2) *We must make Him known*, as the angel to the shepherds, they to those near them, so must we. All cannot preach, but all can do something. Begin with those nearest, teach little brothers and sisters, then may be permitted to teach others. What an honour to make Christ known! —work of angels.

II. THE WISE MEN. (Read Matt. ii. 1—12.) Ask the name of the chief city, not far from Bethlehem. Who held his court there? One day there arrives a party of strange travellers. Who are they? How far have they come? Point out Persia. How would they be known as strangers? Picture the cavalcade—camels, servants, &c., large train of attendants on these Persian princes. What question do they at once ask? perhaps through an interpreter, like Joseph (Gen. xlii. 23). How strange it must seem that no one can tell them! They ask the king for information; he must know where the infant prince is. What made them come at all? Were studying stars, and saw a new meteor. Had read of a star to be seen in Judah; so determined to follow it; have done so, and are brought to Jerusalem. What does Herod do? Explain that the Scribes being employed to write copies of the Scriptures would naturally be familiar with its contents; so they answer at once. What does Herod tell the Magi to do? But does he really intend to worship Him? See what jealousy leads men to—trickery, falsehood, malice, and design of murder. Now follow the Magi, after leaving Herod. As soon as they start, what do they look for? Is the star there? How they must rejoice! Now they come to Bethlehem. Where are the Child and His mother? No longer in the stable—the census over—most of the people have returned, and the inn is no longer crowded. They enter, these rich princes; and see! they kneel in holy reverence before the little babe! What do they see in Him? —a King? Yes, and more; they recognise the Son of God. Now they offer their presents; what are they?—gold, as to a king; frankincense, as to a prophet and priest; while the myrrh may typify His future sufferings, and embalmment as a man in the grave. Remind of the prophecy, that kings should fall down before Christ and bring Him presents (Psalm lxxii. 10, 11).

PRACTICAL LESSONS. The wise men showed (1) *Earnestness.* Undaunted by prospect of long journey, set out to seek Christ. He is near us. Do we seek Him with equal zeal in prayer, His holy word, &c.? (2) *Faith in the guiding star.* They believed it would bring them right, so they acted on their belief till it brought them to their journey's end. So does God guide and direct all who trust in Him. We are guided day by day by His counsel, His Spirit, &c. and shall be even to death (Psalm xlviii. 14). (3) *Devotion.* They gave Christ worship, recognising in Him the Son of God. We worship often with our lips; do we give Him heart-worship? *i.e.*, love Him above all; seek His smile of approval before any one else? (4) *Self-sacrifice.* They spared not their best, but poured it at His feet. What do we give Him in return for all His gifts to us? We have time, money, influence. Do we give Him these, or spend them only on ourselves? If copy the wise men, shall, like them, find Christ precious, and go on our way rejoicing.

Questions to be answered.

1. State all you know about Bethlehem.
2. In what Psalm is Christ's birth referred to? Give the passage.
3. What lessons may we learn from the shepherds?
4. How were the wise men received at Jerusalem?
5. What did their gifts represent?
6. What practical lessons may we learn from them?

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER XXIX.

LAURA WYNDHAM'S first proceeding after the departure of Bertrand Lisle from Chiverley had been to compel her father to agree to a plan she had formed, of spending the interval before her marriage in London. Chiverley had become more hateful to her than ever now that she no longer had even the society of John Pemberton to enliven her, and she declared it was quite impossible that she could procure even the scanty *trousseau* which was all they could afford in any shops less fashionable than those of the West-end of London. There was but one way by which Mr. Wyndham could gratify Laura in her wish without incurring an expense greater than he could bear, and that was, by making an exchange of duty with some London clergyman for the time he wished to be absent from his own parish; he was much too inert to undertake the arrangement himself however, and it was Lurline who put advertisements in the papers, and managed the correspondence which ensued. It was not very difficult to find an incumbent glad to escape from the dust and heat of London for the months of July and August, and one such was induced to enter into arrangements with the Wyndhams, which resulted in their having been established in his house in town two or three weeks before the declaration of war had broken over France like a thunder-clap, which reverberated, with its ominous peal, through every country in Europe.

To Laura Wyndham the news was a matter of the most perfect indifference. Although she had caught Bertrand's fancy sufficiently to make him wish to marry her, she had never in the slightest degree won his confidence, and she knew nothing of his deep hidden love for the native land of his fathers; nor was it possible for her selfish worldly nature to comprehend the generous enthusiasm which could sacrifice personal interests to any cause whatever. She went on, therefore, making arrangements for her wedding, which she was resolved should take place in London, and at a time when every one was looking forward with dismay and dread to the wide-spread suffering which was certain to result from the war, the chief subject of the Lorelei's thoughts was the expected arrival of a set of jewels which Bertrand had promised to send her as his present before their marriage.

About ten days after war had been declared, however, she received a letter from Bertrand which threw her into a violent state of indignation and disquiet: he wrote evidently under the influence of great excitement, assuming that she would at once understand how for him, by birth a Frenchman, the fate of his native country in this tremendous war must needs supersede every other consideration, and absorb his whole soul with feverish anxiety till the probable results of the struggle were known. Bertrand seemed to have been so accustomed to Mary's ready sympathy all his life long, that it had never occurred to him to doubt that Lurline would feel for and with him in his present emergency, as entirely as would have been the case with his early friend, and he went on to pour out to her all the conflicting feelings that had plunged him in the most painful perplexity: the longing to fly at once to fight for France against her foes; the unwillingness to seem to act in the smallest degree unfairly by the country of his adoption; the check put upon his strong impulse to give up all at once for the defence of his native land, by the certainty that as his single arm could avail France but little, he should, by doing so, for a mere sentiment wreck his whole career, lose for ever the position to which he had only attained by years of steady progress, and reduce himself to a state of comparative poverty; all these contending feelings warred in his mind, he said, night and day, depriving him completely of calmness and rest; but the question would soon be decided: if France were victorious, and surely her arms could not fail, it would probably be absolute madness to ruin his prospects for life in order to offer her that which she neither needed nor desired—but if she were unfortunate—ah, then!—(he did not finish his sentence, he seemed certain that Lurline would understand him). He ended by saying that his darling Lorelei would, he was assured, feel with him that in any case their wedding must be postponed for a time; it would make no difference to their mutual love; his heart should be with her wherever he was; and he trusted it might be but a little time before he could come to claim her.

Laura Wyndham read this letter to the end, then flung it to the ground and stamped upon it in a fit of ungovernable passion. One of her best natural qualities was an even temper, which was not easily ruffled, but the contents of this most unwelcome epistle were too much even for her equanimity; her own self interest was her first and last thought always, and it was clear that her plan of becoming the wife of Bertrand Lisle, which she had brought to a triumphant success by so much wily astuteness, was not only thrown back to an indefinite period, but absolutely endangered altogether. It was not love for Bertrand himself, as we know, which made



(*Drawn by* WILLIAM SMALL.)

"Twisting a long spray of ivy among her bright curls."—p. 587.

her wish to marry him, but only for the sake of his position, his large income, and the gay world to which he would introduce her; and she knew that if he once joined the French army, all this, which she alone desired, would be put out of her reach for ever; he must, of course, instantly quit the office he held under the English Government, with its generous emoluments and many advantages; and as she had taken care to inform herself as to his means, she knew very well that if he did so he would be reduced to the mere pittance he derived from his mother, and she as his wife to an even more impoverished condition than that under which she had so long suffered at Chiverley. The bare idea of such a disappointment just when she had attained the summit of her hopes was not to be endured for a moment, and she paced up and down the room in angry agitation, while she thought out the best mode of holding him back from the fatal act of resigning his post; not the faintest response did her cold heart give to all the feelings for which Bertrand claimed her sympathy—patriotism and self-devotion were incomprehensible names to her, into the meaning of which she could not enter, and she simply scorned him for what she held to be the miserable folly of thus ruining his own career.

Finally, a letter was sent off, which contained a wild passionate appeal to him for her sake not to leave his home of safety and peace to enter on so dangerous a campaign. She told him it would kill her if she were to know him to be in all the perils of war—that he had won her love, and therefore she had a claim on his life, and that if he did not wish her to die of terror and distress he must give up all idea of volunteering for the defence of France; then she added that the very idea of such a calamity had given her so great a shock that her nerves were completely shaken, and that she should have neither rest nor peace now so long as he was out of her sight, and therefore she was driven to beg that he would shorten the interval which was to have elapsed before their marriage, and come at once to take her back with him as his wife to his Italian home, where they might dwell safely together while this terrible war raged at a distance, unseen and unheard by them in their happiness. The Lorelei had a triumphant smile on her lips when she closed her letter, for she had never yet failed to master Bertrand's truer nature, and she believed that she would do so now, but she had somewhat overreached herself, for although the letter was calculated to convince Bertrand more than ever of the truth of her love for him, yet her entire want of sympathy with his most sacred feelings could not fail to jar on him, and, unconscious as he was of the deceit and cunning which had dictated it, he could only gain from it an impression of her shallowness and weakness, while in spite of all her efforts her selfishness pierced through every line of it.

It was a stifling afternoon in August, a few days after one of the worst defeats of the French army, when a cab drove up to the door of the house inhabited by the Wyndhams, and a gentleman alighted from it, and, going up the steps, rang the bell for admittance. It was not Bertrand, however, but a man in every way unlike him. He seemed about forty years of age, with a somewhat portly figure, and attired with the most scrupulous correctness. He had strongly-marked hard features, a sallow complexion, and small keen black eyes; his hair also, was black and very smooth, and his face close shaven. He had a look of great decision and self-possession, and his manner, when he spoke to the servant who opened the door, was full of quiet authority. Was Miss Wyndham at home? he inquired. The maid thought he said Mrs. Wyndham, and answered that she was lying down, but Miss Wyndham was in the drawing-room. It was Miss Wyndham he wished to see, he answered, and straightway walked into the house. Being asked his name, he replied, "Mr. Brant."

CHAPTER XXX.

Mr. Brant is an individual of whose previous career it is necessary that we should give some account, in order that his share in the events yet to be recorded in this history may be better understood. The son of an English father and an Italian mother, he possessed some of the characteristics of both nations. He had the courage, coolness, and self-possession of an Englishman, with all that disregard of truth and reckless unscrupulousness which often are to be found among the inhabitants of the soft and sunny south. At the present moment Mr. Brant was established as one of the prince merchants of the town where Bertrand Lisle held his diplomatic post, and he had in that part of the world the reputation of enormous wealth; certainly his mode of living supported such a view: he inhabited there a vast mansion that was almost a palace, enriched with marble and gilding externally, and with the most costly fittings of velvet and silk and splendid furniture within its walls; carriages, horses, servants, everything that money could procure, was there in rich profusion; and, when Mr. Brant's wife was alive, no lady went to Court with such magnificent diamonds, or gave such grand entertainments at her own house. She had been an Italian lady, whom he had married when very young, and her manners and character had not been altogether satisfactory to the more fastidious portion of the society with whom precisely Mr. Brant was anxious to stand well. He made up his mind that his second wife should be an Englishwoman, and although it was not more than a year since Mrs. Brant's death, he was, just at this time, exceedingly anxious to replace her. There were uncomfortable rumours as to Mr. Brant's financial position: he was

known to be always engaged in gigantic speculations, and some of these had certainly proved failures of late, so that it had even been said he must be on the verge of ruin; but he himself carried matters with a high hand, and declared his successes so far exceeded his losses that they were a matter of perfect indifference to him. Nevertheless, persons watched him and his house very narrowly, with a view to discover how his affairs really stood, as the reputation of his colossal fortune had gained him unlimited credit, and if it should ever happen that Richard Brant became really bankrupt it would involve the ruin of thousands. It was, therefore, for many reasons, a matter of the deepest importance to him that the public mind should be reassured on the subject of his solvency, and he could not better do so, as he imagined, than by keeping open house, and launching out into a still more profuse style of expenditure; but he was childless, and the immense business transactions in which he was always engaged rendered it impossible for him to enter so much into society as would be necessary for the attainment of his object. It was necessary, therefore, that he should have a wife to represent him at the *fêtes* he intended to give, and at the houses of others, and it was mainly with the view of finding a suitable lady for this position that he was making the journey to England, though he had not the least idea that he was taking quite the most favourable step for the accomplishment of his purpose when he agreed to perform a commission for Bertrand Lisle in London.

It was, however, in the performance of his promise to him whom he had known as the English *chargé d'affaires*, that he now found his way to the house of the Wyndhams. Sally, who had accompanied them to London, and whose rustic manners did not quite meet the requirements of civilised life, went on before him to the drawing-room door, which she opened, and then, standing back, she made him a sign to go in, and closed it upon him when he had obeyed her, without having dreamt of announcing him. In consequence of this proceeding Mr. Brant stood for two or three minutes within the room, before the only person who occupied it was aware of his presence. He was by no means sorry to have an opportunity of contemplating at his leisure the most beautiful vision he had ever beheld.

Lurline, with all her shining hair floating loose on her shoulders, was standing before a little toilet mirror, which was placed on the table in front of her, and she was engaged in trying on, one after another, various wreaths of artificial flowers, which she intended should form part of her *trousseau*. At the moment when Brant entered the room she was twisting a long spray of ivy among her bright curls, with crystals gleaming on its leaves in guise of dewdrops. It suited well with her fantastic beauty—the dark glossy leaves enhancing the effect of her dazzling fairness and brilliant eyes. She was in a most graceful attitude, with her white hands raised above her head, holding the green glittering wreath, and her bewitching face lit up with smiles at the sight of her own successful loveliness, while the position showed her lithe slender figure to the best advantage. She wore a charming summer dress of light muslin, set off with ribbons and white lace, and all around her were scattered gay-coloured silks and other materials, from which she had apparently been making a selection. Richard Brant had a keen eye for beauty in any shape, and he took in at a glance the peculiar charms of Laura's appearance in all its effective brilliancy. "What a sensation she would have made in our *salons* if Lisle had brought her out to us!" he said to himself; "but there is an end to any chance of that of course." Probably he made some movement which attracted Lurline's attention, for suddenly she turned round and brought the light of her flashing eyes full on his face. She started when she saw a stranger, and stood for a moment looking at him, still with her hands upraised, and the long locks of her burnished hair straying over them in picturesque confusion. He came forward instantly, and, with perfect ease of manner, apologised for what seemed to be an intrusion, as the servant had left him to introduce himself, which he did by giving her his name.

"But I have my credentials here, Miss Wyndham," he continued, taking out a letter and a small parcel from the breast of his coat; "Mr. Lisle charged me to deliver these to you, and to give you all such further explanations of his present position as you may wish to have."

"Is he not coming? is he not here?" she exclaimed, with breathless impatience.

"No, indeed; I fear he is in a much less safe and satisfactory place."

"You do not mean that he has gone to this odious war, after all?" she exclaimed.

"I grieve to have to tell it you, Miss Wyndham, but it is only too true," said Brant, gently, expecting to see her overcome with distress; instead of that a scarlet flush of indignation flamed into Lurline's delicate cheek, and she stamped her dainty little foot on the ground as she said, with unmistakable irritation, "What utter folly! what moonstruck madness! he ought to be put in a lunatic asylum! it is too bad. I declare I won't read his silly letter, full of sentimental rubbish about France, no doubt!" and she flung it out of her hand on to the table with a scornful gesture. Lurline never gave herself the trouble to conceal her sentiments where no end was to be gained by doing so, and it was evident to Mr. Brant, who knew the world well, that she was speaking with entire frankness now.

"It does indeed seem madness to leave so fair a bride for any cause whatever," he said, aloud; "Mr. Lisle shows more self-denying patriotism than I could have done in his place."

XUM

"Patriotism! bah! what does patriotism mean? it is a mere name; and he never considers me, who was to have been married to him next week, and off to gay Italy; and now I suppose it will never be. It is odious conduct, and I feel inclined to hate him for it. Of course he has resigned his post?"

"Naturally; it was not in his power to retain it under the circumstances. That was done a fortnight since, and he started for the seat of war even before his successor was appointed, for which he will undoubtedly be censured; he can never take office under the English Government again."

"No, I should think not; it is the most irretrievable senselessness I ever heard of. I suppose he has not left himself a loophole of escape?" and she took up the letter and tore it open. It was long, and she sat down to read it, making a sign to Mr. Brant to take a seat also. Poor Bertrand had written a noble, manly, touching letter, which must have melted any heart less cased in selfishness than Laura Wyndham's. He told her all that he had felt as day by day brought in the news of the terrible reverses of the French army, and how, dearly as he loved her, he felt that he must not sacrifice, even to her, his duty and his honour. He was a Frenchman, and he could not remain at a luxurious post in the service of another country while France was bleeding at the heart, and requiring the help of every arm to which she had a right. He must go, and his Lurline need not doubt what it cost him to postpone his marriage, and how it wrung his heart to give both her and himself the pain of even a temporary separation; but in presence of such gigantic disasters and miseries as those which had fallen upon his native land, it would indeed be cowardly and selfish to give any weight to private sorrows, and after all he trusted their happiness was only delayed a little time. It was said on all sides that the war could not last long, and unless he lost his life he would return to claim his darling Lorelei the very first moment it was possible to do so. It was true he should no longer be able to offer her the position she would have graced by her beauty, but they would have a pittance which would enable them to live, though in a very humble manner, and love such as theirs could brave poverty and privation. Perhaps they might live at Chiverley with her father; anyhow, if he survived the war he should very speedily come to claim the promise she had made to him in happier days.

Lurline's lip curled scornfully as she flung down the letter, and she turned to Mr. Brant, detecting at once that he was watching her with undisguised admiration.

"Mr. Bertrand Lisle makes a little too sure of his prize," she said; "he asks me to marry him when he can offer me a suitable position and a prospect of a happy life, and then when he has impoverished himself and ruined all his prospects, he coolly tells me that if he comes alive out of the butchery into which he has plunged for no reason whatever, he shall come and claim my promise to marry him, and thereby enter on an existence of pauperism and degradation; he will find himself mistaken."

"He has indeed made a great mistake," said Mr. Brant, softly. Although I have only the honour of so short an acquaintance with you, I can see that you are one fitted to shine in society, and to be at once its ornament and its delight; our brilliant city would have been the very place for you; life is indeed made joyous there."

"Yes, I know; and, oh, how I longed to go! it is enough to drive one wild to be disappointed at the last! You live there always, do you not?"

"Yes, it is my home, and I think I may say, without vanity, that I possess one of the finest of the old palaces as my abode, fitted up of course in modern style."

"It must be charming," said Lurline; "those grand old Italian houses seem made for *fêtes* and receptions."

"Yes, mine is especially adapted for them, as it has splendid gardens attached to it. We gave many successful entertainments there when my late wife was alive, but since I have had no lady to act as mistress of the revels, I have been unable to do so." He looked at Lurline as he spoke, and met the full gaze of her keen bright eyes. He put up his hand to conceal a smile, and in order to change the conversation, he said, "All this time you have not looked at your jewels, Miss Wyndham."

"Jewels! has Bertrand sent them? I am glad of that, anyhow!" and snatching up the parcel, which she had forgotten, she opened it hastily, and found a case containing a set of very fine emeralds and pearls. "Oh, these are pretty!" she exclaimed; "I remember Bertrand always said that emeralds would suit my complexion."

"Diamonds would suit you better," said Mr. Brant; "these are poor stones," he added, contemptuously.

"I will do myself the honour of waiting upon you very shortly," he said, rising; "and I will not intrude upon you longer at present."

"Tell me, is it possible to communicate with Mr. Lisle?" she asked.

"I can hardly tell," he answered; "it will at least be very difficult; but I could try to get a letter conveyed to him if it is a matter of importance."

"I do not know that it is," said Lurline; "for I shall act quite independently of him now, whether he hears from me or not; but I should like just to write and tell him that I have done with him for ever. I will never be a poor man's wife."

"It would indeed be a thousand pities if you were," said Mr. Brant. "I will let you know when I see you again if a letter can be sent."

And so they parted.

(*To be continued.*)

"ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."

BY THOMAS ARCHER.

GIVING THE FEEBLE STRENGTH.—I.

I HAVE had occasion lately to take you with me to some of the "worst parts of London." The phrase has become so common, that there is some difficulty in deciding what it means; and we are obliged to come to the conclusion, that in every quarter of this great metropolis, large and lofty buildings, splendid mansions, gorgeous shops, and even stately palaces, are but symbols of the partial and imperfect development of true national greatness, and can scarcely be regarded as complete evidences of genuine civilisation, if by that word we are to mean more than was expressed by it in heathen times, and amidst pagan people. Perhaps there is no more terrible reflection, amidst all the pomp and magnificence, the vast commercial enterprise and constantly accumulating wealth of this mighty city, than that here we may also find the extremes of want and misery, of vice and poverty, of ignorance and suffering. Side by side with all that makes material greatness—riches, learning, luxury, extravagance—are examples of the deepest necessity and degradation. "The rich and the poor" do indeed "meet together" in a very sad sense. It would be well if the former would complete the text for themselves, and take its meaning deep into their hearts.

There is reason for devout thankfulness, however, that here and there amidst the abodes of rich and poor alike, some building with special characteristics may be seen; that not only the church but the charity which represents practical religion does make vigorous protest against the merely selfish heaping up of riches without regard to the cry of the poor. There are few neighbourhoods in which a Refuge for the homeless, a soup-kitchen, a ragged-school, a "servants' home," an orphanage, a hospital, or some asylum for the sick and suffering, does not relieve that sense of neglect and indifference which is the first painful impression of the thoughtful visitor to those "worst quarters," which yet lie close behind the grand thoroughfares and splendid edifices that distinguish aristocratic and commercial London.

I have said enough for the present about those poverty-haunted districts of Shoreditch, Spitalfields, and Bethnal Green, to warrant me in taking you through them without further comment than suffices to call your attention to the poorly-paid industries, the want and suffering, and the too frequent neglect of the means of health and cleanliness which unhappily distinguish them and the surrounding neighbourhoods lying eastward. The weaver's colony can now scarcely be said to survive the changes wrought by the removal of an entire industry from Spitalfields to provincial manufactories, and the vast importations of foreign silks, and yet there is in this part of London a great population of workers at callings which are scarcely better paid than silk weaving had come to be previous to its comparative disappearance.

Marvellous changes have been effected in the way of buildings and improvements during the last thirty years, but much of the poverty and sickness that belonged to these neighbourhoods remain. The looms may be silent in the upper workshops with their wide leaden casements, but the labour by which the people live seldom brings higher wages than suffice for mere subsistence. The great building in which treasures of art and science are collected is suggestive of some kind of recognition of the need of the inhabitants for rational recreation and instruction, and what is perhaps more to the purpose, it is also a recognition of their desire for both; but it cannot be denied that the recognition has come late, and has not been completely accompanied by those provisions for personal comfort, health, and decency, which a stringent application of existing laws might long ago have ensured in neighbourhoods that for years were suffered to remain centres of pestilence.

The greatest change ever effected in this quarter of London was that which followed the formation of Victoria Park. That magnificent area, with its lakes and islands, its glorious flower-beds and plantations, its cricket-ground and great expanse of open field, made Bethnal Green famous. There had always been a fine stretch of open country beyond what was known as "the Green," on which the building of the Musuem now stands. A roadway between banks and hedges skirted wide fields, led to the open space where a queer old mansion could be seen amidst a few tall trees, while beyond this again, across the canal bridge, were certain country hostelries, one of them with what was in that day a famous "tea-garden;" and, further on, a few farms and some large old-fashioned private residences stood amidst meadows, gardens, and cattle pastures, on either side of the winding road leading away to the Hackney Marshes and the low-lying fields beyond the old village of Homerton. It was on a large portion of this rural area that Victoria Park was founded. Tavern and farmhouse disappeared; the canal bridge was made ornamental; and just beyond the queer old mansion

that stood by the roadway, the great stone and iron gates of "the people's pleasure-ground" were erected.

Now, the mansion, to which I have already twice referred, was in fact one of the few romantic buildings of the district, for it was what remained of the house of the persecuting Bishop Bonner, and the four most prominent of the tall trees—those having an oblong or pit excavation of the soil at the foot of each—were traditionally the landmarks of the martyrdom of four sisters who were there burnt at the stake, and buried in graves indicated by the hollows in the ground, which popular superstition had declared could never be filled up.

That they have been filled up long ago, and that on the site of the ancient house itself another great building has been erected, you may see to-day as we stand at the end of the long road leading to the entrance of "the people's park."

The abode of cruelty and bigotry has been replaced by one of the most truly representative of all our benevolent institutions. The graves of the martyred sisters might well take a new meaning, if the spot could now be discovered in the broad and beautifully planted garden, where feeble men and women sun themselves into returning life and strength in the gentle summer air blowing straight across from the broad woods of Epping and Hainault miles away.

The people's playground is fitly consummated by the people's hospital. That the City of London Hospital for Diseases of the Chest, Victoria Park, might well be called "the people's," is shown, not because it is supported by state aid or by charitable endowment, on the contrary, it depends entirely on those voluntary contributions and subscriptions which have hitherto enabled it successfully to carry on a noble work, but yet have only just sufficed to supply its needs, "from hand to mouth." Yet it is essentially devoted to patients who belong to the working population. Like the park itself it attracts crowds of visitors, not only from the City, from Bethnal Green, Mile End, Poplar, Islington, Camden Town, and other parts of London, but even from distant places whence excursionists come to see and to enjoy it. This hospital receives patients from every part of London, and even from distant country places. There were seven inmates from York last year, as well as some from Somerset, Hereford, Derby, Lincolnshire, Lancashire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Huntingdon, Northampton, Wiltshire, and other counties; so that in fact the districts of Bethnal Green, Spitalfields, and Shoreditch, represented only a very small proportion of the 781 in-patients and the 13,937 out-patients, who were admitted to medical treatment during the twelve months. More than this, however, amongst the contributions which are made for the support of this hospital, there must be reckoned those collected by working men of the district in their clubs and associations, in token of the appreciation of benefits bestowed by such an institution to failing men and women, wives and shopmates and relatives, who being threatened or actually stricken down with one of those diseases which sap the life and leave the body prostrate, require prompt skill and medical aid, even if they are not in absolute need of nourishing food and alleviating rest.

Standing here, in front of this broad noble building, with its many windows, its picturesque front of red brick and white stone, its central tower, its sheltered garden-walks, and pleasant lawn, we may well feel glad to hear that the work done within its wards is known and recognised. What a work it is can only be estimated by those who remember how fell is the disease from which so many of the patients suffer, and how great a thing it has been, even where cures could not be effected, usefully to prolong the lives of hundreds of those who must have died but for timely aid. Nay, even at the least, the alleviation of suffering to those on whom death had already laid his hand has been no small thing; and when we know that of 240,000 out-patients who have received advice and medicines, and 10,400 in-patients whose cases have warranted their admission to the wards, a large number of actual cures have been effected since the establishment of this hospital, we are entitled to regard the institution as one of the most useful that we have ever visited together. Let us enter, not by the handsome broad portico in the centre of the building, but at the out-patients' door, in order that we may see the two waiting-rooms, where men and women bring their letters of admission, or attend to see one of the three consulting physicians. Of these three gentlemen the senior is Dr. Peacock, of whom it may be said that he is the organiser of the hospital, the efficiency of which is mainly due to his direction. This is no small praise, I am aware, but there are so many evidences of the thorough unity and completeness in all the details of management that, considering how great a variety of cases are included under "diseases of the chest," from the slow insidious but fatal ravages of consumption to the sudden pang and deadly spasm of heart disease, and the various affections of throat and lungs, it may easily be seen how much depends upon the adoption of a system initiated by long study and experience. The perfect arrangements which distinguish this hospital are doubtless rendered easier by ample space and admirable appliances. Plenty of room and plenty of air (air however which has been warmed to one even temperature before it enters the wards and corridors where the patients eat and drink, sleep and walk) are the first characteristics of the place, while a certain chaste simplicity of ornament, and yet an avoidance of mere utilitarian bareness, is to be observed in all

that portion of the structure where decoration may naturally be expected.

The Board-room, the secretary's room, and the various apartments devoted to the resident officers on the ground-floor, are plain enough, however, though they are of good size and proportions, the only really ornamental article of furniture in the Board-room being a handsome semi-grand piano, the gift of one of the committee, and a real boon to such of the patients as can come to practise choral singing, as well as to those who can listen delightedly to the amateur concerts that are periodically performed, either in the hospital itself or in one of the wards. For they have cheerful entertainments in this resort of the feeble, where, to tell the truth, food is often the best physic to cure, and sympathy and encouragement the most potent remedies to alleviate.

As to the actual physic—the employment of medicines—it is only in some of the large endowed hospitals that we can see such a dispensary as this large light room, with its surrounding rows of bottles and drawers, its two open windows, one communicating with the men's and the other with the women's waiting room, its slabs, and scales and measures, on a central counter, where 380 prescriptions will have to be made up to-day before the alert and intelligent gentleman and his assistants who have the control of this department, will be able to replace the current stock out of the medical stores.

These small cisterns, each with its tap, occupying so prominent a place on the counter, represent the staple medicine of the establishment, pure cod-liver oil, of which 1,200 gallons are used every year, and they are constantly replenished from three large cylinders, or vats, containing 800 gallons, which occupy a room of their own adjoining the dispensary and the compounding room, the latter being the place where drugs are prepared, and the great art of pill-making is practised on a remarkable scale. *(To be concluded.)*

FLOSSY'S LITTLE SHOE.

"MAMMA, I have just got the sixpence papa promised me for weeding a bed in the garden, and I am trying to find out how to spend it best. I wish I knew some one who wants it very much!"

"I don't think, my dear, you will have far to seek; there are a great many poor people in the village."

"Oh yes! but you or others help most of them. I would like to do good with my money to some poor little child."

"Well, Zoe, if you ask God to guide you, I am sure He will show you the right person."

"Yes, if I had more; but could I ask Him how to spend only sixpence?"

"Certainly; there is nothing too small to bring to God. A sparrow cannot fall to the ground unknown to Him; He clothes the lilies of the field; and how much more will He attend to anything concerning His own people, however trifling it may appear to us!"

Next day Zoe was asked by her mother to take little Florence out for a walk, as nurse was busy. This was an unexpected pleasure, for Zoe made a great pet of her youngest sister, and was proud of being trusted to take charge of the little one all by herself. They amused themselves for some time in the fields, making cowslip balls, and blowing off the downy dandelion-seed to find out what o'clock it was, or playing "cocks" with tough black heads of the rib-wort plantain; then, when tired of these sports, they crossed a stile and came out on the road near a group of small cottages. Just at this place, Florence began to lag a little behind her sister.

"What is the matter, Flossy? Come on!"

"Feet won't walk any more, Zoe."

"Why, are you tired?"

"Yes, hard road hurts Flossy's feet."

"Shall I carry you for a while?"

"Oh yes, yes!" And Zoe took her little sister in her arms for some distance along the hard dusty road; then, setting her down on the soft grass at the edge of the path, she said, "Run on now, Flossy, your little feet won't be hurt here, and we'll soon get into the fields again." But when Florence attempted to walk, it was found that one of her shoes was gone. The child looked up in her sister's face, and laughed merrily.

"Zoe must carry Flossy all the way home," she said, triumphantly.

"But I can't, dear, for my arms ache already; you are grown such a great big girl now, sister is not strong enough."

"Flossy can't walk with one shoe."

"Well, we must go back and look for the other; I dare say no one has passed this way since, and we'll be sure to find it." And lifting up the little one again, she retraced her steps, but the missing shoe was nowhere to be seen. Zoe was now seriously perplexed. She could not leave her sister alone while she went home for help; true, there were several cottages near, but she knew well their mother would not wish Florence to be left in any of them; and to carry the heavy child the whole way home was quite impossible to Zoe's slender form and weak arms.

While pausing to think what was best to do under the circumstances, a slatternly-looking woman put her head out of one of the cottage-doors.

"Are you searching for anything, Miss?"

"Yes, my sister has dropped one of her shoes; have you seen it?"

"I saw a little girl come out of that far house, and lift something off the road-side. I suppose if you could find her she'd give it up, for one shoe is no use to any one."

Zoe went immediately to the cottage pointed out, and tapped gently at the door. Presently a girl of about her own age, having also a child in her arms, appeared, and looked at her inquiringly.

"Have you seen my little sister's shoe?" she asked; "it must have fallen off her foot about here," and she held up Florence's plump shoeless foot, to show the size. In doing so, for the first time she glanced at the child in the poor girl's arms, and the contrast between the two little ones struck her forcibly—Flossy so chubby and healthy, with bright merry eyes and rosy cheeks, the other, worn and pallid, with attenuated limbs and thin bony feet hanging from under her faded torn frock.

"I did find a little shoe," answered the girl; "and put it by inside the house, for I didn't know whose it was," and turning away, she reached from the top of an old cupboard the dainty little leather shoe, which she held a moment to admire, then replaced on the child's foot with a sad look, for she could not help feeling deeply the wide difference between her pale sickly little sister, dying for want of the bare necessaries of life, and the healthy comfortably-dressed child before her, so full of joy and spirits. Half-sighing, half-smiling, she said, "'Tis a pretty little shoe, and a nice little foot too."

"Is your child ill?" asked Zoe, compassionately.

"Yes, Miss; very bad indeed; but the neighbours say she might get well if she had plenty of new milk."

"And why don't you give it to her?"

"I haven't any, Miss."

"Is she your sister? and where's your mother?"

"She's my only sister, and mother's dead. We're living with an aunt here, but she has plenty of children of her own, and not enough to feed them all, much less us. She does her best though. They're out at work now, and I'm minding baby that's asleep inside the house, and my own little one, that cries and frets every time I lay her down."

"I never saw you about here before," said Zoe; "have you been long with your aunt?"

"No, mother died only a short time ago. The last words she said were—'Nelly, take care of your little sister, and God will take care of you both; be sure to trust Him in every trouble, for He has promised to be a Father to you.'"

"And so he will," answered Zoe; "my mother says He is always watching over and minding us; and we may ask him about anything, no matter how small."

"Well, Miss, this morning, after the woman next door told me baby would die unless she had milk, I asked God to send us some, or show me a way to earn a little money to buy it; and he hasn't answered yet."

"Don't be too sure of that, Nelly, for I asked Him this morning also to show me how I could help some one very much with sixpence my papa gave me, and He has answered us both at the same time. See, here is what will buy milk for your sick baby for the next day or two at least, then He may send you more if you still trust him;" and Zoe, having placed Flossy on the ground, searched her pocket, and at length drew out the sixpence for which she had been so anxious to find a good use.

All this time Florence had been gazing with an unusually thoughtful and surprised expression at the pale worn face of the other child, but now, taking Zoe's hand, trotted pleasantly home by her side, in the recovered shoe, chatting gaily about the poor white baby in the girl's arms. And they had quite an adventure to tell mother on their return.

Let me end my story by saying that Nelly's baby throve rapidly on the milk and other good and nourishing things which Zoe and Florence were given by their mother and allowed to carry to the cottage daily. S. T. A. R.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

231. Who is it likens the *ungodly* to *chaff?*

232. How many lepers are mentioned as being outside the gates of Samaria, and who gave notice of the flight of the Syrians?

233. How many days had Lazarus been dead before our Lord raised him to life again?

234. What event took place near the city Adam?

235. Who was the wife of Felix, the Governor of Cæsarea?

236. What was the only condition upon which Nahash the Ammonite would make peace with the people of Jabesh-gilead?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 560.

216. When he healed the leper in Galilee (Mark i. 44). See also Leviticus xiv. 3, 4, 10.

217. Job vi. 6.

218. To search diligently for the young child Jesus, and bring him word again when they had found him (Matt. ii. 8).

219. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John xv. 13).

220. Psalm xvi. 6.

221. "Physician heal thyself" (Luke iv. 23).

222. "This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David" (2 Chron. xxxii. 30).

223. Hymenæus and Philetus (2 Tim. ii. 17).



(*Drawn by* M. E. EDWARDS.)

THREE ANSWERS TO THE SWALLOW.

(*The Child speaks.*)

"TWEET, tweet, tweet!"
The birds cry out of the sky.
Tweet, tweet, tweet,
Mother I want to fly,
Up and up, and up above the poplars tall.
Mother if I had wings
I would fly and never fall.

(*The Mother speaks.*)

"Sweet, sweet, sweet!"
So the swallows are here again,
Wheeling over the village street
And out to the open plain.
"Sweet, sweet, sweet!"
As they cried three springs ago,
When Hans led me through the fields,
Down to the church below.
Sweet, sweet, sweet! through warm summer and winter cold,
I have carried the grass from the field,
And led the cattle to fold;
Three years have come and gone,
And my child is just two years old,
And the swallows are crying again, "Sweet, sweet!"
And my tale is told.

(*The Grandmother muses.*)

"Fleet, fleet, fleet!"
Are those the swallows I hear?
The sound came sudden and sweet,
And this is the spring of the year.
To my dim eyes they seem
But a sudden light as they pass,
But I know how they skim o'er the stream,
And over the churchyard grass.
Their wings are a sudden light,
My time will not be long,
For my spirit is nearer its flight
Than that of the young and the strong.
Fleet, fleet, fleet!
The days are wearing fast,
I hear them cry, far out of the sky,
"There are wings for the soul at last!"

AGNES MACDONELL.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXIX.—DOROTHY REFLECTS.

"IT is such a lovely morning!" sighed Dorothy; "no one would think it was the end of October; and I should so like to go and sit a little while in the garden, with a cloak round me. I am so tired of trying to work, and getting nothing to do. And, after all, I never shall like work, and I cannot see its wonderful virtue, unless I gain money by it to help poor papa. Somehow," she said, with a sigh, "I think Mr. Fuller's idea of happiness was the right one—just enough to live on, and nothing to do."

She gathered a shawl round her, and looked out at the sunshiny garden, and then struggled against her longing to go and be quiet, and the feeling that she ought to find other things to do.

"I am very selfish," she said, presently—"very! I wish I could cure myself. I wonder what George Blakesley saw in me to love! It is so odd, too," she thought; "but since I have tried to work and to do better, I don't think he has cared so much for me. His love seems to be dying out, and I do not wonder at it. I am very, very selfish."

"Dorothy, will you come into my study?" called Mr. Woodward. "I want to speak to you, my dear! I am not well."

So she laid down the book she had taken up, and threw aside her shawl, and went.

"Come here," he said, as she entered, "and sit down. You have been such a good girl lately, dear; I don't know what we should have done without you!"

And Dorothy's heart gave a throb of satisfaction.

"I want to talk to you, you know, about how things have gone lately at the office: I fear they are worse even than we imagined. Hunter, the manager, in whom we trusted thoroughly, has been playing us false, and the paper has gone altogether to smash. I thought perhaps something might be saved, but I see now it is impossible. I shall be in the Gazette next week, I suppose, and these things will have to be sold."

"Sold?"

"Yes, dear; I have been thinking that perhaps you and your mother had better go into some cheap lodgings before the crash comes. You must comfort her as well as you can, dear, and manage everything, for there is no money. The lease of this house will be sold, of course."

"And shall we never come back here?"

"I suppose not," he said, and turned sadly away; and she saw that there were tears in her father's eyes. "I wish I had settled your mother's money on her, and never risked it in this business. I shall never forgive myself as long as I live, but I did it for the best, and of course I have my children to think of, and I wanted to make some provision for you."

The words fell on Dorothy's heart like a reproach. He had ruined himself, hoping to provide for his children, and she had been dreaming her life away, and Tom had been spending his money in pleasure. She would make no promises, she thought, but things should be different in future, and she gave a long sigh, and thought how different her life might have been.

"I could never separate my dreams from my realities," she thought, "and sufficiently realise the latter."

"Do you think you could find some cheap lodgings, dear?" Mr. Woodward asked. "I want your mother to be out of this place by Saturday. It would distress her so to see all our things sold. You must get some furnished rooms for us, as cheaply as possible, and get all your clothes away, and you and your mother and Sally and the boys must get there as quickly as possible. I wish Will could go on with his school a little longer. There, that is all, dear. I am very unwell; I wish I was not obliged to go out!" he sighed.

Then Dorothy kissed her father tenderly, and went to think about how she should manage all he wished.

"And while he was in all this sorrow," she thought, "I was thinking of going to read my book and idle about in the garden. I wish I could see Mr. Blakesley, he would help me. Oh, to think we must leave this house!" and she tried vainly to keep back her tears. "It will seem like the end of a life to us all; for we shall never have such happy days again!" And she thought of the early summer days, and all the happy hours she had spent with Mr. Fuller. "Those were the happiest days of my life," she thought, "and they are all gone for ever."

CHAPTER XXX.—DOROTHY IN THE WORKSHOP.

Dorothy went out an hour later, and, after a long search, found some furnished rooms which she thought would do, and took them, subject to her mother's approval. They were shabby dreary-looking rooms, near to St. John's Wood, but the best she could get at the price.

"I wonder if Mr. Blakesley will come and see us this evening," she thought again. "He promised to try and get me something—among his friends, too."

It was strange how she was learning to lean on the man she did not love. Suddenly, as she passed a shop, she saw, written on a card displayed in the window, "Wanted, a governess. A young lady required to teach three children English, French, and Music; inquire," &c.

"I wonder if I should do for that," she thought. And, after a long deliberation, she determined to go and try. The address given was only a little way off, and so it was not far to go. "I don't know what to say," she thought; and her hand shook as she knocked at the door, and her feet lagged painfully as she ascended the stairs to the little showy drawing-room to which the servant conducted her. Then she remembered how often George Blakesley had said that work was always honourable and noble, and all her courage came back, and with it a thought that almost made her joyful—she, going to try and work in earnest now, and help her poor weary father! She had found something to live for!

There was something in the manner and the face of the quiet brown-eyed girl that interested the lady of the house, when she appeared. Dorothy was no longer the frightened dreamy child, as she sat and told what she could do, and explained that she had never been out before, but that circumstances had arisen which made her wish to work, and she was ready to do so.

"But I should only want you to come for three hours in the morning, and I only thought of giving twenty pounds a year," Mrs. Gibson said, half afraid that the dignified lady-like girl would scarcely condescend to teach the three children of a poor doctor's wife, who had a struggle to make things look better than they were. But Dorothy said she would willingly undertake the office, and so, when she left, after playing some snatches on the piano to the mother of her future pupils, it was with the knowledge that if, on inquiry, Mrs. Gibson found that all Dorothy said was true, she was forthwith to be installed, for three hours daily, as the governess of the small Gibsons. One thing she had stipulated—*i. e.*, that she should be paid weekly.

"It will be a comfort to me," she said, frankly, feeling it neither shame nor a sin to confess what so many try to hide—poverty; "for I am very poor, and this money will be a great help."

How she walked home that afternoon Dorothy never knew. It seemed as if she trod on air, as if her heart danced so wildly that her feet could scarcely help keeping time, and walking was a trial, when she longed to run, as she would have done a year ago, reckless of all appearances.

"I am so thankful," she cried to herself, "I am going to work. I am no longer human lumber, as Mr. Blakesley said. I am going to work, and to be of use."

This was the burden of her thoughts. She had a right now to the light of the sun, and to watch the falling leaves, and to breathe the fresh air of that glorious autumn day, and to walk over the world's pleasant paths; for was she not one of the world's workers, a part of its great machinery, necessary to others, and entering into their views, and making them, or having now the power of making them, better? "And I will!" she thought, while the tears came into her eyes; "and if I cannot make one thing good and beautiful, I may make many others just a little better, and doing this, I shall be satisfied."

Yes, Dorothy *had* found something to live for at last, and, unconsciously, she *was* beginning already in the world's great workshop to make one thing beautiful, and that one her own life. She caught sight of her home, and all the light died out of her heart, for she remembered the shabby lodgings to which they were to remove. Her father was out when she entered, and her mother was sitting sadly alone, grieving, as was her wont.

"Do you know we are going to leave here next week, Dorothy?" she asked.

"Yes, dear mamma!" and she told her of the rooms she had taken, and Mrs. Woodward's tears began to flow.

"I am sure it will kill me!" she sobbed, "and your poor father too. It is such a pity he was so thoughtless, and he is not well either. It is breaking his heart as well as mine. He is so scrupulous, too; he will give up every stick we have, and won't let me keep a thing back, excepting our clothes."

"He is quite right, dear mamma."

"Yes, but I don't know what will become of us," her mother said, sadly. "We shall be starving when the winter comes."

"Oh no, mamma; oh no! we will all help. And, oh, dear mamma, I *have* got work already," and she threw herself down on her knees, and put her head down on Mrs. Woodward's shoulder, and told her about her pupils.

"And so I will help papa, and we all will, and take care of you, dear, dear mamma!" and the pent-up feeling in her heart gave way, and the tears rained down her cheeks, as she felt her mother clinging to her; but yet it seemed as if the old self whispered and reproached her with all the past idle years.

"How could I be so selfish! oh, how could I!" she thought, bitterly. "Oh, if I could only become better!" she longed, till, in her eagerness, the words became almost a prayer.

"Oh, Dorothy dear!" said Mrs. Woodward, an hour later, "I forgot to tell you that Mr. Fuller came while you were out. He has been in the West of England, but is going abroad soon, and came to say good-bye. He said he should write to you."

(To be continued.)

THE TRIPLETS OF THE BIBLE.

BY THE REV. J. HILES HITCHENS, AUTHOR OF "THE FURNACE," "THE FACE OF THE KING," ETC.

VI.—THE THREE GRACES.

"Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."—1 Cor. xiii. 13.

HERE have here a created trinity, three vital principles which together constitute true religion, three glorious graces which co-exist, but are not co-equal, which, though distinguished one from another, are not divided. Each of these is indispensable to the Christian's life and joy and development. If one of these graces fail, all three vanish. It is sheer presumption to be influenced by hope when we are devoid of faith; it is cheerless killing despondency to possess faith without hope; and it is mere hypocrisy to profess charity where faith and hope are absent. Neither of these graces is known to men of the world—men who are unregenerate, men who keep away from the open arms and sympathetic heart of Jesus. Hence it may be well just in a word or two to define the nature of these excellences.

Faith—the faith here alluded to by the apostle, is that of which he writes in another place as the bestowment of God, "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, *it is the gift of God.*" It is not simply the mental reception of revealed truth; it is the heart appropriation of that truth. It is not credit only; it is trust.

Hope—divine hope is begotten of faith. It anticipates the glories, the promises of which faith accepts. It dwells with pure delight upon the joys disclosed to the steady eye of faith. It expects and desires, and so ever animates the believer in duty, and sustains him in difficulty.

Charity needs careful consideration, because it has been so frequently misunderstood. "St. Paul's word," says John Wesley, "is αγαπη, exactly answering to the plain English word *love*, and accordingly it is so rendered in the old translations of the Bible. This third grace is *not almsgiving. That* we may daily practise where divine love is unknown. St. Paul says, "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity (love) it profiteth me nothing." *Neither is it merely human affection.* Precious though that is, it is far inferior to this grace. There may exist the truest, deepest, most sincere and enduring attachment between one friend and another without either being experimentally acquainted with divine love in the heart. It is love to God for His own sake, and love of man for God's sake. It is love to fellow saints as brethren of the same family, and love to unbelievers as bearing the marred image of God, and capable of being renewed by divine grace. It is filial toward the Infinite One, and fraternal toward our companions in life's highway. In relation to God it is the state of heart which leads us to say with the Psalmist, "There is none upon the earth I desire before thee," or with Solomon to our beloved, "O Thou whom my soul loveth!" or with Peter on the occasion of his heroic confession, "Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee." In relation to man it will lead us to act the part of the good Samaritan who had compassion on the poor Jew lying in Jericho's highway, and went and bound up his wounds, set

him on his own beast, brought him to the inn, and carefully provided for him. Toward man love "suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." Such are these three graces.

Now, though faith, hope, and charity are stars of the same brilliant constellation, yet one star differeth from another star in glory, and charity is of the first magnitude. Last here in order, it is first in importance and pre-eminence.

Why does the apostle say, "The greatest of these is love?" I answer:—

Because love peculiarly participates of God's nature.—It bears a closer resemblance to the divine image than either of the other graces. The eternal, self-existent, independent, and all-wise Being has no faith, no hope; nor does He stand in need of either. Of finite souls alone are these predicable. Faith and hope are expressions of dependence, and indications of ignorance. Faith and hope are specially and solely the property of creatures. It cannot be said of the Creator that He believes this or that to exist, or that He hopes this or that will be, for all things are naked and open to His eye; all things are before Him as one *eternal now*. But the Divine Being has *love*. Aye, He has taught us in the inspired page that love is His very nature. Every other attribute is at the bidding of love. Love is the genus, and all the other perfections of the Deity are the species. Every work of God in the universe, every word of God to the human family, and every dispensation of God that concerns the race of man, has been prompted and performed by *love*. When then we feel the welling up within our hearts of this holy grace we have a stream of which God is the spring, we have a reflection of the glory of the Divine nature. By faith and hope we depend on God; by love we resemble God; and, as conformity is superior to dependence, love is greater than faith or hope, as the luscious fruit and perfumed flower are superior to the branch or stem.

The influence of love is of wider extent.—Faith and hope are between ourselves and things unseen; but love is between us and things seen and unseen. Faith and hope link me to the throne of the eternal; but love binds me to the whole family in heaven and on earth. Faith and hope have respect to the future; love embraces present and future. Faith fixes its eye on glory, and hope casts its anchor within the veil, but love throws open its God-like arms to clasp the whole world in its fervent throbbing burning heart. As the wisdom, justice, and power of God are under the direction of His love, so all our purposes and thoughts and acts should be guided by this holy principle. With some, Christian love is a mere impulse when it ought to be abiding. Like the reservoired water that is conveyed to your home ready for use in an instant, and for use in every conceivable direction, so love should be in us, and abound for every good word and work. Well do the apostles enthrone love among the graces, and place the crown of supremacy upon her brow; well has Paul said, "Above all things put on charity—love!" Well has Peter said, "Add to" the different excellences of the Christian character love; and "above all things have fervent charity among yourselves." Faith and hope are fine flowers in the bouquet of graces, but love binds them together. Faith and hope are important, aye, indispensable, constituents in the edifice of a Christian life, but love is the essential girder, rendering them safe and strong. Faith and hope are necessary portions of a believer's attire, but love is the uppermost mantle thrown over the other robes, "adding the crowning dignity" and preserving all in their appropriate positions.

Love *is the evidence of the existence of the other graces.*—By the presence and operation of this excellency we may judge of our spiritual condition before God. Do we desire to know whether we may cherish within us the childlike confidence of relationship to heaven? Do we desire to know whether we have obtained a new heart, a right spirit, a divine gift? Do we wish to satisfy ourselves whether we are on the way to the city of rest and renown proffered to the ransomed? Then we must see what love there is in our hearts. By this means multitudes have been not only satisfied, but fully assured. To this simple issue John brought the question of a man's standing in the sight of God: "We *know* that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." As the expanding aromatic flower is sufficient indication that the plant is living, as the beating of the pulse informs the skilled examiner as to the condition of the physical functions, as the movement of the hands is an index of the regularity or irregularity of the watch, as the pointer in a barometer reveals the state of the atmosphere, and as the ascending or descending drop of water in the glass tube indicates to the engineer the amount of pressure on the boiler of the locomotive, so *love* is an evidence of the strength of our faith, the security of our hope, the development of our religious life. There is something amiss in the soul of the man who has not Christian love in full exercise. The man who can look with perfect indifference on the woes and wants of his fellow-man, the man who forbears to exercise forgiveness to his erring brother, the man who is ready to hunt to the very death another who has offended against the laws of propriety or truth, the man who never

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speaks of a compeer without using the caustic, sour, withering words of intense jealousy or hatred, may well question his right to the name of "Christian," if indeed he *presumes* to wear that title. If the presence of love proves the heart right, the absence argues the soul to be altogether wrong, unlike God, unfit for heaven.

Love is the most powerful of all motives.—It is not a sickly sentiment, a momentary emotion; it is one of the strongest, bravest, most enduring powers known upon the earth. Neither is it an inactive or idle force. It is one of the most untiring and working principles with which mortal is acquainted. What will it not do in self-denying labour? What will it not bear in privation and suffering? This grace "seems to resemble the cherubic figure, having the courage of the lion, the patience of the ox, the wing of the eagle, and all directed by the intelligence and will of the man." Where it exists it must exert itself. Like its great heaven-sent embodiment, it "cannot be hid." The strength of Samson lay in his hair; the strength of a Christian lies in his love. Love makes the heaviest burdens light, and the roughest road easy; love sings all the day, and knows no such word in its vocabulary as *sacrifice*. Pleasure, ambition, avarice, novelty, may make a man zealous in a good cause for a season, but ingratitude will chill that zeal. But if the torch of zeal be lighted at Calvary, if the flame be one of love, it will burn with growing strength and increasing lustre amid all the disappointments of life. Many waters, wide, deep, and rough, cannot quench love; it is stronger than death itself, surviving the grim presence and icy grasp of the King of Terrors.

In search of this grace go at once to Calvary. Press through the crowds surrounding that central cross, and approach Him who died for you. Upon that cross is written, "Herein is love." From that cross a voice proclaims, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maranatha." There, by the cross is the spring of that copious and clear stream of love which, flowing into the human heart, will cleanse every desire and purify every motive.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. SECOND SERIES. No. 3. THE CIRCUMCISION AND PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE.

Chapter to be read—Luke ii., 21—40.

INTRODUCTION. Have seen Christ while a babe receiving visitors—two sets—who were they? Of what nation were the shepherds? would represent the Jews: who would be represented by the Wise Men? Therefore these two sets of men would typify the worship of Jews and Gentiles, *i.e.*, whole world. To which was Christ sent? (John i. 2). So far "His own" did receive Him, *i.e.*, the Jewish shepherds worshipped the new-born King. Now must Christ observe all the ceremonies of the Jewish law.

I. THE CIRCUMCISION. (Read Gen. xvii. 9—14). Draw out from the children the *time* of the institution of circumcision, viz., when Abraham was 99 years old: also its *object*—to be an outward token of the covenant between God and His servant Abraham. The promise of the covenant referred to three things—(*a*) the promise of a numerous seed; (*b*) of the land of Canaan for their habitation; (*c*) that by his seed all nations of the earth should be blessed. Now show how all these promises were fully fulfilled by Christ. Of whose seed did he come? therefore He, like all Abraham's seed, must enter into the covenant; so He must be circumcised. How old was He at the time? Obeyed the law in its minutest detail: what name was then given Him? the name above every name (Phil. ii. 9, 10), meaning "the Lord my Saviour." Now, how did He fulfil the promises connected with the covenant? (*a*) *He is the head of His Church.* His seed includes not only Jews, but Gentiles (Eph. ii. 12); all men are drawn to Him (John xii. 32); and He is the head of the Church, His body (Eph. i. 22). (*b*) *He provides a country for His people.* Canaan always been regarded as typical of heaven reached by crossing the Jordan, a figure of death; the enemies all conquered—man's great enemies of this world the flesh and the devil—the wilderness of this world safely passed, His people reach the land prepared by Him for them (John xiv. 2). (*c*) *He blesses all men.* Remind how His first words were those of blessing (Matt. v. 3); His last words blessing His disciples (Luke xxiv. 51). Now, in heaven, He blesses us by turning us away from our sins (Acts iii. 26) and sending down His Spirit. So the blessings of circumcision all fully fulfilled in Christ.

II. THE PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE. (Read Luke ii. 22—24). Now again Christ brought to the Temple. Another Jewish rite to be performed (from Lev. xii. 2, 6, 8); it will be seen that this took place thirty-three days after the circumcision. The Child and His mother come to the Temple—the House of Prayer. The mother offers a sacrifice; why? as a sin-offering to the Lord. And also the Child is solemnly presented to the Lord as His Child. So Christ, in very deed God's Son, is yet, as the Son of Man, dedicated to God. So far the Holy Child has been seen by companies of people. Now individuals are to see Him and worship Him. Who are they?

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(1) *Simeon.* (Read ii. 25—35). What was his character? a devout worshipper of God, *i.e.*, a man of prayer. For what was he praying and looking out daily? (ver. 30.) Had for years been praying to be allowed to see the expected Christ. Now, this day, comes as usual into the Temple, but what specially took him to-day? (ver. 27). How his heart must have throbbed with excitement! At last is to see Him for whom he has been looking so long. Picture him looking about amongst the various groups: at last sees the Holy Family—Joseph and Mary and the Babe. Can this be the Messiah? this infant? Yes; taught by the Spirit, he believes. Now he takes the babe in his arms, and blesses God. What does he ask to do? why die in peace now! Whom has he seen? Who is God's salvation? and for whom was He sent? To lighten and teach the Gentiles as well as Jews. No wonder that Joseph and Mary marvelled at these words. But some one else saw the babe—who was she? (2) *Anna.* (Read ii. 36—39). She, like Simeon, was old; had been daily looking for the Saviour; lived in or near the Temple, always praying and fasting: now she hears the news, comes in, joins the little group, sees the Babe, worships, and gives thanks, not only so, but tells the tale abroad; cannot keep it to herself; goes round to all her friends—all looking for redemption—tells of the Saviour come at last to set His people free.

III. Practical Lessons. (1) *The benefit of being in covenant with God.* Those received as His children are blessed by Him with forgiveness, pardon, peace, and a future home of glory; but this involves corresponding duties: they must, as Jesus, increase in wisdom, be obedient, teachable, loving, &c. Is this true of us? (2) *All may come to Christ.* Jews and Gentiles, males and females, boys and girls, old and young, all are invited. What is wanted? *Willingness*, such as these had (see Is. lv. 1, Matt. xii. 32); *worship*, such as these gave: the homage of a life spent in looking to Christ. (3) *Others must be told.* No selfishness about true religion. Anna at once told all about Christ. So did the shepherds. So should we. The news of a Saviour so joyful must be spread all over the world: all can help: do we do what we can?

Questions to be answered.

1. When was circumcision instituted, and why?
2. What are the three promises connected with circumcision?
3. How did Christ fulfil these promises?
4. Say what you can about Simeon and Anna.
5. Write out Simeon's song.
6. What lessons may we learn?

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXI.

MARY TREVELYAN also received a letter, written by Bertrand Lisle just when he was on the point of starting for the war. It was a much more unconstrained and natural letter than that which he had written to Laura, for he knew well that from Mary he would have the most entire sympathy, and that she would fully enter into the feelings which drove him so imperatively to offer himself for the defence of his native land. He spoke to her of all he felt in this respect, freely and fervently, seeming to find a relief in doing so; and then he told her that he was of course aware how probable it was that he should never come alive out of that terrible campaign, and he could not risk to leave a world which she, more than any other, had brightened for him all his lifetime, without thanking her for her past goodness, and assuring her that the remembrance of her and of all their happiness in the days that were gone would lie very near his heart in the hour of death, come when it might. The last words of his letter, however, referred to Lurline: he spoke of the answer she had sent him when he had first told her of the possibility of his joining the French army, and of the grief and terror she had seemed to feel in the prospect. "Poor, pretty Lurline!" he added; "she has never been taught to take serious views of life in any way, but she does love me well, at least, and she is my one care in throwing my life into this dreadful lottery; if I should fall, sweet Mary, I trust you, for the sake of our happy days in the peaceful time that is past, to do what you can to comfort my tender little Lorelei."

But for the moment her tender heart could not fail to feel wounded at the closing words of his letter—"His one care is for Lurline!" she thought, "Lurline, who, at least, can be very happy without him, for certainly she was joyous as ever when he left us, and I—and I——" She covered her face with her hands, as she remembered how every moment of her existence had been filled with him in silent suffering since the day she had believed him parted from her for ever; at length she dropped her hands and looked up—"His care is for Lurline, but I will care for him," she said, softly—"for him! or if I am never allowed to come across him, at least for

his brethren in the great struggle; my feet shall stand like his on the blood-stained soil of France; I will try to take bravely my little part in that great agony; and if he finds a grave there, so will I."

Mary Trevelyan had been resolved, from the first day when the tidings of the war reached her, that she would offer herself as a nurse to the International Society for the Succour of the Sick and Wounded, and she had already taken the first step in ascertaining that her services would be accepted. But it is in the nature of every true and ardent affection, especially in the heart of a woman, to feel a sort of craving and necessity to extend help and protection to the object of it, if in any way it be possible; the desire to shield those it loves from every evil, and to be itself the means of doing so, is the imperative demand of every faithful heart, and Mary felt this so strongly as regarded Bertrand, anomalous as it seemed that the fragile young girl should dream of giving help to the stalwart man, that she could not bring herself absolutely to decide on her own destination till she should know distinctly what he meant to do. His letter at once put an end to any further hesitation. At the time when she received it, which was only a day or two later than the date of Mr. Brant's arrival in England, she knew that he was already in France—already, it might be, lying on the battle-field of Wörth or Gravelotte, and her only desire now was to make her way as speedily as might be to the scenes of carnage and suffering that were desolating his unhappy country.

Mary hastened at once to the office in London, from whence the Society carried on their operations, and begged to be sent without delay to whatever spot in France most required help for the sick and wounded. She was told that several parties of surgeons and nurses had already been dispatched to the seat of war, but that in a few days a small number of volunteers, chiefly men, but including one or two nurses, under the direction of an English doctor, were going to Paris to offer their services to the authorities of the Society there, for any post to which they might be appointed; and in view of the approaching siege of Paris, which was even then imminent, it was thought that most likely they would be retained for work in the capital; if she chose, Miss Trevelyan might join them: she at once agreed, and received the red-cross badge in token that she was enrolled in the Society. She was told the hour at which, six days later, she was to join the party at Victoria Station, and went away feeling thankful that, whether she ever saw Bertrand Lisle again or not, she would have a glorious opportunity of following in the steps of that Divine One who came on earth for the relief of suffering, physical and mental, wheresoever He might find it.

Mary's next task was to go and tell Mrs. Parry of her intention, and here she was met by an unexpected difficulty. Her kind old nurse said not a word to dissuade her from her dangerous purpose, for she knew the resolute self-devotion of her child too well to hope that she could be shaken in it; but after she had overcome the nervous trembling which seized her when she first heard that her pale delicate Mary was going into those dreadful scenes, and had winked away the tears which dimmed her twinkling eyes, she said, "Very well, my sweet lamb, if you must go, may heaven protect and save you; but I am going too."

"Oh no, dearest nurse; impossible!" exclaimed Mary; "at your age, and with your infirm health you could never stand the fatigues we shall have to endure; and you know I shall not need any protection. I shall be with the other members of the Society."

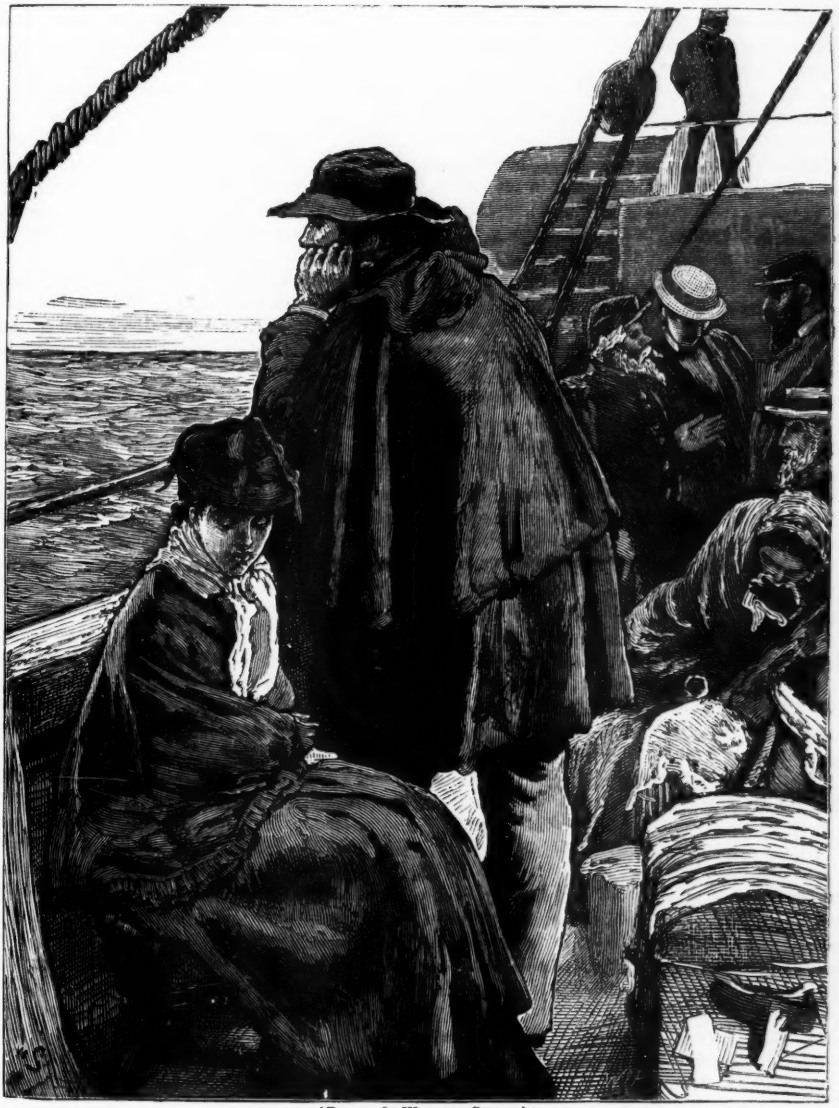
"I know, my dear, and I can well understand that the Society would not choose to be encumbered with a worn-out old woman like me; so I shall not go to be actually with you, nor will I even travel with you, but I shall go to Paris, and be at hand if you want me."

Mary flung her arms round her neck.

"You good dear nurse! thank heaven for your love, at least, though it is all I have on earth; but I cannot bear to think of your leaving the peace and comfort of England at such a time as this: you know Paris is likely to be besieged, and there will be great misery and suffering there, I fear."

"All the more reason why I should go, as I think I can be of use quite independent of you. You must know I have a friend there—she is the wife of a man they call a *colporteur*, a sort of missionary, who goes about selling Bibles to the poor benighted heathen French. His wife lives in Paris, and he travels about. He is away just now, she does not know where. He may have been killed, for anything she knows, in all the massacring that has been going on, and she is very ill, all alone there with seven children, the youngest a new-born infant; and she made some one write a letter for her to me, saying how lonely and helpless she was, so it is my clear duty to go and help her, and you need say nothing more, my pretty Mary, for I can be obstinate as well as you. I shall start to-morrow morning, and be ready to receive you, if you should want me the first moment you come, or at any time. So now make yourself satisfied, and, help me to find a nice home for my dear cockatoo, for that is more on my mind than anything else."

Mrs. Parry had talked herself out of breath in her eagerness, and Mary saw it was no use attempting to oppose her further, so she gravely entered into the question of "cockie's" lodgings, which was happily settled by the offer of the landlady of the house to take charge of him, and on the following morning she saw her kind old nurse off by the tidal train for Paris, after having had the address of the *colporteur's* wife duly impressed on her.



(*Drawn by* WILLIAM SMALL.)

"Mary sat at the side of the vessel near the helm."—*p.* 604.

A few days later, and the evening before Mary herself was to start had arrived—she had been allowed to remain at the Childrens' Hospital after the return of the Lady Superintendent until she should decide on her own plans—and she was alone in the sitting-room, while every one else was engaged in the wards, making her final arrangements for the journey next day, when the neat prim-looking portress came to tell her that a gentleman wished to see her. She could not guess who it might be, but thinking it was probably one of the travelling party, desired him to be shown in. There was a quick step in the passage, and, brushing past the staid servant in his excitement, Charlie Davenant came rushing in, and seized her hand in both of his with so vehement a grasp as almost to crush it.

"How thankful I am that I am still in time to see you again!" he exclaimed.

"And I am very pleased indeed to see you, but quite surprised; I did not know you were anywhere near London."

"Nor should I have been had I not heard that you were going, like a saint as you are, to give your dear beautiful life to help all those poor sufferers over the water!"

At that moment one of the nurses appeared at the door, and said that "Tottie" refused to go to sleep till Miss Mary came to give her a good-night kiss.

"Will you wait for me a few minutes," said Mary to Charlie Davenant, "I shall be back almost immediately, but I cannot refuse this poor little one on my last day."

"I will wait for you all night, if you like," he answered, impulsively, "but you must come back, for I have a great deal to tell you which you must hear."

"I shall come," she said, smiling, and followed the nurse from the room.

CHAPTER XXXII.

MARY TREVELYAN soon came back, leaving sleepy Tottie quite willing to let her round eyes close when once she had seen her dear lady, and she found Charlie Davenant contemplating with a rueful face the various preparations for her departure, which were to be seen around him.

"Oh, Miss Trevelyan, how I wish you were safe back again!" he said, with a great sigh.

"We are safe everywhere, you know, if we would only believe it," she answered, "since whatever happens is by the will of Him who knows what is best for us; but now may I hear what it is you have to tell me?"

"It concerns Laura Wyndham," he answered, gravely. "I think you ought to know that she is likely to prove as false to Mr. Lisle as she has been to poor John Pemberton."

Mary turned round, and looked at him quite aghast at his words. "It is impossible," she said.

"I believe it to be certain, knowing Lurline as I do," he answered; "fate has thrown another man in her way, who will suit her far better, at the very time when she was becoming convinced that her engagement with a soldier who had joined the French army was an exceedingly bad speculation. I suppose you know she has had another letter from Bertrand since he entered on the campaign?"

"No, I have heard nothing," said Mary, breathlessly. "Has there been news of him? oh, tell me!" and as he saw how her chest heaved, and her faint colour went and came, his heart burned with mingled pity and indignation at the manner in which her happiness had been stolen from her.

"The letter had been sent by the field-post, and it had only reached her a day or two before I saw her yesterday: it was short, and Mr. Lisle had written it apparently with much difficulty, and with his left hand."

"Is he hurt?" Mary's blanched lips could scarcely frame the question.

"He is hurt, but not vitally. It seems he was enrolled in the French army as Bertrand de L'Isle, just in time to take his share in the dreadful battle of Gravelotte. He has been fortunate in escaping from it with his life, and without a fatal wound; but he has had a serious and painful injury to his right arm, which has completely incapacitated him from using it, the elbow-joint has been shattered by a bullet, and it may ultimately have to be amputated. In the meantime, however, those who are fighting for unhappy France may not stop to think of their own troubles, and as Mr. Lisle cannot go again into action in this state, he has volunteered for a service of even greater danger, and has been appointed to carry dispatches from the seat of war to the military commander in Paris. The Prussians, as you know, are said to be advancing on the capital, and Mr. Lisle felt so doubtful if he could reach his destination in safety, that he wished Lurline to know it was possible she might never hear from him again." Charlie stopped abruptly, terrified at the look of agony on Mary's white face. "Let me get you some water!" he exclaimed, starting up; "you look so faint; I ought not to have told you this."

"No, no!" she gasped, holding out a trembling hand to stop him—"I must know all! tell me, I beseech you! tell me every word you heard! I am certain that as yet, at least, he is not dead—I should have felt it if he had been. Oh, Charlie! keep nothing back from me!"

It was the first time she had called him by his Christian name, and although he saw she had done it unconsciously, he could not refuse the request she had made in such terms, even were it injurious to her to comply with it.

"Mr. Lisle wrote this letter just before starting

on his perilous journey; he said that in the confusion attending the terrible battle he had lost everything he had with him, including his money, and that he now possessed nothing in the world but the horse which had been given him for all such portions of the distance to Paris as could not be traversed by any other means, and that, he feared, on account of the vicinity of the hostile troops, would be nearly the whole way. He added, that he should be beholden to the hospitality of the country people where he travelled for mere subsistence, as a few stray sous, which might buy him one meal, was literally all he had in his pocket, and money was, unhappily, too scarce in the army at that moment for him to dream of asking for any. He is a brave, noble fellow!" added Charlie, enthusiastically.

"And so, alone and in pain, with his life in danger every instant, he is making that dreadful journey," said Mary, with tears welling into her eyes.

"Yes; and what do you think was Lurline's comment on this letter from the man whose wife she would have been but for this war? She said it gave ample proof of the wisdom she had shown in deciding to give him up from the moment she heard he had resigned his appointment and joined the army. 'It is pretty plain,' she said, 'in what guise he will come out of the war—if he lives to come out of it at all—as a broken down, one-armed soldier, without a penny in the world; and that is certainly not a position he will find me disposed to share.'"

"Mr. Davenant," said Mary, starting to her feet, "for very shame it cannot be that Laura ever spoke such words as these; you must have misunderstood her!" and the indignation she felt sent a glow over her white face, and dispelled the faintness which had nearly overcome her.

"I assure you I could not mistake her," said Charlie, "for she talked over the whole matter at great length and with the utmost coolness. I think, in her anxiety to be married, she might not so completely have discarded Mr. Lisle till she saw how his affairs would turn out, if it had not been that she expects the offer of an alliance infinitely more splendid than his would have been, even in his former position, and she is glad to be free in order to secure it."

Mary sat down again in silence, she was too gentle to speak the contempt and almost loathing with which such conduct filled her; but after a moment she asked Charlie if he meant to imply that Laura was likely to marry some other man.

"Certain, I should say, if the gentleman continues to be as willing as he seems to be at present; but as they have only known each other ten days I suppose he thinks it necessary to wait as long as he can before definitely asking her to marry him. It will not be very long, however, for it seems he is anxious to get back to Italy as fast as possible, and he has told Mrs. Wyndham he would like to take Laura with him as his wife. But I have not yet explained to you that he is a Mr. Brant, an enormously wealthy merchant, who has a sort of palace in the beautiful city where Mr. Lisle lived. He brought Lurline some jewels which Bertrand wished to send her, and thus made her acquaintance, and he has already given her thoroughly to understand that if she marries him she will have every luxury and pleasure which money can procure. You know what a temptation that must be to the Lorelei."

"It is terrible!" said Mary; "Bertrand loves her."

"Or thinks he does," replied Charlie, with a smile, "he was dazzled and infatuated, but I think when Lurline shows herself to him in her true colours, as she now will, he may find his love for her was much more an imagination than a reality."

"But he will suffer—he must suffer in being so betrayed."

"Lurline is not worth it if he does," said Charlie, sharply; "the man she is likely to marry will suit her far better. I saw him; he came in while I was there yesterday, and his character may be read on his face—a hard, cold, selfish man of the world, who has his own interests at heart and nothing else; if he marries the Lorelei it will be because it is convenient for his own purposes, whatever they may be. Lurline carried him off into the back drawing-room to talk to him in private, so soon as he appeared, and it was then I got Mrs. Wyndham to tell me the whole history of his acquaintance with them. She says he is very anxious to be married that he may have an English lady to manage his princely establishment abroad; but he has to return there in a very few weeks, and she believes that he will have the marriage settled and finally accomplished in time to take Lurline home with him."

"So soon! while even yet Bertrand believes her engaged to him," said Mary, slowly; "Mr. Davenant, it is inconceivable; I cannot give credit to it!"

"I believe there is another motive weighing with Lurline at this moment which I almost shrink from telling you," said Charlie, half reluctantly; "yet it seems best you should know all. It appears that Mr. Wyndham has been very unwell since he has been in town, and the doctors have told both his wife and daughter that he has an incurable malady, which is certain to end his life very soon. Were he to die the Lorelei would be completely without a home, as Mrs. Wyndham would have to go back to her own friends, and I think Laura wishes to provide an establishment for herself before that event."

"Mr. Davenant, I must hope that you are judging poor Laura too harshly," said Mary, with enough of reproach in her gentle voice to make Charlie stumble uncomfortably to his feet, saying, "Anyhow, I dare say you have had enough of me and my surmises, so I will leave you now; but let me tell you one more fact which you ought to know: Lurline wrote to you to ask for your address in Paris, did she not?"

"Yes; and I sent it to her. Letters forwarded to the care of Madame Brunot, the wife of the *colporteur* with whom nurse Parry is going to lodge, will always reach me safely."

"Well, Lurline told me why she had asked you for it. She said she certainly should have to write to Mr. Lisle very soon on a matter of importance, and as she had not the remotest idea where he was, or was likely to be, she should send her letter to you, and ask you to give it to him, as you would be certain to find him out." Charlie glanced furtively at Mary as he spoke, but the quiet dignity of her manner was not ruffled for a moment; she was far above the petty spite of such a woman as Laura Wyndham. She made no remark on Charlie's statement, but, holding out her hand to him, she said, "It may be long before we meet again, Mr. Davenant, if ever; let me give you my best wishes for your happiness wherever you may be."

He caught her hand, and wrung it in both of his. "And you, Miss Trevelyan, come back safe—oh, come back safe! We cannot spare such as you are out of this wicked world," and then, overcome by his emotion, he rushed from the room.

Not much more than four and twenty hours later Mary Trevelyan was seated on the deck of the steam packet which was conveying her and her associates from Dover to Calais. It was a most lovely night, so fair and peaceful that it seemed scarce possible to believe the land whose quiet shore was already looming in sight could really be convulsed by all the horrors of war, and rent from end to end by struggles not only against the common foe but amongst her own children—France was even then close on the terrible disgrace and disaster of the day at Sedan—but here there was not so much as a breath of wind, not a ripple on the surface of the Channel, which lay like a sea of glass mirroring the pure stars in its depth. Mary sat at the side of the vessel near the helm, apart from the strangely miscellaneous crowd which thronged the deck; even those under whose care she was travelling were strangers to her, and she preferred to be alone with her own thoughts; they had wandered back, although she had so much to occupy her in the present, to the night of her own birth, when her unknown father had found a grave in just such calm and waveless waters. Ever since she had known, through Laura Wyndham's heartless revelation, the share that Mr. Lisle had unfortunately taken in her father's death, she had felt a yearning compassion for the parents she had never known, but of Mr. Lisle, her kind and constant friend, she thought only with a tender regret for all the remorse and suffering he had endured by a wholly unintentional act; she knew him far too well to suppose for an instant that he had been to blame, and she well remembered how the reproaches of his over sensitive conscience had poisoned all his subsequent life. She went on to think how glad she was that he too was now at rest, so that he was saved all the misery he would have endured in the knowledge of his dear son's danger, and became quite absorbed in her recollections.

Ever since Mary had sat down thus and lost herself in these reflections, a man, enveloped in a large cloak with a broad brimmed felt hat coming down over his forehead, had been standing close to her, leaning with his arms folded on the rail of the vessel, and looking steadily back to the English coast. But she had not noticed him among the numbers round her, and she was suddenly startled by his addressing her.

"Does not this seem almost like the rest of Paradise after the battle of life is over, Miss Trevelyan?" he said, in a low deep-toned voice. She looked up at him in great astonishment. How did he know her? who was he? He saw at once that she was at a loss, and taking off his hat, he said, "I beg your pardon, Miss Trevelyan, I thought you had recognised me. She did recognise him, for the face, so strangely worn and altered, was that of John Pemberton. He looked at least ten years older than he had done when he left Chiverley, and there was a settled sadness on his heavy features, but the dark honest eyes seemed brighter thay they used to be, and met her own with a more open fearless gaze.

"Mr. Pemberton," she said, cordially giving him her hand; "I am so very glad to see you again, but how do you come to be here, are you too going to Paris?"

"Yes, I have joined the Society for the Relief of the Sick and Wounded, like yourself, though I cannot hope to be so useful as you will be; still if I can do nothing better I can fetch and carry for others."

"You will find enough to do," said Mary; "I think men are almost more likely to be useful than women; but excuse me, I am ignorant in such matters, you have not had time to become a clergyman, have you?"

"No, oh no," he said, with a shudder; "after such a career as mine for the last two years, I must put myself to some severe test before I dare to seek so high an honour; it is for that reason I am going among the victims of the war. I think I may find the means there to suffer for others."

"Alas! I fear there is no doubt that you will suffer, as all must do in the midst of such unparalleled miseries," said Mary.

"Suffering, torture, death, oh, how gladly would I welcome them all if only through the last extreme of pain I might struggle up to the feet of my forgiving Saviour!"

And as he spoke John Pemberton stretched out his arms for a moment towards the midnight sky, then letting them fall once more on the railing, buried his face upon them, and Mary remained by his side in silence.

(*To be continued.*)

MAN'S WAY NOT IN HIMSELF.—II.

BY THE REV. JAMES SPENCE, D.D., AUTHOR OF "HOURS WITH DANIEL," ETC.

"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself."—JER. x. 23.

THE *perception* of his way is not in man. The very light that is in him is darkness, and with a bedimmed understanding he sees not the way of life and of peace. Blinded or beclouded with sin, he takes a false view of his powers, position, and prospects, and has no clear guiding knowledge of his duty, his deserts, or his destiny. The capabilities and faculties of his manhood will be exercised, for he is an active and restless being; but he sees not adequately what he is, he discerns not clearly what he ought to be. Having lost the knowledge of his Father and God, he cannot find his way back to virtue and glory. The perception of his way is not in him.

Nor is the *choice* of his way in man. It is possible for a man to be so long a slave, that slavery becomes a second nature to him; he may hug the chains of his bondage and care nothing for liberty. So the Israelites, even in the breezy wilderness, and under the immediate guidance of God, longed to get back to the flesh-pots of Egypt. Now, man, when placed in circumstances where the true path of his manhood is pointed out to him, does not of himself choose it, and does not care for it. Many things are more attractive to him than his own proper way. Although the light of Divine Revelation shines upon him, showing him what he was, what he is, and what he may become, he is indifferent to the true dignity, birthright, and glory of his own nature. To him, in this respect, the admonition has deep and suggestive meaning—"Ask of the beasts, and they shall teach thee." The lion struggles for liberty, and the bird flies from the cage of its imprisonment when the door is left open; but man, with liberty offered him, and glory too, chooses not the way in which alone his manhood can rise to its legitimate power and sacred royalty. Deep and wide is our degradation, terrible our degeneracy, and complete our ruin.

This is still more manifest in the fact that the *pursuit* of his way is not in man. He may be given to see it, by varied motives and mighty power he may be led into it, but he is ever prone to wander; and even when his way is again by grace put into his soul, he is apt to forget it or to neglect it. Verily, it is not in man that walketh to guide morally or spiritually his own steps. "The world by wisdom knew not God," and man by wisdom knows not himself.

How sorrowful, then, is the acknowledgment, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself." No fact is sadder, yet none more true. In this respect man stands in striking contrast to all other creatures. So soon as we begin to live, we begin to go astray. Examine the annals of the nations and the records of humanity, and you do not find a man who naturally accords to God His supremacy, or who yields to his own manhood the respect and homage that are its due. How has the gold become dim and the fine gold changed! That which brightly bore the image of the heavenly man bears the image of the earthly. The sanctions of law, the arrangements of government, the rules and conventionalisms of society, the influences of education, are all so many curbs and forces brought to bear on man to keep him within bounds, so that his path, if possible, shall be virtuous and harmless; but nothing that is the product of mere human wisdom or power can again set man right, or put the true way of his nature within him as it was at first. The acknowledgment of the text is the cry of helplessness and the wail of misery: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself." Yet the very fact that God is addressed in this acknowledgment suggests hope, for He hath said, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in Me is thy help."

II. The words of the prophet may, therefore, be also viewed as an appeal to God. In God above, the true way of man can be found, and the very triumph of his Gospel is in the assurance given us: "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts."

1. The greatness of man's degeneracy shows how utterly useless is all human help. In some sense man is still a law unto himself, and his moral nature, though distorted and fallen, may still be appealed to; but vain, and worse than vain, are the theories which make humanity, as it were, a God, and capable of working out its own spiritual transformation. All history declares that this is impossible: man's help is in God alone. He alone knows our condition, circumstances, and destiny, and he alone can meet our need by putting our way again within us, so that a redeemed and renovated nature shall become the law of our being. The very language of the prophet in this passage, humbly confessing ruin and incompetence, is an appeal to God for this gracious and marvellous restoration.

From the Creator alone, then, man can expect the recovery and restoration of his way. It is not Nature, nor her teaching, which can do it. The stars in their courses, and the marvels of the world

around us, have from the first been saying, "The hand that made us is Divine," but their voice cannot quicken man. No mere outward rule is sufficient, no voice of external authority can meet the case. This has been sounding in the ears of humanity for many ages, but without effect. What the law—even enforced by the thunderings of Sinai—could not do, because it was weak through the flesh, God has done in the Gospel of His only-begotten Son. Man's way may again be restored and established within him, so that he may march in all the majesty of a new nature to glory. This is the grand provision of the Gospel, and to unfold it is the great burden of revelation. It is when a man feels that his way is not in himself, when he feels that he has gone astray, like a lost sheep, that he is utterly helpless and ruined, and can find no way of peace, or purity, or true progress—it is then that he will welcome with gladness and gratitude the truth that there is all-sufficient help for him in God, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."

2. What, then, is God's method of restoring man to his true position and dignity, and of putting his way again within him? It consists of two parts, both of which are needful to this great end. There must be redemption and regeneration; and God, in the Gospel of his Son, has provided both.

First, as to *Redemption*. Man, as a creature of God, is under moral government, but having departed from his Maker and lost his way, he is under condemnation as a sinner and a rebel. As a child of disobedience, a wayward and prodigal son of the Infinite Father, he has exposed himself to tremendous consequences. Guilt is upon him that must drag him to perdition, if it is not removed. Before the law of his being can be again put within him, satisfaction must be found for his wandering and his sin. He must be redeemed from condemnation and delivered from guilt. The law which he has violated must be maintained; the government which he has sinned against must be upheld; and now God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. Christ Jesus died, the Just for the unjust, bringing near unto us the righteousness of God, so that in Him we find acceptance and safety. Thus, although sold under sin, condemned by law, and exposed to punishment, we may be delivered. The consequence of our wrong-doing and rebellion has, in a mysterious sense, been borne by the incarnate Son of God, and the price of our deliverance was His most precious blood. Through Him God can be just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly, and he can work in the sinner according to the law of his own wisdom and mercy.

But this is not all, it is only the outward preparation for putting the law of manhood again within. It only delivers a man from the consequence of his sin and folly, and puts him in a position to receive anew the image of his God, and the true way of his own proper nature.

There must be *Regeneration* as well as redemption, and God has provided for this by the power of the truth, and the quickening energy of His Spirit. The new birth, the new spiritual creation, is really the setting-up of man's way once more within him, and no man can reach it without being born again. The germ of a new existence, and the element of a new character, must take possession of the soul. Old things pass away, and all things become new. The enthronement of man's way in himself is not without a struggle, and to follow this way, amid the influences of evil and the tendencies of the "old man," involves a conflict; but victory will be on the side of redeemed and renovated manhood. The old becomes crucified, and the new becomes triumphant; the soul becomes dead unto sin, and alive unto righteousness and to God. Thus, in the expressive language of Scripture, a man comes to himself. In this way, by the renewing of the mind, he proves what is the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God. That will becomes his law, unconsciously ruling him from day to day, and his walking with God in duty and devotedness will be but the outward evidence and expression of the new life within him. Is not this the highest style of being? Is not this the noblest distinction of manhood, not to be told our duty from the outside, not to be driven to it by an external authority, but to do it as the natural action of a law within us, and the spontaneous operation of a new life? The bee requires no outward teaching to seek the flowers that yield it honey, and to shun the flowers that would hurt its life; so he is the loftiest and most God-like man who is a holy law unto himself, passing through the world in the faithful discharge of every obligation, not from the authority of an external command, but from the force of a new life.

This majesty of a new nature, this God-likeness, is possible for man now only through Christ. He is at once the Mediator, the Master, and the Model of this new life. For the liberty, safety, and glory of their manhood, men are united to Christ. For their moral rescue and spiritual renovation, he urges them to trust in Him. Their help and their hope are in Him alone: without Him, and without any conscious connection with Him, they may become rich or learned, they may know much of men and things, they may travel far and wide, they may be adorned with much worldly virtue, and receive much worldly respect, but without Him they cannot be holy. without Him they cannot be good, without Him they cannot be saved. Christ alone can enable sinners to quit themselves like men, and to go forth heavenward with all the energy, liberty, and joy of a true manhood.

WHEN TO GIVE.

ON a bright morning in the month of May, Edith and her nurse were strolling on the sands at one of our well-known watering-places.

They had already enjoyed the gentle breeze from the sea, and the warm gladdening rays of the sun for nearly an hour, when the nurse exclaimed, "Look, Miss Edith, at that poor little boy under the bridge of the pier; he has nothing on him but rags, and looks so thin and pale. I wonder if he has had any breakfast!"

"Let's go and ask him," replied Edith, "he really does look very miserable; you speak, Mary, I don't like to."

But before they had time to reach the place where he was sitting, he sprung from his seat, full of life and spirits, and began turning summersaults to the very edge of the water, allowing the waves to wash right over him. The reason of this sudden animation soon appeared. A lady and gentleman were throwing halfpence down from the pier into the water, and this little boy was exerting himself for their amusement and his own profit; having picked up all he could find, he rushed back to his old seat, and began counting his gains.

Mary and her young charge just reached the spot as he was tying up his riches in the corner of an old piece of rag. Here Edith made signs for Mary to speak to him.

"Would you like a roll from the baker's, little boy?"

"I don't mind."

"But will you be very glad if I fetch you one?"

"Not much; gi'e us a penny instead."

"No, I can't do that; but if you are hungry I will buy you something to eat."

"Do it, then; I s'pose I shall want suffin' to eat before long."

"Here is a biscuit which I have in my bag, you can eat it when you like," and so saying, the two walked away.

"You see," said Mary, "I was mistaken in that little boy. I thought he was very poor and wretched."

"And so he is," replied Edith; "he's all in rags, and has no shoes or cap."

"That is nothing, my dear child. I feel sure if you gave him all new clothes to-day he would be down here to-morrow in the same plight. I remember just such a case many years ago, when I was staying at the sea-side with a lady and her children. I was very young, for it was my first place; my mistress was always kind to poor people, and one day we found a poor little boy nearly naked lying asleep on the sands; we took him up to the house where we were staying, gave him a good dinner, and sent him home with a tidy suit of clothes, boots, and cap. Well, in a few days we found the same boy with his old clothes on again, and he sat begging of every one who passed by; we asked him what he had done with his new clothes? but he not only would not tell us, but was very saucy, and ran away, laughing. Now, I think this child we pitied so much just now is another of the same kind."

"What a shame!" exclaimed Edith; "I shan't give any more pennies to poor people."

"You must not say so, dear, exactly, though I do think it is always better to pay for something done. Now look at that tidy little girl, with a basket of violets and primroses; go and give her a penny for a bunch of flowers; she must have got up very early this morning, and walked a mile at least to the place where they grow, and then she has made all these neat bunches to sell."

"Here they are, nurse; how sweet they smell; won't ma be delighted! what a nice little girl she is! did you see her rosy cheeks?"

"Yes, and not only that, but her nicely-mended frock, clean pinafore, and, though her shoes were very old, they were clean and patched; we must see, when we go home, if there is an old pair of yours done with, as they would just fit her."

"Oh yes!" cried Edith, clapping her hands with delight. "Ma said I was not to wear the buttoned ones any more, as they were getting shabby; do let me run in and fetch them now, before she goes away; and there's a frock of mine too, I'm sure."

"Stop a minute, we will go in together, and ask your mamma what we may give her."

After a very short time the boots, and a neat print frock of Edith's, were packed up, and she was tripping along in a great state of delight. Upon reaching the spot where they had bought the flowers, only the basket remained. Edith was so disappointed that she could almost have cried with vexation, when a clean tidy-looking woman, with a baby in her arms, said, "Violets, miss; only a penny a bunch."

"Where's the little girl who was selling these flowers just now?" asked Edith of the woman.

"She's gone to do some errands for a lady; she goes every day, and gets twopence for going, so I allus comes and sells the flowers whilst she's gone."

"Thank you," said Edith; and, turning to Mary, said, "let's walk up and down here till she comes back, I do so want to see how she looks when we give her these things."

They had however only gone to the end of the street, when they saw the child running along in great haste in an opposite direction. "Look! look!" cried Edith, "there she goes; let's run after her!"

"Its no use, we could not catch her if we did; she is running with all her might, and is already at the

end of the next street. No wonder she is employed to fetch errands if she does them at that rate; some children would have looked about for playmates, or stopped to look at the Punch-and-Judy show across the road. You had better come and have your bath, then we shall find her back selling her flowers by that time, I've no doubt."

Edith was rather unwilling to wait so long, but not wishing to vex her kind nurse, she hastened off to the bathing-rooms, for it was too cold to bathe in the open sea.

Upon returning to the Parade, they soon found the little flower-girl, who was so busy that she did not notice Edith and her nurse watching her smiling and happy face, as she sold the last two bunches in her basket.

"And what are you going to do now, little girl?" asked Mary. "What a lot of violets you have sold to-day!"

"Yes, mum. I'm so glad!"

"I suppose you want to go and play, after your morning's work?"

"If there's time. If baby's awake I shall have to take her out; and do you know she is getting such a weight, I have to sit down ever so many times."

"And what do you like doing best?" asked Mary.

"Looking at picture-books, and reading stories."

"Can you read well?"

"I reads to father now he's ill, and he's so glad; he says it makes the time go very fast; he can't read himself, you know; his father never sent him to school, nor mother's either; wasn't it a pity?"

"I am very glad you can read. I will try and find you some books."

"Thank ye, mum, that's very good of you; I do want some fresh ones; I've read mine over and over again."

Edith stood very patiently by her nurse's side, listening to the conversation, till, fearing she had quite forgotten the parcel, reminded her of it.

"We've brought you a pair of boots and a frock."

"I don't think we can buy 'em just yet, mum."

"We don't want to sell them," cried Edith, her face crimsoning at the child's mistake; "ma has sent them as a present to you, if you like to have them."

"Thank ye, miss," said the child, deeply blushing; "may I bring you some flowers every morning for a week? father doesn't like me to get things for nothing; do let me do something for them."

"If you would like to bring some flowers for a few mornings," replied the nurse, "you will find us at that large white house on the top of the hill."

"That I will," said the joyful child, as she put the things into her basket, and, wishing her kind friends good morning, ran home in such a state of happiness as only those can feel who are satisfied that their time has been well spent.

Edith and her nurse also felt great satisfaction in having helped one who was so deserving, and who tried so hard to help herself and her parents.

M. N.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

237. What were the names of the sons of Samuel?

238. Quote a passage in which our Lord sets forth the duty of forgiveness and its extent.

239. What sin is mentioned as having caused the destruction of Tyre?

240. In the parable of "The rich man and Lazarus," how many brethren does the rich man say he had still living?

241. Quote the words used by Moses at the commencement and termination of the journeyings of the Israelites.

242. Where were the bones of Saul and Jonathan buried? and by whom?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 576.

224. Two talents of silver and two changes of garments (2 Kings v. 23).

225. In order to stir up the zeal of the other Churches (2 Cor. ix. 2).

226. "They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; *adder's poison* is under their lips" (Ps. cxl. 3).

227. By covering the spies with stalks of flax, and afterwards by letting them down through a window by a cord (Joshua ii. 6—15).

228. St. Peter, St. James, and St. John (Matt. xvii. 1).

229. Ahab (2 Kings xxii. 30—34), and Josiah (2 Chron. xxxv. 22, 23).

230. "The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle" (2 Thess. iii. 17).

SONNET.

AS our good Lord, the gentle Nazarene,
Once human, vehement with sheer disdain,
Drave from the cloister of the sacred fane,
By force and scourge, the clamorous and obscene,
Together with blasphemers, and the mean
Usurers; nor less than these, the folk whose gold
Purchased the purple and fine raiment, sold
To clothe the leper-scars of the unclean;
So durst I deem to-day His anger moves
To answer them in marriage whoso deal,
As erst they dealt who haggled o'er the doves
On holy ground; and no less such as kneel
To ratify the traffic with an oath,
Which under His chastisement bringeth both.

HORACE YERWORTH.



(*Drawn by* LIZZIE LAWSON.)

EVIL THOUGHTS.

"Better is he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city."—PROV. xvi. 32.

WHENCE springs the evil thought?
A bat, with noiseless flight,
It enters in, unsought,
Attracted by the light;
Or like a deadly snake
Deep hidden in the heart,
Which doth its victim wake
To feel the pois'nous dart.

Indignantly he spurns
The reptile thought away;
With shame his spirit burns
To think such thoughts hold sway.
Confess them? No: nor probe
Their source with morbid care;
It will not cleanse the robe
To think how spots came there.

And yet sometimes, alas!—
Like as a cagèd bird
Before a looking-glass
At first with fright is stirred,
Then, wheedling, looks again,
And loves its imaged self—
So man will first refrain,
And then deceive himself!

But, come ye whence ye may,
This thing, O thoughts, I know:
At those who go astray
A stone I dare not throw.
Degrees there are of ill;
Some conquer, while some fall.
To master thought and will
Is noblest work for all.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXI.—TOM DECLARES HIMSELF.

IT was a chilly evening, but they had wrapped themselves up well, and stood for the last time under the sycamore-tree, Dorothy in the midst, striving hard to keep back her tears. Sally made no effort to hide hers, but let them fall freely. It was their last evening at Hampstead.

"I shall get some work to do," said Will.

"So shall I," said Sally.

"Should like to know what a shrimp like you could do!" Tom remarked, scornfully.

"I can draw men and women," said Sally.

"So you can, darling," said Dorothy; "and it *is* such a blessing to be able to say you can do even one thing. I wonder if Sally *could* earn anything. Men and women are things we like to see, even in pictures."

"Oh yes, we're mighty fond of ourselves," remarked Tom.

"Tom, how much are you going to give the dad out of your money?" asked Will.

"Mind your own business!" was the polite reply. "Dorothy, when do you begin to teach your brats?"

"You shouldn't call them brats," replied his sister. "I begin on Monday."

"Oh well, Sally and Will, you had better go in. You'll find Blakesley there."

"Mr. Blakesley there?" said Dorothy, almost eagerly.

"Yes; they'll tell him you are out here; so if he wants to see you he'll come."

She was anxious to see him to-night. She wanted to hear what he would say when she told him that she had got work; but she was ashamed to confess it, even to herself, and so she remained behind with Tom. She pulled her warm shawl closer round her, and stood waiting for him to speak; but he said nothing—only stood whistling in an uneasy sort of way to himself. So she sat down on the seat—the dear old rickety seat on which she would never sit again perhaps, and began to day-dream. It was strange how much George Blakesley entered into her thoughts, now that he had, as far as was in his power, withdrawn himself from her life. She was so anxious that he should see that she was not the mere weak girl he had thought, and that she could put some real work and earnestness into her life, when the time came that they were really needed. She did not care for *him*, but she knew that his praise was a thing worth caring for, because he only gave it when it had been earned; and so she waited, and tried to imagine what he would say to her first real step in a right direction.

"Doll," said Tom, solemnly and slowly breaking in upon her thoughts, "do you know I think I'm a beast."

"Tom!" she almost screamed, in her surprise.

"So I am, Doll."

"Why?" she anxiously inquired.

"Because, dear, the dad's ruined, and we are all on the highway to the workhouse, and you have exerted yourself, and are going to teach brats, and Will talks about grinding, and even Sally wants to help. And I can't do anything, though I have fifty pounds a year."

"But why can't you?"

"Because I kept that boat all the summer, and you know what a lazy lot we were, and how you and all of us used to hang about."

Dorothy winced beneath his words, though there was no thought of reproach in them.

"And so I used to get off easily, and pay another fellow to take some of my work, and he's made a lot of mulls somehow, and now I believe I shall get dismissed—sent off, you know. I owe a lot on the boat score, and here I am. I am a regular beast, Doll!

Blakesley told me as much when I began, but I wouldn't take it."

"Oh, Tom, can't you work hard and retrieve?"

"I mean to try. I'm not going to be outdone by a girl. I have got out of the boat business, that's one comfort. Look here, Doll, I shall let you manage my money in future, and I'll pay off as fast as I can, and get into something else, if I'm kicked out where I am, and make a good start. Oh, here comes Blakesley, so I'd better go. Give us a kiss, Dolly. I'm glad you are not going to be married; we should have missed you awfully."

CHAPTER XXXII.—"ANOTHER GOOD-BYE."

"Well, Dorothy," said George Blakesley, in his usual quiet voice, "are you holding a reception under the branches of your favourite tree?" Then he sat down by her side, and Tom went in-doors, and Dorothy told him about her pupils. He seemed pleased, but he gave her no praise, and she was disappointed. "You can do more than three hours' work a-day," he said," and I have heard of something that would do for you, I think, but I do not know whether you would have the courage to accept it."

"Yes I should," she said.

"It is this. Aunt Josephine is writing a book, something about the better education of women, and she wants an amanuensis. You write a good hand, and she would only want you in the afternoon or evening."

"But I should be so ashamed to go; they must think so badly of me!" and she turned her face away.

"No, they don't do that," he answered in a low voice. "I know it would be awkward for you at first; the consideration is whether you ought or not to lose the work." She sat considering for a long time, and she answered slowly, "I ought *not* to lose it."

"Then I will speak to her about it this evening," and he rose to go.

"Are you going now?" she asked. She thought he had meant to sit by her side and talk to her, as he used a month since, but he answered almost distantly, if not coldly, "Yes; I promised to be at my aunt's by seven; and, Dorothy"—he turned round and looked at her face for the first time that evening—"I shan't see you again for some time. I am going away for three months."

"Going away?" she said, in dismay. "What for?" He answered as if he resented the question, and she remembered suddenly that she had no right to ask it.

"On business partly," he said, "and partly for health;" and then she, looking at his face, saw for the first time how worn it had grown, and how ill he looked; how all, save the kind blue eyes, seemed changed; she darted forward, and put her hand upon his arm.

"George, have you forgiven——?" but she stopped, and did not know what to do, for he stood and looked at her in surprise, and gently enough drew her hand away from his arm. "I will go and see Miss Josephine to-morrow," she said, meekly; "but shall I not see you again before you go?"

"No; I start for Paris to-morrow week. Good-bye, Dorothy."

"But you will come and see us before you go?"

"No, I shall not have time."

"Good-bye," she said, coldly, turning away to hide the tears in her eyes.

"Good-bye," he said, and went.

She returned to the seat under the sycamore-tree, and sat down. It was a terrible disappointment to her. She thought he would have been pleased, and have praised her. She felt as if half her efforts had been made to gain his approval; "And he could not have loved me very much," she thought, "for he seems to have forgotten all the past, and to have accepted the position of an ordinary friend quite contentedly—I wonder that he ever loved me at all, though." She sighed. "Oh, my dear old sycamore, to think I shall never stand beneath you again!" And then she thought of the morning when Venus was buried, and all that had been since, and of the old vexed question. "I have answered *that*," she thought, "and found something to live *for;* but I wish life was not such a wearying thing—I am tired of it already." She was so fond of the garden—she felt almost as if she could not leave it—there were so many memories bound up with it. But when she went in-doors at last she forgot the sycamore-tree, and the underwood, and the old seat, and Venus's grave, and everything else; for there, awaiting her, was a letter.

"Mr. Blakesley took it in," said Sally, "and I told him it was from Mr. Fuller, for I know his writing."

"It is only to wish me good-bye," said Dorothy—"I was out when he came, you know." And she put it into her pocket. She executed all the little household duties which lately she had taken on herself, and waited till she escaped for the night before she broke the seal of her letter. This was what he said:—

Dear Dorothy,—You were out when I came the other day, so we did not say good-bye. I shall only be away for a few months though, and when I come back my first visit will be to Dorothy, and perhaps she may have forgotten the past, or all in it that made her so angry. I think you were quite right to be angry, and I shall never forgive myself for all I said and did; but now—now that you are free, will you try and forgive me? My dear little Dorothy, I often think of the happy days we spent before Netta came and bewitched us all, and what excellent friends we were.

There is such a wild sea down on this rough Cornish coast; you would delight in it so. We are very much alike, Dorothy; I have often thought that, and we should both be content to dream our lives away in a place like this, I believe. I wish you were here. How could you be so foolish, child—I never forgot

you—I was only fascinated. Before the spring comes I shall be back at Hampstead with you, and sitting under the sycamore-tree. Good-bye, child.—Yours ever,

ADRIAN FULLER.

She looked up when she had finished reading it. It had made her heart beat and her fingers tremble, and the old feeling came rushing back, and Netta's words with it, that perhaps some day she should marry him; but the new feeling conquered it. "No," she said, "life is made for something better than dreams." Then she thought, with a sigh—"And I have no heart. I only love just my home people, and that is natural, but all my other feelings seem just to consist of restless longings and wishes, and something I do not understand."

The next day they left Hampstead, and in the afternoon Dorothy went to Miss Josephine's, and became her amanuensis.

(*To be continued.*)

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE.—I.

BY THE RIGHT REVEREND THE LORD BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL.

THERE is perhaps no portion of the New Testament which has more distinct characteristics, or more clearly sets forth the individuality of the sacred writer, than the Gospel which is the subject of the present article. These characteristics, and some traces of this individuality, shall now be placed before the general reader. We must, first, however, specify what little we certainly know of the outward history of the thoughtful and discriminating proselyte who has left to us this record of his Master's words and works.

The three facts which the writings of the New Testament appear to warrant our distinctly stating with reference to St. Luke are, *first*, that he was a companion of St. Paul; *secondly*, that he was not of the circumcision; *thirdly*, that his profession was that of a physician.

Of these the first fact is clearly of the greatest moment, and is providentially that of which we have the most satisfactory proofs. That he, whom the apostle characterised in his Epistle to Philemon as his "fellow-worker" (*συνεργός*), really showed himself as such by his companionship with St. Paul in his second journey, cannot reasonably be doubted. None of the speculations which of late years have been put forward in reference to the composition of the evangelist's second work have ever shaken the trustworthiness of the familiar inference from the narrative, viz., that St. Luke accompanied St. Paul on his second journey; that he joined him at Troas, and thence proceeded by way of Samothrace to Philippi; and that on the apostle's return to that city, after the tumult at Ephesus, he went with him to Jerusalem, and onward to Rome. There, from St. Paul's notice in the concluding verses of his Epistle to the Colossians, we know that he remained with the apostle during his first imprisonment; and then, too, again we find the faithful evangelist, at the close of the apostle's second imprisonment, his supporter and comforter when all others had fallen away. This latter fact, I need hardly say, is supplied to us by the concluding verses of the apostle's last writing—his second Epistle to Timothy.

The second fact in reference to our evangelist is perhaps somewhat less certain, though still so reasonable a deduction from the 10th, 11th, and 14th verses of the 4th chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians, that few critics of any reputation have hesitated to accept it as the most natural interpretation of the apostle's words in the passage to which I refer. There, it will be observed, the salutations which the apostle conveys to the Church at Colossæ are sent from friends and well-wishers, who appear to have belonged to two different sections of the great household of faith. Aristarchus, Marcus, and Justus are mentioned first, and are specified as "being of the circumcision." Epaphras, Lucas, and Demas follow next, but in a group so far detached from the one that preceded as to make the supposition in the highest degree natural that these last were *not* of the circumcision, and as such were separately mentioned by the apostle.

The third fact relative to the evangelist—that he was a physician—is also distinctly specified in the passage we have just noticed, where, as we all doubtless well remember, St. Luke is named by him whom he so faithfully loved and followed as "the beloved physician." It has, I am aware, been urged by Calvin that this very specification is unfavourable to the identification of the Lucas here mentioned with the evangelist. It has been said that the apostle's follower and friend would have received at his hands some more honourable title, and would have had his greeting conveyed in terms which could scarcely have failed to refer to the high estimation in which he must now have been held by the Church at large. The simple and unobtrusive title of the "beloved physician" must, it has been urged, belong to one of a far humbler position in the Church of Christ than that of St. Luke the Evangelist. The objection is not without some plausibility, but when we pause only to consider how many possible reasons there might have

been why St. Luke might have been so brought to the remembrance of the Colossians, and further remember that antiquity never appears to have doubted the correctness of the identification, we may very properly abide by the current opinion.

These three facts relative to the third evangelist have received, as we might well imagine, several amplifications from the earlier ecclesiastical writers. Of these it is only necessary to allude to the direct statements of Eusebius and Jerome, that the beloved physician was of Antioch, and the indirect comment of the latter of these writers that he was a proselyte, neither of which appears in itself unlikely, or in any way incompatible with the three facts which we have derived from the notices of the New Testament. It is right, however, to notice that Irenæus, who has devoted a chapter (Hær. iii. 10.) to the consideration of St. Luke's Gospel, confines himself solely to the three scriptural statements relative to the evangelist; and it may be added that Chrysostom, whose long connection with Antioch so often and so naturally leads him to dwell upon its early associations with Christianity, has nowhere claimed the evangelist as belonging to his native city.

Reverting then to these facts relative to St. Luke—that he was a companion of St. Paul, that he was of Gentile descent, and that he was by calling a physician—we can hardly forbear at once proceeding onward to the question, how far, and in what degree, we can trace any indication of these three facts in the inspired document which we are soon about to consider? Do we in any way find the writer reflected in his works? Does the companion of St. Paul disclose himself in a Gospel that was not improbably composed under that apostle's general supervision? Does the Gentile appear in his relation of the words and works of Him who was no less the Light of the Gentiles than the glory of His people Israel? Are there any traces, however slight, of the earthly calling of the historian-evangelist in the record which he was moved to set forth of the mercies of the great Healer of the children of men? Such questions are not devoid either of interest or usefulness. They serve to connect the inspired writer with his works in a way that is both natural and reasonable, and they also suitably prepare us for a more complete appreciation of those particular characteristics which I will afterwards proceed to delineate.

The first question, how far the connection of our evangelist with St. Paul appears in his Gospel, demands very careful consideration, as it would certainly seem that the opinion of some degree of dependence of the evangelist on the apostle has found favour with early and trustworthy writers. Not to multiply quotations, which will be found in almost all popular introductions to the study of the Gospels, it may be enough to cite the following very distinct statement of Irenæus—a writer, be it observed, whom we have already noticed as at once full and explicit on St. Luke's Gospel, and yet apparently careful to make no additions from mere hearsay or tradition. His words are as follows:—"Luke, too, companion of St. Paul, put down in a book the Gospel which the latter was in the habit of preaching." If we add to this the short but equally pertinent statement of Tertullian, "Luke's digest is usually ascribed to Paul," we have two observations from trustworthy writers, dating backward, the one nearly as far as to the middle of the second century, the latter to a period not more than half a century later, which certainly cannot be dismissed without consideration. It will be observed, however, that the question with which we are most interested, and which belongs almost wholly to the province of internal evidence and criticism, the reflection on St. Luke's Gospel of St. Paul's teaching, is somewhat different from that to which the quotations we have made really were intended to form the answer. The comments rather bear upon, and probably were distinctly intended by the writers to bear upon, the general question of the authority of St. Luke's Gospel. The more clearly substantiated dependence of St. Mark's Gospel on the teaching and preaching of St. Peter, suggested probably the idea of a similar dependence of the Gospel of one who was not an apostle upon the teaching of one who was; and who, as his own words several times clearly imply, was specially informed by revelation as to some, at least, of the leading points in his Master's history. However this may be, I certainly see no reason for calling in question the fact generally, nor can I admit (with some recent writers on St. Luke) that judicious historical criticism rejects such statements as ill-founded or gratuitous. It would seem to be perfectly reasonable that there should be some degree of spiritual dependence in the case of one like St. Luke on the great apostle of the Gentiles, and it ever seems to be a subject for thankfulness to Almighty God that the connection of the evangelist with St. Paul was so close and persistent. At the same time it seems proper to separate the statements of antiquity from the question with which we are more immediately engaged, and which belongs in a great degree to the province of modern controversy. What we have now to consider is a purely literary question, which has to be answered by the results of a fair and unprejudiced examination of the contents of the Gospel now before us. Our question is not, does the third Gospel *depend* upon the teaching of St. Paul—but, does it, as we might be led to think from the connection between the evangelist and the apostle, reflect any of the peculiarities of that teaching? The answer cannot

be made quite so readily as many of our modern writers seem disposed to imagine. It is easy enough to answer sweepingly in the negative, and it is not much more difficult to answer hastily in the affirmative, on the strength of a specious list of coincidences; but it is not quite so easy to make our answer, if we agree first to give just weight on the one hand to passages and sentiments of real and unquestionable similarity, and on the other hand to reject those coincidences which appear to have arisen merely from the oneness of the Gospel-message, and not from any marked peculiarities in the mode of delivering it. We shall perhaps be confirmed in our view that the question is not very easy, and, it may be added, not wholly free from possibilities of biassed judgment, if we just pause for a moment to consider the very opposite decisions arrived at by two critics who have investigated the present question. On the negative side we have Dr. Davidson, who, in his introduction to this Gospel, conceives the tradition of the dependence of St. Luke's Gospel on the preaching of St. Paul to rest on no good foundation, though he candidly supplies us with a list of some striking accordances. On the affirmative side we have Dr. Reitschl, of Tübingen, who, in the second part of his treatise on St. Luke and Marcion, strongly urges that the evangelist's reproduction of St. Paul's sentiments is distinctly to be traced in several passages relating to the abrogation of the law, in various comments relating to the apostles and the seventy disciples, in the recognition of the Gentiles, and his general representation of our Lord as the victor of the powers of darkness rather than as the merely Jewish Messiah. Here are two very different opinions: to which are we to incline? On which side is the weight of evidence? At first sight it would seem clearly on the side of the German critic. The list of identities in sentiment between the apostle and the evangelist, as put forward by Dr. Reitschl, is certainly large and comprehensive; the denial of Dr. Davidson is in the face of some admitted similarities. And yet a nearer inspection of the recorded similarities will almost certainly induce us to modify our judgment. Most of them are only such as an ingenious observer might produce from a comparison of any other Gospel with the Epistles of St. Paul. The few that really seem to carry conviction may be set aside by the production of dissimilarities of teaching on the very same points, fully as strong as the specified likenesses. Nay, even the general impression (the thing after all which in these matters most tends to persuade us), that there is *some* sort of agreement in expression between the sentiments of St. Paul and St. Luke, may be explained far more readily and satisfactorily, on the assumption of St. Luke's Gentile origin, than on that of his dependence on the apostle of the Gentiles. The result, then, at which the cautious reader and critic would arrive, after considering the evidence on both sides, would probably be nothing more definite than this: that there are a few undoubted instances—such as the account of the institution of the Lord's Supper, the relation of the parable of the two sons, and, still more clearly, of the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee, to the doctrine of justification by faith, and apparently also some scattered comments to the same effect, in which a similarity of sentiment between St. Paul and his companion are certainly to be recognised, but that these are too few to be adduced as internal illustrations of that connection between the two inspired men of which history informs us. I do not, then, venture to deny that the teaching of St. Paul may not have been permitted to guide St. Luke in his selection of some of those words and works of our Lord which he alone records; but I think it is fair to say that it has not yet been satisfactorily proved. It is one thing to believe with the writers of antiquity that there may have been some spiritual dependence existing between the "beloved physician" and St. Paul; it is another to assert that there is clear internal evidence of it in the writings which these inspired men have left for our learning.

I have dwelt upon this question, because it will be found to involve several serious considerations which reach beyond the mere literary point of view in which we have been regarding it, and because I do not think it has always been sufficiently disentangled from ecclesiastical traditions with which it does not stand in any necessary connection.

"ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."

BY THOMAS ARCHER.

GIVING THE FEEBLE STRENGTH.—II.

CONTINUING our walk round the hospital, we notice the three consulting-rooms, where the physicians attend daily at two o'clock, each to see his own patients, and the reception-room, where an officer takes the letters of introduction, and exchanges them for attendance cards. This is the door of the museum; and though we shall be admitted, if you choose to accompany me, it is, like other surgical museums,

of professional more than general interest, and not a public portion of the hospital. Turning into the great main corridor, with its peculiar honeycombed red-brick ceiling and pleasant sense of light and air, we will ascend the broad staircase to the wards, those of the women being on the first floor, while the men occupy a precisely similar ward on the second. These wards consist of a series of rooms of from two to six, eight, and twelve beds each, so as to afford opportunity for the proper classification of the cases. A day-room is also provided for each set of wards, so that those patients who are well enough to leave their beds may take their meals there, or may read, play at chess, draughts, or bagatelle, or occupy themselves with needlework. These wards and their day-rooms all open into a light cheerful corridor, with large windows, where the inmates may walk and talk, or read and rest, sitting or reclining upon the couches and settees that are placed at intervals along the wall. All through these rooms and corridors the air is kept at a medium temperature of from 55 to 60 degrees by means of hot-air or hot-water apparatus, the latter being in use as well as the former. You noticed, as we stood in the grounds, a large square structure of a monumental character, that was in fact the chamber through the sides of which draughts of air are carried to channels beneath the building, there they are drawn around a furnace, to be heated, and to escape through pipes that are grouped about the entire building. In order to ensure the necessary comfort of patients requiring a higher temperature, each ward is provided with an open fire-place.

It is now just dinner-time. The ample rations of meat and vegetables, fish and milk, and the various "special diets," are coming up on the lift from the kitchens, and in the women's day-room a very comfortable party is just sitting down to the mid-day meal. Here, as elsewhere, greater patience and more genuine cheerfulness are to be observed among the women than is as a rule displayed by the men, and there are not wanting signs of pleasant progress towards recovery, of grateful appreciation of the benefits received, and of a hopeful trusting spirit, which goes far to aid the doctor and the nurse. There are, of course, some sad sights. Looking into the wards, we may see more than one woman for whom only a few more hours of this mortal life remain; more than one child whose emaciated form and face looks as though death itself could bring no great change. Yet it must be remembered that cases likely soon to terminate fatally are not admitted. The severity of the diseases and their frequently fatal character under any condition will account for the large proportion of sickness unto death which finds here alleviation but not absolute cure; though, of course, the sufferers from heart disease, who are on the whole the most cheerful, as well as those whose affections of the lungs can be sensibly arrested, if not altogether healed, are frequently restored to many years of useful work in the world. On this second storey, in the men's ward, there are some very serious cases, and some sights that have a heartache in them, yet they are full of significance, for many of them include the spectacle of God's sweet gift of trust and patience—the mighty courage of a quiet mind. Yonder is a courageous fellow, who, suffering from a terrible aneurism, had to cease his daily labour, and now lies on his back, hopeful of cure, with a set still face and a determined yet wistful look at the resident medical officer, or the nurse who adjusts the india-rubber ice-bag on his chest. Here, near the door, is that which should make us bow our heads low before the greatest mystery of mortal life. Not the mystery of death, but the mystery of meeting death and awaiting it. A brave, patient, noble man is sitting up in that bed, his high forehead, fair falling hair, long tawny beard, and steady placid eye, reminding one of some picture of Norseman or Viking. Lean and gaunt enough in frame, his long thin hand is little but skin and bone, but it is clasped gently by the sorrowing wife, who sits beside him, and glances at us through tearful eyes as we enter. One can almost believe that the sick man who is going on the great journey whither he cannot yet take the wife who loves him, has been speaking of it calmly, there is such an inscrutable look of absolute repose in that face. He is a Dane, and the doctor tells us has borne his illness and great pain with a quiet courage that has challenged the admiration of those about him—a courage born of simple faith, let us believe, a calm resting on an eternal foundation of peace. Here, in the corridor, is a party, some of its members still very weak and languid, who, having just dined, are about to take the afternoon lounge, with book or newspaper, and, leaving them, we will conclude our visit by descending to the basement, whence the chief medicine comes in the shape of wholesome nourishing food, of meat and fish, of pure farina, of wine, and milk, and fresh eggs, of clean pure linen, and even of ice, for ice is a large ingredient here, and several tons are consumed every year. The domestic staff have their apartments in this basement portion of the building, another division of which is occupied by the kitchens and store-rooms, while lifts for coal and daily meals and every other requisite, ascend to the upper wards, and shoots or wells from the upper floors convey linen and bedding that require washing, as well as the dust and refuse of the wards, to special receptacles.

The kitchen itself is a sight worth seeing, with

its wide open range, where prime joints are roasting, or have been roasted, and are now being cut into great platefuls for the ordinary full-diet patients. In the great boilers and ovens, vegetables and boiled meats, farinaceous puddings, rice, tapioca, fish, and a dozen other articles of pure diet are being prepared, while a reservoir of strong beef-tea represents the nourishment of those feeble ones to whom liquid, representing either meat or milk, is all that can be permitted. We have little time to remain in the separate rooms, which are cool tile-lined larders, where bread and milk and meat are kept, but among the records of donations and contributions to the hospital it is very pleasant to read of the multifarious gifts of food and other comforts sent from time to time by benevolent friends. They consist of baskets of game, fruits, rice, tea, flour, books, warm clothing for poor patients leaving the hospital, prints, pictures, fern-cases, all kinds of useful articles, showing how thoughtful the donors are of what will be a solace and a comfort to the patients, while not the least practically valuable remittances are bundles of old linen. Still more touching, however, are the records of gifts brought by patients themselves, or by their friends.

"I was a patient here four 'years ago," says a man who has made his way to the secretary's room, "and I made up my mind that if ever I could scrape a guinea together I should bring it, and now I have, and here it is, if you'll be so good as to take it, for I want to show I'm truly grateful."

"If you'll please accept it from us; my husband and I have put by fifteen shillings, and want to give it to the hospital for your kindness to our son, who was here before he died."

These are the chronicles that show this to be a people's hospital indeed, and that should open the hearts of those who can take pounds instead of shillings. In such cases the secretary has ventured to remind the grateful donors that they may be unable to afford to leave their savings, but the evident pain, even of the hint of refusal, was reason for accepting the poor offering. Poor, did I say? nay, rich—rich in all that can really give value to such gifts, the wealth of the heart that must be satisfied by giving.

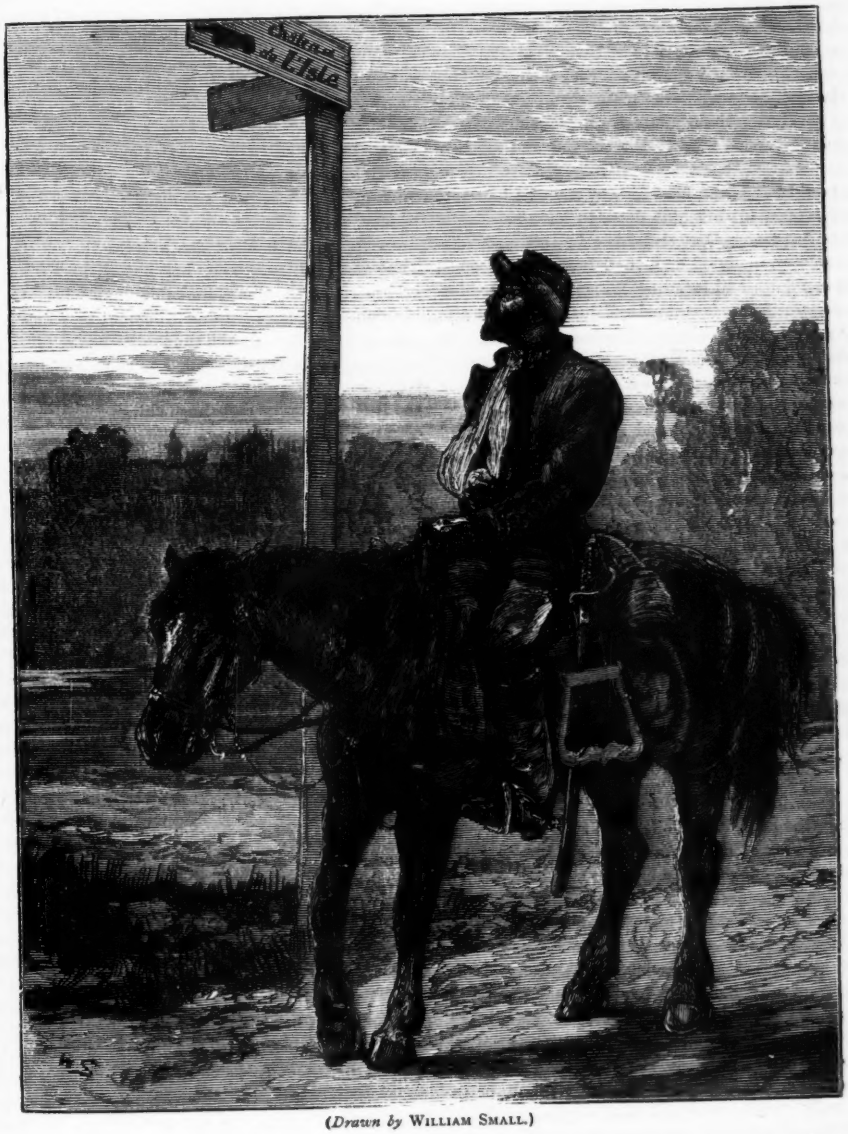
There is one more adjunct to this great human conservatory which we must see before we leave. Down four shallow stone steps from the corridor, and along a cheerful quiet sub-corridor, is the chapel. A very beautiful building, with no stained glass or sumptuous detail of ornament, and yet so admirable in its simple architectural decoration and beautiful proportions, that it is an example of what such a place should be. It is capable of seating three or four hundred persons, and visitors are freely admitted to the Sunday services when there is room, though of course seats are reserved for the patients, who have "elbows" provided in their pews, that they may be able to lean without undue fatigue. The chapel itself was a gift of a beneficent friend, and was presented anonymously. One day an architect waited on the committee, and simply said that if they would permit a chapel to be erected on a vacant space in their grounds close to the main building, he had plans for such a structure with him, and the whole cost would be defrayed by a client of his, who, however, would not make known his name. The gift was accepted, and the benevolent contract nobly fulfilled. I should be glad to hear that some other charitable donor had sent in like manner an offer of funds to fill those two great vacant wards which, waiting for patients, are among the saddest sights in this hospital.

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE glory of an August sunset had filled all the dome of heaven, as it arched bright and cloudless over the once smiling land of France, and there could not have been conceived a greater contrast than that which existed between the pure pellucid sky overhead, softened by the harmonious blending of its limpid blue with the exquisite opal tints of the western horizon, and the blackened war-racked country which lay beneath it, every step revealing some trace of the destroying legions that so lately had passed over it. Here it was a village burnt almost to the ground, with a few miserable-looking men and women wandering listlessly round the ruins of their once happy homes; there it was a vineyard trampled down by the rushing feet of horses and the wheels of artillery carriages, with all the ripe fruit crushed into the ground, and the vines torn up by the roots, giving no hope for the future; now it was a garden, desolated by the rude hands that had carried off its produce, and cut down its bushes to replenish their camp fires; here and there along the road would be seen a dead horse, which had dropped down from the severity of the march, and occasionally there was darker testimony to the terrible nature of the great struggle, in the body of some unfortunate peasant suspended from a tree be-



(*Drawn by* WILLIAM SMALL.)

"In the fading light he had to go quite close to distinguish what was written."—*p.* 612.

cause he had been suspected of being a spy or a traitor.

In the fair heaven above all was sinless calm and beauty, and on earth nothing was to be seen but the disfiguring traces of strife and ruin, rapine and bloodshed. The wondrous difference between the realm of light and purity and that of darkness and distress, seemed to have struck home forcibly to the weary way-worn man who was riding along slowly on the country road, glancing now to the golden sunset, now to the scarred and stricken land.

It would have been hard for any one who had only known him in his brighter days, to have recognised the gay handsome Bertrand Lisle in this poor disabled soldier, mounted on a tired horse, that seemed as broken down and forlorn-looking as the rider himself. His uniform was stained and dusty, his right arm hung powerless in a sling, his hair and beard had been cut short to lessen the difficulties of the toilette in his present circumstances; but the greatest change was in the expression of his countenance. The pleasant face, that used to be so bright and sunny, was grave and sad, and he looked at least ten years older then he had done but a month before, for men do not pass through such scenes as the dreadful battle of Gravelotte without bearing the mark of its awfulness with them to the grave, even if they have sustained no personal injury. Bertrand was sobered for life by the scenes he had witnessed, and years of thought could not have revealed so much of the mystery of human existence as he had learnt in those tremendous hours of carnage and of suffering.

It had taught him, as nothing else could have done, how utterly ephemeral and hollow are all the hopes and joys which seek to feed upon this mortal life alone; how helpless every human being is in the grasp of destiny, that in an instant can fling him down from the highest summit of his wishes to grovel in the dust, despoiled of all and racked with pain; but best of all was one glorious lesson which he had gained out of that appalling battle-field when the struggle was over.

Disabled as he was, he had gone over it, when the terrible struggle was over, with the surgeons and one or two of the officers, striving to relieve the sufferings of any that were lying wounded but yet alive amidst the confused masses that encumbered the reddened earth; and as he went from heap to heap of the dead, and saw the thousands that had been stricken down in their brightest prime, or in their early youth, with all the purpose of their life unfinished, all its fair promise unfulfilled, the conviction came upon him, with all the strength of an eternal verity, that it was impossible this brief precarious existence could be all for which those men had received the gift of life from the Creator of the universe. Apart from the assurances of revelation, of which Bertrand, though a true believer, had thought as little as men actively engaged in worldly business are apt to think of that which seems as yet so distant from them, there rose within him now the absolute certainty that death, swooping down suddenly upon this incomplete fragment of existence, could not be the close of all moral consciousness—all human powers of enjoyment or of progress—but rather that it must be, in truth, the commencement of that perfect and immortal life for which the Infinite Father first drew us out of the unknown void, and animated our mysterious being with the invisible power of the vital flame. There, not here, must all the hopes and aspirations—the virtues, the beauty, the powers of those he had left in mangled heaps upon the field of death, have their final outcome and fruition. They had but spent their dawn of life on earth, the glorious day must brighten to high noon hereafter; no morning out of God's creation ever saw the sun set suddenly when scarcely has he risen above the horizon, nor shall any life that God has given be quenched in final night while yet the roseate glow of early hope shines forth, prophetic of a more enduring glory.

It seemed to Bertrand Lisle, as he rode slowly onward, pondering on these truths, that all the concerns of this world, on which he had so lately dwelt with eager interest, were dwarfed to absolute insignificance before the one thought that, beyond these visible scenes the true life waits us, where all that has been so incomplete, so hollow, so disappointing here, shall have its fulfilment and consummation in bliss. Even the fervent patriotism, to which he had sacrificed so much, had for the time become merged into the one earnest hope that the living spirits of all the countless dead whom he had seen mown down by the blast of war, like forest leaves before the storm, might every one, foeman and friend alike, have passed in safety to the reality of that pure existence for which they had been created. The years which he himself, or any one, could pass in this mortal state seemed to him so fleeting, so uncertain, that he seemed almost incapable of feeling any anxiety as to his own future fate in this world. The passionate love for Lurline, which had made him long so intently to have her by his side, had, for the moment, fastened itself with disquietude only on the thought of her eternal destiny as well as his own. Had that brilliant wilful being ever given an hour's reflection to the time when even her bright eyes must be dimmed by the shades of death, and her musical laughing voice stilled in the impenetrable silence of the grave? He took out her photograph, which he always carried in the breast-pocket of his coat, and looked at it. Yes, there she was, in her coquettish attitude, leaning her pretty head on her hand, with her smiling face turned round to the gazer, and her eyes, even in the dim likeness, having a flashing keenness in their look, which gave a somewhat painful impression of her character when thus separated

from the living witchery of her actual presence. Bertrand half sighed as he looked at it.

"She has never been taught to think of anything but this world," he thought, "but I shall be a different man after what I have seen these last few days, and I may be able to mould her to higher aims."

Then, as in a vision, the pure sweet face of Mary Trevelyan seemed to pass before him, and again he sighed, with a strange mixture of feeling. The remembrance of her quiet reserve and modesty was a great contrast to the look which even the photograph of Lurline wore.

"Dear Mary," he thought; "I believe she half lives in heaven already, well, she has the less need of earthly love," and he put Laura's portrait back in its place close to his heart. Bertrand was aware, however, that his present state of feeling—the result of a tremendous shock—neither would nor could endure in all its first fervour throughout the working days of life, and already even now he had to turn his mind to the problem, which had to be solved every night, as to where he was to find a lodging till the morning for himself and his horse. Since he had started on his difficult journey with the dispatches for the military commander in Paris, he had been obliged to trust entirely to the hospitality of his countrymen, and had experienced many strange vicissitudes in the reception he met with. For the most part he was made welcome as a soldier of France to a night's shelter wherever he asked it, from noble or peasant alike, and if any looked doubtfully or suspiciously at him, he had but to chant in a low voice the first verse of the popular song, "*Mourir pour la Patrie*," to ensure his being offered all there was to give; but the state of the country was such that with the best will possible, it was often but a sorry entertainment which could be provided for him: sometimes he found himself in a hamlet which had been almost entirely burnt down, or in a *château* which had been sacked from attic to basement, but on the other hand he sometimes met with a splendid welcome in a country house lying out of the line of march, and therefore untouched, or found a more modest but comfortable home in the house of a village curé.

Bertrand was now travelling through a thoroughly rural district, and he saw no sign of any human habitation far or near. Night was coming on apace, and for the sake of his poor tired horse as much as his own, he became very anxious to find some place where food and shelter could be obtained for them both. It was a picturesque thickly-wooded country; and as he trotted slowly along he came to a point where a narrower road branched off from that on which he was riding, and a tall white sign-post stood at the junction of the two with some words written on it, and a hand painted black pointing down the side-way. Bertrand rode up to this welcome guide that he might ascertain whether it indicated the path to any village, and in the fading light he had to go quite close to distinguish what was written on it; when he had read the words he gave a violent start, and remained motionless on his horse, as if petrified to stone, for the inscription on the sign-board was simply this, "*Au château de L'Isle.*" Bertrand Lisle had heard that name before; yes, though his father had never breathed it to him nor wished that he should know what their devotion to the doctrine of the divine right of kings had cost them, yet he well remembered that it had escaped the lips of an old French gentleman who had come to visit his parents when he was a boy; he recollected how he sat unnoticed in a corner, drinking in every word this old man said about the "Château de L'Isle," his father's rightful inheritance, and the rich estates that belonged to it, which it now flashed upon him had been mentioned as lying in precisely the "Department" of France in which he at present was. Some dim confused reminiscence too he had of a relative of their name and blood who had usurped his father's place, and of the bitter scorn with which Mr. Lisle spoke of him. Bertrand had been but a child when he overheard this conversation, and though it excited him greatly at the time, it had gradually passed from his mind, but now the sight of that name seemed to have struck the key-note which revived the whole in his memory, and he sat there pondering over his recollections with the keenest interest and excitement, for many more minutes than he was aware of. He could not doubt that by a strange Providence he had been actually led almost to the gate of his own old home, and under the strong influence of the religious feelings which had so lately been enacted in his mind, he could not but feel that he must have been brought there for some special purpose. He had not the smallest idea to whom the château now belonged, or who the relative had been whom his father had so vehemently repudiated, but it did not take him long to make up his mind that he would seek a shelter that night in the ancient abode of his ancestors and nowhere else.

The resolution was no sooner formed than he put it in execution: he turned his weary horse into the side-path, and went on for nearly a mile through a wood with occasional glimpses of an open country lying beyond, till he saw before him a high wall, enclosing what was evidently an extensive park shaded by very fine old trees. It was clearly a private residence, for it was entered by a huge iron gate with a quaint little lodge set on one side of it, and two fierce-looking stone griffins guarding it from pillars to the right and left. Bertrand felt, as if by intuition, that he was at the gate of his rightful home, and, dismounting, he led his horse up to it, and pulled a massive iron bell-handle which hung at one side; it seemed rusty from age, and the sound it woke was harsh and loud, echoing down among the old trees with a discordant peal.

XUM

CHAPTER XXXIV.

As the sound of the bell died away among the trees, an old woman came out from the lodge, and reconnoitered Bertrand for a few minutes through the bars of the gate, without making the slightest movement to let him in; when he spoke to her she shook her head, and pointed to her ears as an intimation that she was deaf; finally she turned round and went off in what he supposed to be the direction of the house, and he concluded that she had gone to call some one else. In this he proved to be correct, as it was not long before a man-servant, in old-fashioned livery, came down the avenue towards him; he was a thin elderly man, with a somewhat haggard worn-out look, and he too came and peered at Bertrand through the iron bars before attempting to let him in. It was quite dark by this time, and in the gathering shadows he seemed only able to distinguish that it was a soldier who stood there with the bridle of his horse hanging over his left arm, for he said, in a suspicious tone, "Is it a Prussian?"

"A Prussian! no indeed," exclaimed Bertrand; "I am a French officer, a friend. I am travelling to Paris on a mission from the army, but my horse is exhausted, and I am disabled, and I have come to ask for a night's shelter in the château: I suppose you have shown hospitality to some of our troops before now."

"Doubtless; I will go and ask my master."

"Your master is the Comte de L'Isle, is he not?" said Bertrand at a venture, devoured by anxiety as he was to ascertain whether any of his father's family still held possession of the old home.

"Certainly," answered the man; "and, monsieur, by what name shall I announce you to my master?"

"Say that I am Bertrand de L'Isle, his relative," he replied; and it seemed to him as if a voice within him that was not his own had given the answer.

Its effect upon the servant was very startling: he uttered a great cry, flung his arms above his head, and turning round, without another word, fled up the avenue as fast as his somewhat attenuated limbs could carry him. Anxious as he was, Bertrand could hardly help smiling at the absurd position in which he was placed; but he felt convinced from the man's manner that he meant to come back, and he was not mistaken. In the course of a very few minutes he reappeared, hurrying to the gate as quickly as he could. Hastily he unlocked it, flinging back its ponderous weight with some difficulty as it swung round on its creaking hinges, while, with a very low bow, he advanced to Bertrand, and took the horse's bridle from his hand.

"Enter, sir," he said. "It is Providence who has conducted you here. Monsieur le Comte awaits you with impatience. Permit me to follow you with the horse; the avenue leads straight to the château; you cannot mistake it."

Bertrand merely bent his head, and walked on in silence between the two rows of magnificent old trees that lined either side of the way. He felt like a man in a dream. He was treading the soil that had owned the lordship of his ancestors for centuries back; he was about to enter the home of his fathers, to meet one linked to him in name and blood—by what relationship he knew not, whose very existence had been unknown to him half an hour before. How and why had he been led to this one spot on all the fair face of France with which he had any connection? Certainly, the old servant must be right, and Providence had brought him hither for some purpose yet unknown.

So he paced on silently along the sombre avenue, with the trees meeting nearly over his head, and at last the glimmer of lights began to appear through the branches, and soon he emerged into an open space, where there was a wide sweep of sufficient extent to allow a carriage and four to turn round it, while before him, showing black against the clear evening sky, rose the outline of a huge old house, with the battlements and turrets which distinguished it as one of the feudal châteaux of former times.

There were lights in many of the windows, and as the clatter of the horse's hoofs was heard on the gravel, the great front door was thrown open, casting a blaze of light on a fountain surrounded by uncouth statues which stood in the centre of the sweep, while two or three servants, bearing torches, hurried down the steps to receive the visitor. One of them took the horse from the butler, another relieved Bertrand of his military cloak and knapsack, and a third led the way into the house; but the old man who had met him at the gate pushed past the men, and waving them all aside, he gravely beckoned to Bertrand to follow him. He moved on before him through the vast hall, which was paved with stone of different tints harmoniously arranged, and lined with suits of armour, and banners hanging from the walls with all the colour faded out of them by age.

The servant opened a door to the right of this hall, and, standing back, signed to Bertrand to pass in. He did so, and found himself in a long lofty room, the floor and ceiling of which were of dark polished oak, the walls almost hidden by well-preserved tapestry, clearly of ancient date; there was a wide open hearth of stone, on which, summer though it still was, some logs of wood were blazing brightly. A table in the centre of the room supported several tall wax candles, but the space they had to illuminate was so vast that they cast but a limited circle of light around them.

Within that circle however sat the only occupant of the room, in a huge easy-chair drawn close to the flaming logs. He was an old man, with thin white hair falling on his shoulders from under a black velvet skull-cap, and a haggard worn face, almost livid in its deadly paleness. He had evidently been originally

a man of small stature, but illness or sorrow had reduced him almost to a skeleton, and it was plain, from the manner in which his shrunken limbs were swathed in wrappings and supported by cushions, that he had completely lost the use of them. The upper part of his body only seemed alive, and his small piercing eyes especially appeared to glow with a lurid light from under his sharply-defined eyebrows. There was an expression of restless misery on his countenance, which it was painful to witness, and he was now gazing towards the door with an eagerness which had something almost wild in its intensity.

"Monsieur le Comte," said the servant, in a low voice, to Bertrand; and then, drawing back, he closed the door, and left him alone with his host. As the new-comer advanced towards the invalid, who was evidently incapable of rising to meet him, his face assumed an expression of mingled terror and longing anxiety; his lips parted breathlessly; his eyes, wide open and staring, fastened upon Bertrand's countenance, till, when he was within a few steps of his chair, he stretched out his thin shrunken hands, and said, with the pure French accent of the old school, which recalled to the young man the tones of his dead father's voice, "Louis de L'Isle! God has heard my prayer! It is—it must be Louis!"

"Not Louis, alas!" said Bertrand. "Louis de L'Isle was my father, and he is dead."

The old man fell back in his chair, with a look of the deepest despondency and disappointment. "If you are his true and legal representative, I may yet, so far as this world is concerned at least, redeem the past. Young man, who are you?"

"Bertrand de L'Isle, the only child of Louis de L'Isle and Caroline (*née* Vernon) his wife."

"Louis de L'Isle and Caroline Vernon! yes, notice of their marriage was sent to be entered in the archives of the family, and an intimation of the birth also of his son; but from that day to this no tidings of him has ever reached this place. For more than twenty years I sought none, but rather strove to lose all trace of him, and I succeeded but too well. For the last five I have sought him with anguish; but God has been merciful at the last. He has not suffered me to perish altogether in despair. He has sent you here, Louis' only son, and the true legitimate heir of our house; and I recognise the purpose for which you have been brought to me. Bertrand de L'Isle, do you know who I am?"

"Your servant told me you were the Comte de L'Isle, but beyond that I know nothing. I came here by no will or purpose of my own, but led surely by a mysterious destiny. Till I saw the name of the Château de L'Isle on the sign-post at the turn of the road, I knew not that the old home of our race still existed, nor did I know that the estates were still held by one of our name."

"Did your father, then, never speak to you of Armand de L'Isle, his uncle?"

"Never," answered Bertrand; but he gave a slight start as he heard the name, which the old man's keen eyes instantly observed.

"Louis was always generous," he said; "but who, then, has spoken to you of Armand?"

"To myself personally no one; but I once heard a conversation, when I was a child, between my father and a French friend, which I had forgotten till the events of this night revived it in my memory, and the name of Armand was mentioned then."

"In terms of bitter reprobation, no doubt?"

Bertrand did not answer.

"Young man, tell me the truth! in such terms they spoke of Armand, did they not?"

"Yes," replied Bertrand.

"And justly!" he said, with a deep sigh; "but hear me, Bertrand; the time of mercy and compassion is surely come, or you had not been here to-night; and I have suffered—ah, heaven, how have I suffered for my sins! listen, then, with gentleness and pity, not with indignation or the desire of revenge, while I tell you that I am Armand, your father's uncle, and, alas! too long his enemy and yours, but that at least I am no longer, only your kinsman now, Bertrand, in blood and name; let me be friends with the last of my race; but for you I am alone on earth; be merciful to me!" He stretched out his hand imploringly to the young man, and Bertrand, who had inherited much of his father's courtly grace, stooped and kissed his uncle's wasted hand. "The kiss of peace, thank Heaven!" said the old man, while a smile lit up his shrunken face. "Ah, Bertrand, my dear nephew, I have much to say to you; but you are fatigued, and in sore need of refreshment, no doubt; I am unable to move from this chair—my prison for five years past—but my servants will attend to your wants, and when you have supped come back to me, that I may open all my aching heart to you." He rang a silver hand-bell that stood on the table near him, and it was immediately answered by the old servant who had conducted Bertrand to the house.

"Show the Comte Bertrand de L'Isle to the best apartments in the house," said his uncle, "and let everything be provided for his comfort and refreshment, and see that no one enters the château this night but himself; I must be alone with him."

The servant bowed, and ushered Bertrand, with the greatest respect, through a suite of princely apartments, till he arrived at a room where supper had already been prepared for him in a very sumptuous style, and which opened into a bed-room where a luxurious couch awaited him that was very different from the resting-places he had found for some time past, and, with the feeling still that he was living in a dream, Bertrand prepared to take advantage of the comforts that surrounded him.

(*To be continued.*)

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. SECOND SERIES. No. 4. A VISIT TO NAZARETH.

Chapter to be read—St. Luke iv. (part of).

INTRODUCTION. Ask where Christ was born. Whose city was it? but did his parents live there? Their city was Nazareth; went there after the flight into Egypt (Matt. ii. 23). Christ lived there with them for thirty years; only one incident given of his life during that time. At last fully grown up. Was thirty years old (Luke iii. 24), the age at which priests began their work (Num. iv. 35); time to begin public work. Was first baptised. Then tempted in the wilderness. Then began his life work. What was that? Remind of past lessons; by miracles, parables, sermons, discourses, example of holy life and patience under suffering, to show that He was not merely a teacher sent from God but the Son of God Himself.

I. THE SYNAGOGUE. (Read Luke iv. 14—20). Picture the scene. Christ had left the village; gone to Judea; been unheard of for a time; now revisits his native country; works miracles, the first being at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, recorded by St. John (chap. ii.). Then other wonderful miracles. The news of His power spreads; all the country rings with it. Is invited to the synagogues: teaches there. Makes the round of them all. At last comes to Nazareth, where had been brought up. Visits the home of His childhood; but where will He be sure to go on the Sabbath? Can imagine the little village synagogue full: the friends and companions of His childhood—His mother, His cousins, &c., all gathered to hear Him. Now the Psalms sung; the first lesson from the law read. He stands up to read the second lesson from the Prophets; finds the chapter appointed for the day, and begins to read. What chapter was it? (Is. lx. 1, 2). When the lesson over what does He do? Compare a similar event in Acts xiii. 14, when St. Paul expounded the Scriptures at Anticch. Notice, Christ sat down to speak. What wonderful words did He say? How was it fulfilled in their ears? When did the Spirit descend upon Him? Probably the Baptism was only a few days before. What was the message of glad tidings to the poor? His very name, Jesus, proclaimed Him the Saviour. Remind how the angel told this to the shepherds, and Simeon declared it in the Temple. The work of salvation now begun. From whose power was Christ to save them? Had Himself just conquered the devil; could, therefore, now enable them to do the same. Surely they would receive this message gladly.

II. CHRIST REJECTED. (Read 22—30). What had the large congregation come together for? Yes; but what do they want besides to hear Christ speak? What did they think He would *do?* Had heard of miracles in Capernaum—surely He will do some in his own city. Did He gratify their curiosity? Rather seemed to repel it; quotes a familiar proverb to them. What instances does He give? Christ would not work miracles among His own people merely to please them. They must accept Him, believe on Him as the apostles did; love Him as Martha and Mary did; look to Him as the woman with the issue of blood, &c.; and *then* He would bless them. How did they like this? Notice, they were (1) *disappointed.* Had come together mainly to see some miracle. Very hard that their old companion would not gratify them. Also, they were (2) *jealous* that others should see His mighty works and not they; but what had they seen all these thirty years? His *life:* of what kind was that? holy, blameless, undefiled. That might have taught them about Him, only their eyes were blinded. Now, what do they do? actually try to cast Him down a precipice. However, His hour not yet come. How does He escape? Passes calmly through them, not afraid and is let alone. So He came to His own, and His own received Him not. He never taught in Nazareth again.

III. PRACTICAL LESSONS. (1) *Jesus Christ's message is the same now.* What were His disciples told to preach to all nations? (Matt. xvi. 16). People's wants, sins, natures are the same now as then. All have sinned, need deliverance from power of sin and Satan. Same message of salvation through Christ alone. (2) *Christ must be received with faith.* They wanted more signs. So often people say, "If I had seen His miracles I would believe." But He has given enough signs. His life and death: the spread of the Gospel: its effect upon the world: all are sufficient signs of the truth of the Gospel. We must ask for more faith. Remind how when Saul forsook God an evil spirit troubled him. How when Judas sold Christ Satan entered into him. So will he always. See awful warning in Prov. i. 24—26. Therefore, call is *now* to accept Christ's offered salvation, *i.e.*, to leave off sin, confess it, mourn over it, ask for pardon, seek forgiveness through Christ, and so be saved.

Questions to be answered.

1. When did Christ begin His public work? Why at that age?
2. Describe His first visit to Nazareth.
3. What chapter did He read, and how did He apply it?
4. With what feelings was the message received?
5. What three practical lessons may we learn?
6. What solemn warning should we take to ourselves?

SURLY BOB.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER I.—IN SCHOOL.

CERTAINLY Bob Saunders, "Surly Bob," as he was styled by his companions, was not an attractive boy. The Sunday scholars at St. Chad's school were as a rule rather a rough ill-looking and unruly set of lads; but foremost among them all was Bob, who distinguished himself by being more rough, ill-looking, and unruly than the rest.

Bob was always looked upon as *the* black sheep in the class; not that he was the only black one there, but that he was considered to be of a deeper dye than the others. For if by chance Bob was absent from his place, the lesson went off comparatively peacefully; but whenever he was present there was sure to be bad behaviour and disturbance of some sort, the blame of which was generally traced to him; for whenever mischief or quarrelling were going forward Bob was almost invariably found to be mixed up in it.

That very afternoon, on coming into school, he had found another boy sitting in the particular seat which he chose to call his, and had suddenly, without waiting to see if his comrade were willing to give it up, dealt him such a box on the ear as quite to upset the balance of the other, who was entirely unprepared for the assault, and in consequence nearly fell right off the form. Before he could recover himself, Bob, muttering "You get out of there, that's my place," gave him a vigorous push, and then slipped into the seat he had been occupying.

Tom Lane, indignant at this treatment, doubled up his fists, and returned the blow that had been dealt him; and there is no knowing to what lengths their angry feelings might have carried them, had not their teacher arrived at that moment, and managed to restore some degree of order. But the two sat for some time regarding one another with menacing looks; Tom shaking his clenched fist at Bob, by way of showing him that he was not going to submit to such treatment, but was determined to "have it out" with his enemy after school, whilst Bob's defiant glances seemed to dare him to "come on."

At length the lesson began; but Bob was in one of his sullen moods this afternoon, and refused to open his mouth; not only allowing every question to remain unanswered so far as he was concerned, but, for some reason only known to himself, maintaining a dogged silence when it came to his turn to read a verse. His teacher at length passed him by, and desired the lad next him to read it instead.

The child obeyed, after a glance at Bob, which was half wondering, half sorrowful, and read in a clear young voice the sacred words. He was a gentle little fellow, the smallest and youngest in the class, with a pale complexion, fair hair, and intelligent face; but, poor boy, he was a cripple, and as he stood to read he was obliged to support himself on his little crutch.

A stranger at a first glance would have thought it impossible that there could be any relationship between the little child with the winning face and the big bully of the class, Bob Saunders, but nevertheless they were brothers; and as the younger resumed his seat, he, either accidentally or on purpose, laid his hand lightly on Bob's knee. The other did not shake it off, he suffered it to remain there as if he had not noticed it, but he turned his head away and gazed steadfastly in another direction, as if determined not to allow himself to look at the child. Was he afraid that his sullenness would melt if brought face to face with the gentleness of the other? or was it that even he himself could see and acknowledge the contrast between them, and took shame to himself for it?

No on-looker could have decided the question; for Bob's countenance always seemed to wear but one expression, and that an unfortunate and forbidding one. No softening look, no ray of interest was ever seen to light it up, as Sunday after Sunday he sat through the lesson, apparently not listening to a single word, as his teacher often despondingly thought. For though frequently discouraged, Mr. Thornton had at different times felt some gleam of hope about the others, when he had noted signs of awakening intelligence on their faces; but Bob seemed beyond all influence, nothing appeared to reach him, nothing to touch him; he still remained the most daring, and quarrelsome, and sullen of the whole party. His character was thoroughly established: he was *the* "bad boy," not only of his class, but of the school.

The school broke up, and the boys streamed out; the enforced order and decorum with which they left the room flung to the winds the moment they got outside, at least by the more disorderly ones, for there were some who went quietly to their homes. But Bob and Tom Lane were not among the latter. They had their quarrel to finish before they separated; and, accordingly, choosing a favourable and tolerably retired spot, they had their fight out, not leaving off until each had given the other a black eye, by way of making an impression.

That done, and Bob feeling he had "settled" Tom, so to speak, for the time, he turned moodily homewards. But it was not much of a home he had—little more than a shelter from the rain, with food sufficient to keep life in him, though not enough to impart warmth or comfort. For Bob and Johnnie

Saunders, being orphans, were left to the care of an uncle and aunt, and they, not being provident or good managers, were always complaining of the hardness of the times, and the difficulty of providing for their own children, "let alone those of other people." So the brothers often came off with but short allowance; not that Mrs. Saunders of set purpose neglected or was unkind to them, but because, when there was not enough for all, it was a matter of course she thought that her own children should be served first.

Moreover, the cottage being small, and part of it let to lodgers, the family were rather cramped for room, and so Bob and Johnnie slept in a little sort of outhouse, which stood at the end of the small back garden. It had evidently been erected in the first place merely as a sort of wash-house or tool-house, and was a tumble-down place, flagged with rough stones, and bitterly cold in the severe weather, which had now prevailed for so long at Crossley. But thither Bob betook himself as soon as he reached the cottage.

He seemed to have expected to find Johnnie there, for though the place was so small that it only needed half a glance to scan the whole, he gave a lingering look all around, as if missing something. Then he shut the door, and remained a moment standing irresolutely, until a low sound of cooing attracted his attention, when, going to the corner whence it proceeded, he drew forth from some place of concealment a pretty little ring-dove.

(*To be continued.*)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

243. What request did the mother of St. James and St. John ask of our Lord?

244. From what two hills were the blessings and cursings pronounced upon the children of Israel; and what tribes took part in each?

245. What two diseases did God especially threaten to bring upon His people for their neglect of His commandments?

246. What example does our Lord give to illustrate the way in which the Israelites broke the commandments of God to follow their own traditions?

247. What man of Israel was stoned for blaspheming God?

248. For what purpose was Aaron's rod, which budded, kept in the Tabernacle?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 592.

231. David (Psalm i. 4).

232. Four (2 Kings vii. 3).

233. Four days (John xi. 39).

234. The waters of the Jordan which came down from above rose up upon an heap; and those that came down toward the sea of the plain failed and were cut off, so that the people passed over right against Jericho (Joshua iii. 16).

235. Drusilla, a Jewess (Acts xxiv. 24).

236. That he might thrust out all their right eyes, and lay it for a reproach upon all Israel (1 Sam. xi. 2).

LOOKING THROUGH.

NO tear she shed, no word she said,
She made no plaint or mean;
But only leaned her aching head
Upon the churchyard stone.

For aye the bitterness is past,
Or e'er the mourner weeps.
Oh, hush! before a grief so vast
How can ye speak? He sleeps.

Ay, well he sleeps! no throb of pain
That silent heart shall stir;
But who will walk from church again
Along the lanes with her?

And who will come at evening-time
To make her garden trim?
How shall she look on others' prime
As she has looked on him?

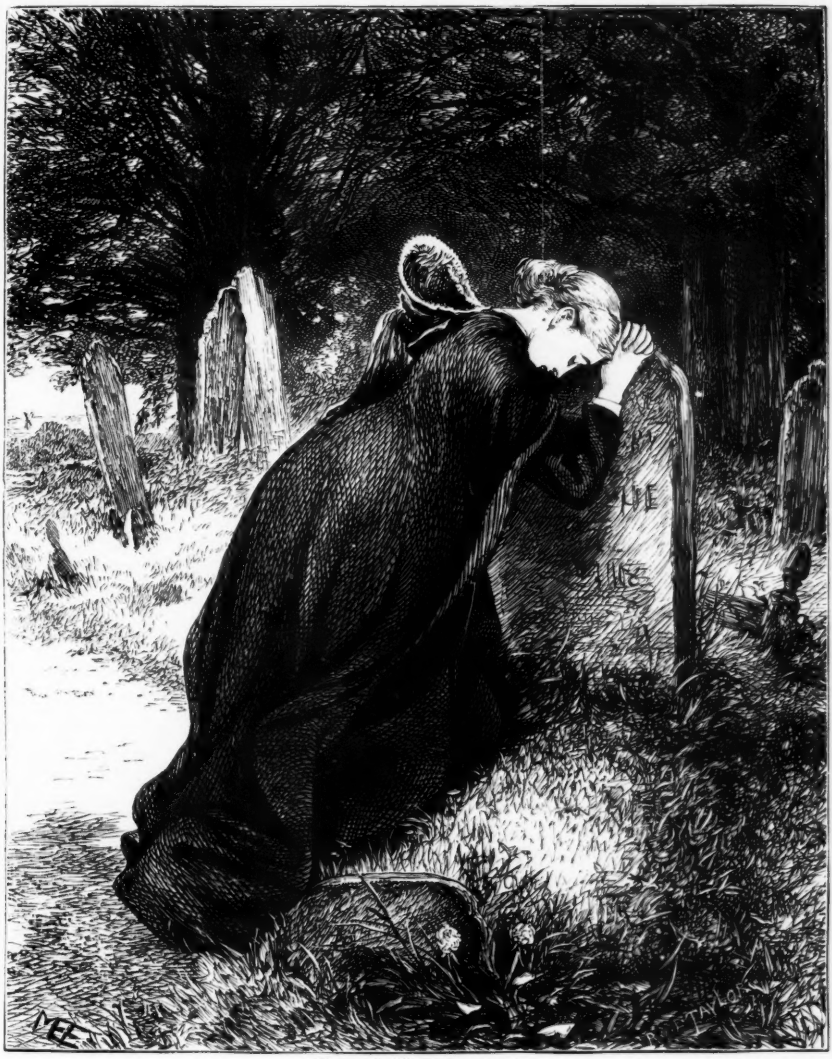
She leans against the churchyard rails—
A sacred guard and true
That stern lock keeps! her thin cheek pales,
But she is looking through.

'Tis summer after lonely years—
Her Father loves her best!
And she hath found a time of tears,
A quiet hour of rest.

She thinks of morning hours that wait,
Of welcomes yet to be;
For Death may lock the outer gate,
But Jesus keeps the key.

Ah! tears have now no bitter spring,
The heaven is clear and blue;
The doves rise there on sunny wing,
And she is looking through!

ALESSIE BOND.



(*Drawn by* M. E. EDWARDS.)

"But only leaned her aching head
Upon the churchyard stone."

"*LOOKING THROUGH.*"—*p.* 624.



(*Drawn by* J. McL. RALSTON.

HEATHER BELLS.

BUNCH of purple heather,
Bound with rush together,
By the little mountain maiden with sunburnt brow and hand;

Flung with Gaelic laughter,
And merry racings after,
Flung upward lightly, gracefully, as spray is flung on land.

Treasured to remind me
Of beauty left behind me;
Bright gem-like lakes that nestle 'mid the hills with sunset crowned,
Wild romantic beauty,
Tales of crime and duty,
All scenes in bonny Scotland where time hath smiled and frowned.

Deep cathedral glories,
Stained and carven stories,
Riders springing forward in bronze from stormy years,
Towers that touch the thunder,
Journeying through wonder,
And the hand that draws us onward through the dark till light appears.

Martyr-memories thronging,
Joy, and yet the longing,
Still roused and still unsatisfied by all the joys of earth.
In her mingling splendours
Broken types she renders
Of God's unbroken glory, of heaven's tearless mirth!

A. Bond.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—AFTER THEY HAD LEFT HAMPSTEAD.

"DOLL, whatever shall we do? The dad wants change of air, and better living, and lots of good things."

"He must have it too," she answered. "Let us all gather round and hold a council of war." Then Tom and Will and Sally clustered close to her. They were still in the shabby lodgings Dorothy had found for him six months before, and things had gone their very worst with Mr. Woodward; and, lastly, his health had failed, and a long illness had kept him in his bed nearly all the winter. Then it was that the children showed that, indolent and lazy and fun-loving as they had been in the old days, they could work when the time came.

Tom had retrieved his position and paid his debts, and shown such a disposition to work, that his former shortcomings had been overlooked; and, careful and generous, he regularly brought his money to his sister. Will had got into an office, but had no salary as yet, though he hoped soon to gain one; and Sally had earned a little money once, for the grotesque figures she had loved to draw had proved useful as designs for Christmas cards, and now she was studying hard to improve herself in the art she loved so that she might gain constant employment. But it was Dorothy who had been the mainstay of the family when the day of sorrow came. She put away her story-books and poetry-books, and forgot her dreams, and left off building castles, and worked in earnest, teaching Mrs. Gibson's children in the morning, and writing from Miss Josephine's dictation in the afternoon, and sometimes till late in the evening, until her hand ached and the lines danced before her eyes. She had thought it would be so difficult to go and see the three old ladies, to ask for work. But she found it less so than she had imagined, for kind thoughtful George Blakesley had made all things smooth before her, and she had been received kindly for his sake; and as the months went on they learnt to like the girl who tried so hard to work and to win bread for her sick father and broken-down mother.

Dorothy's labours did not end with the putting away of Miss Josephine's pens and paper, for of an evening she had to read the paper to her father, and to sit by his side and cheer him up as best she could. Sometimes, too, she used to play to him, for George Blakesley bought in the piano and sent it as a present to Sally, but at last he got too ill to listen to her.

"The doctor says he must have a complete change," repeated Tom.

"He and mamma must go somewhere, and we must give up these rooms and take just two little bed-rooms, one for you and Will, and one for me and Sally, and we'll live upon as little as we can." And she stopped to consider how that plan would work, while Sally and Will nestled up closer to her, and Tom looked at her with all his old boyish admiration.

"I don't know what we should have done without you, Dolly," he said; "I was an awfully selfish fellow till you stirred me up by your example"—Tom was always frank, and never ashamed to own his faults—"I don't wonder Blakesley was so spooney on you."

"But he liked me before I ever tried to work," she answered; "he doesn't care for me now;" and her face flushed as she spoke of him, and hid for the moment the careworn expression which had lately crept over it.

"I think he cares for us all now as much as he does for you," said Sally, looking up and kissing her sister's cheek; and the innocent words had a sting in them the child never dreamt.

"I don't see where we can send papa," she said; "it is so difficult to move him, and we have so little

money; I think we had better consult Mr. Blakesley." And when he came that evening (he had returned a week before) they called him into the sitting-room (for he was going straight up to Mr. Woodward), and asked him how he thought it could be managed. They all had faith in George Blakesley.

"I think you had better wait a bit," he said, "and let him get stronger before you try to move him. By the way, a friend of mine has bought the lease of the old house at Hampstead, but is not going to live in it just yet."

"I hate him!" said Tom.

"Why, pray?"

"Because we all must hate any one who lives in our dear old house," said Dorothy, the tears rushing to her eyes.

"Now, I have some more news for you, Dorothy. Your friend, Mr. Fuller, has returned, and called on me to ask your address. He is coming to see you." The children brightened up at the news, but Dorothy turned away and looked quietly out of window. George Blakesley followed her up. "I thought you would be pleased to see your old friend again," he said; "and he was quite anxious to hear all about you."

"Yes!" she said.

"You won't see me so often when he comes, for I am going to get a friend to live with me, and I have a great deal of work also, and have little time."

"I see," she answered; and she thought, "He does not care to come now. He only does it out of kindness."

"You are not looking well lately, Dorothy. What is the matter?"

"Nothing much," she answered, "only papa's being ill worries me of course. Mr. Blakesley, is there anything else, excepting work and helping others, for which we may live—any happiness we may distinctly try to gain? Do you know," she went on, looking up into his face, "I get so tired sometimes, and feel as if I want some grand mental rest and sunshine."

"Talk to Aunt Milly, Dorothy; she will tell you better than I can." And he turned away coldly, and went up-stairs.

"Ah," thought Dorothy, bitterly, "once, when I did not value it, I had his love, but now that I would give my life for it, he does not care for me a bit!" And so it was in the long winter months, when sorrow came to her and she had no one else on whom to lean, Dorothy had learnt to see and to recognise all the nobleness in George Blakesley's character, to see and feel how kind and thoughtful and loving he could be, and to give him that thorough respect which is the foundation of all thorough love. He was no dreamer, who lived in long dreams of which he made himself the hero, no sluggard, pining for ease and without ambition save to earn enough to maintain himself, content to die without leaving the world one whit better for his life having been in it. No selfish weak man was George Blakesley, but a noble, upright, God-fearing one, whom to know thoroughly, and to love as Dorothy in these her days of sorrow and striving was learning to love him, was in itself an incentive to well-doing. And this is in a measure a test of all our characters, the effect which we have on those who love us; for as we are, so, in a measure, we make those who lean upon us; and a woman who cares for a man greater and better than herself cannot love vainly, for even if she does gain his love in return, yet in the mere effort to become worthy of him, she loses a part of her old self in his nobler nature, and turns away from all baser lower ones to struggle towards the height he has gained.

It seemed to Dorothy as if all George Blakesley's love for her went with his engagement to her. At any rate he had shown no sign of it since, and he had often almost pointedly spoken of Adrian Fuller, till she wondered if he knew or guessed of her old fancy for him. His manner piqued her sometimes. He could not have had a very strong regard for her, she thought, if he could so soon forget the old footing and be content with the new. "When I did not want his love, and did nothing to deserve it, I had it," she said to herself that evening. "And now that I have at any rate tried to be more worthy of it, it is out of my reach."

"My dear," said Miss Milly, the next day, "Josephine is not well enough to write to-day. She is ill and feverish, and obliged to keep to her room. Sit down and talk to me a little while, will you. I am all alone." Dorothy was fonder of her than of either of her sisters, and sat contentedly down at her feet. "Would you mind telling about yourself and George, Dorothy?" she asked; "I never liked to ask you, but I have so often wondered why it was broken off!"

Then, without any reserve, Dorothy told her the entire story. "Strange," said the old lady, when it was finished, "that he should have got over it so completely as he seems to have done. He told me this morning that you had an old friend returned from abroad, and that he thought you and he liked each other."

"Oh no, Miss Milly!" Yet the crimson colour in her face deceived the old lady. "I think you are right, George," she told her nephew next time he came, "Dorothy is in love with the artist." He made no answer, but his visits to his old friends ceased almost altogether as soon as Mr. Woodward was sufficiently recovered to be down-stairs again.

Miss Josephine was very ill—obliged to keep her bed for days, and unable to see any one. At last, when she partly recovered, she sent for Dorothy.

"I should like you to read to me," she said; and

from that day, instead of writing, Dorothy sat by her side every afternoon, and read aloud.

"My dear Dorothy," she said, one evening, "I have often heard about you from my nephew, but I don't know much about your religious opinions: I should like to hear what they are."

"Oh, Miss Josephine," she answered, "I could not really explain them."

"Is religion a comfort to you? for that is what it should be."

"I don't know, Miss Josephine. I don't think I trouble very much about it, to tell the truth."

"But you should, my dear. I fancy you want a secret friend, some one to go to for counsel and help, and sympathy and love; this has often struck me. Go to your Saviour and your Bible, dear: there is no friend like Him, no comforter like His Word; all others may fail, but these never. Don't let your religion or your love for your God be a task or a mere matter of duty; make it the thing nearest and dearest to your heart, until it becomes your staff and support and strength in everything and through anything. There is no happiness like this, my dear. It takes the bitterness from every sorrow, and gives you hope no mortal has power to dim or deprive you of, and it gives you not merely something to live for but to die for. I don't think I shall get well again, Dorothy; my strength seems failing daily, and I wanted to say this to you. Now kiss me, dear." And for the first time Dorothy kissed Miss Josephine's handsome face. "I wish you had married George, dear. He will never have any one now—he seems to have given up all idea of it." From that time she failed; Dorothy never had another talk with her, though day after day she sat by her side reading to her or watching.

"Dorothy," she said one evening, "are you here?"

"Yes, Miss Josephine."

"I want my sisters."

"We are here," they answered; and she held out her hands, but could not speak.

"Dorothy," she called, faintly, an hour later, "tell George I told you of the best friend for you, your Saviour. Make Him your friend, dear."

"Yes, Miss Josephine," said Dorothy, awed, and her heart solemnly repeating the promise.

"There is none other like Him," she murmured, and then Tortoiseshell turned her face to the wall and died royally.

(To be continued.)

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE.—II.

BY THE RIGHT REVEREND THE LORD BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL.

THE second question which we have to consider is one scarcely of less interest than the first, and equally relates to the individuality of the Gospel which we are now considering. We have seen that there are apparently but slight traces of the companion of St. Paul in the Gospel before us; we next ask, whether the second historical fact relating to St. Luke, that he was of Gentile origin, is equally faintly discernible in those records of his Master's words and works which the third evangelist was more especially moved to select. The answer must certainly be in the negative. The traces of St. Paul's companion may be doubtful, but the hand of the Gentile Christian may be recognised in so many places in this Gospel, that we might almost have drawn the inference from the evidence, which any meditative perusal of it will be found at once most readily, and, I think I may add, most persuasively, to supply to us. The Gospel of St. Luke is the Gospel of the *Gentile* and of the *proselyte;* the Gospel, on the one hand, of a writer well versed in the customs and habits of the nation to which as, according to the flesh, his Master was pleased to belong, the Gospel of one not unconscious of Jewish privileges and prerogatives, but yet, at the same time, and on the other hand, of one who seems ever impressed with the feeling that it was to the wide world of the Gentiles that the blessings of the Gospel must ultimately and principally extend.

We may illustrate the truth of this by specifying two or three characteristics of St. Luke's Gospel standing in connection with this particular question, which have been noticed and admitted by all recent expositors.

In the first place, the comprehensive spirit and, as it has been termed, *universality* of St. Luke's Gospel, cannot possibly be overlooked. We observe this in the very genealogy of our Lord, who in this Gospel appears before us not as the son of Abraham and the son of David, but as the son of Adam and the Son of God. We observe it again in the important notice of the mission of the seventy disciples which he alone records, a notice which gains in importance, when we remember that it appears certain that in the time of our Lord the Jews were accustomed to consider the number of all the nations of the world beside themselves as seventy. We further trace the same comprehensive spirit in the notices of the Samaritans, both in the special parable of the merciful man of that despised race, and in the miracle peculiar to our evangelist, in which gratitude alone was found in

the leper, who was of the lineage of the enemy and the stranger. We find also the same sentiments throughout the Gospel in scattered texts, recurring so frequently, and expressed with such clearness, that it seems almost impossible to believe that the inspired writer was uninterested in the promises which he was recording. Thus, for example, it is St. Luke who is the relater of the aged Simeon's declaration, that the light of salvation was to lighten the Gentiles (ii. 32); it is St. Luke who, when reciting the prophecy in reference to the forerunner, specially extends the quotation as we find it in St. Matthew, by subjoining, "And all flesh shall see the salvation of God" (iii. 6); it is St. Luke who specifies the Lord's words in the synagogue at Nazareth, in which the case of the Syrian leper is contrasted with that of the many sufferers in Israel who remained uncleansed, and in which the widow of Sarepta is alluded to as specially blessed, while the widows of Israel were left to the general providence of God (iv. 25); it is again St. Luke who inserts the account of the merciful condescension shown to the despised publican in the person of Zacchæus (xix. 1); and it is the same evangelist who, on the other hand, omits the prohibition recorded by St. Matthew (x. 5), in reference to others equally hated and despised, the prohibition which forbad the early functions of the apostles to be exercised among Gentiles or Samaritans, and restricted their mission "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

We may trace this universality still further in the marked tone of tender-heartedness and compassion which seems so specially to pervade this inspired record. The frequent reference to the poor (xiv. 13), the touching account of the woman who was a sinner (vii. 37), the parables of the prodigal son (xv. 11), of Lazarus (xvi. 19), and of the widow and the unjust judge (xviii. 1), the noticeable repetition of the term "friend" (φίλος), and, still more, the general aspect in which our Lord is presented to us as the friend and benefactor of man, the merciful High Priest who was touched by a sense of our infirmities, and who, in the words of St. Peter, as recorded by our evangelist, "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with Him" (Acts x. 38). We may substantiate this by references which present themselves almost on every chapter. We may observe it, for example, in the special mention of the passage of Isaiah selected by our Lord in the synagogue of Nazareth (iv. 18), in the unbounded exercise of mercy attributed to Him in the twice-repeated notice, that of the divers sick that were brought to Him, and even of the mixed multitude that sought to touch Him, "He healed all" (iv. 40, vi. 19), in the tenderness shown to the widow of Nain (vii. 13), in the mercy extended to the woman that was a sinner (vii. 47), in the touching address to the daughters of Jerusalem (xxiii. 28), in the gracious promise to the expiring malefactor (xxiii. 43), and in the prayer for the forgiveness of His murderers, which rose heavenward even from the cross itself (xxiii. 34).

A few special details may be added, which seem to indicate the same inclusive and comprehensive spirit on the part of the Gentile evangelist. We have already observed, that members of despised classes—the Samaritan, the publican, the needy and the sinful—come more frequently before us in this Gospel than in any of the other three. It can hardly be accidental, then, that in this same Gospel we meet with more frequent notices of that sex which, though probably somewhat more honoured among the Jews than among other Oriental nations, nevertheless occupied a position of dependence and subjection. In the opening chapters we meet with special notices of Elizabeth and Anna. As we pass onward, we find mention of the fact that, besides the twelve apostles, pious women were permitted to accompany and to minister on the Lord. We derive our knowledge of the characters of Martha and Mary principally from our present evangelist. The women of Jerusalem, who wept and bewailed the suffering Lord, and the women that came from Galilee and beheld His sepulchre, find a place in the record of one who might have known and felt with the apostle whom he accompanied, that in Christ there was no distinction of nation or sex, but that in Him all were united and one.

We may again observe, that it is almost from St. Luke alone, of the four evangelists, that we have any notices of persons or events that belonged to the world at large, and not merely to the restricted polity of Judaism. The decree of Cæsar Augustus, the name of the Roman governor, under whom it was first instituted, the carefully named, though disputed date of the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, serve suitably to remind us that the history of the Gospels has its proper place in the history of the world, and stands therewith in an accurate and demonstrable connection.

We might farther pass to the scarcely doubtful indications that the Gospel was designed for a far wider circle of readers than those of the circumcision; nay, that it was probably intended, as Origen has long ago remarked, exclusively for the believer of the Gentile world, if it did not now perhaps appear that enough has already been said to demonstrate the existence of a spirit and character in the Gospel of St. Luke that strictly harmonises with what historical inference seems to tell us was the descent of the writer. With such marked characteristics as those which we have alluded to and specified, it can scarcely be denied that the believing Gentile is faithfully reflected in

St. Luke's inspired record, and that the large-hearted and observant believer of the nations is to be felt, seen, and recognised in the Gospel that bears the name of the beloved physician.

We have but one more point to consider—the supposed indications of the profession of the writer in the record that he has left us. Such a question might, at first sight, seem more curious than useful, and scarcely worthy of more than the most passing notice. Like many such questions, however, it has had this good, that it has often quickened observation, and has certainly served to direct attention to some peculiarities in the Gospel we are now considering, and to some mental characteristics of its writer, which, decide as we may on the immediate question, are by no means undeserving of our consideration. Let us, then, briefly discuss the question. With regard to the supposed medical terms that have been observed in this Gospel and in the Acts, it does not seem too much to say, that no reliance can possibly be placed on a list so short and so uncertain. The popular example, the "great fever" of St. Peter's mother-in-law (iv. 38), is certainly nothing more than an instance of the choice of an expressive rather than a technical term, and such as might easily and naturally be found on the pages of any observant writer. Much more deserving of our attention are those instances in which certain acts, feelings, or emotions are incidentally analysed and referred to what seem their true and natural causes. It is interesting, for example, to observe that it is in the Gospel of St. Luke that we find the confused wonder of the disciples at our Lord's stilling of the tempest indirectly specified as due to the greatness of their fear (viii. 25), the heaviness of the apostles in the garden of Gethsemane ascribed to their grief (xxii. 45), and the disbelief of the apostles when the chosen Lord appeared among them, referred to their overpowering joy (xxiv. 41). It is interesting, again, to remember that it is St. Luke alone who has given us the notice of his Master's bloody sweat during the agony in the garden, and who has recorded the healing as well as the smiting off of the ear of Malchus. It would seem, too, not without significance, that in the commission to the twelve apostles, and to the twenty disciples, the command to heal the sick should be so distinctly prominent. "To preach the kingdom of God," and "to heal the sick," are in the narrative of St. Luke the two great characteristics of the apostolic office. "And they departed," says our evangelist, "and went through the towns preaching the Gospel and healing everywhere" (ix. 6). Such things are interesting, and perhaps significant, but to such things we cannot appeal with *perfect* confidence, nor can we say more than this, that they harmonise with what we know of the calling of the writer, but that taken alone they would probably never have led us to any inference upon the subject.

Such specialities, then, we may dismiss as interesting, but nothing more. Let us, however, not overlook this general fact, that we certainly find in the Gospel of St. Luke just those characteristics which we might expect to find in the Gospel of the beloved physician—just those peculiarities which we might naturally look for in one whose daily calling taught him to observe, to discriminate, and to refer to their true causes the various facts or circumstances which presented themselves. If we seem to have any reason in tracing the effect of the earthly calling of the first evangelist, in the method and arrangement by which it is characterised, in the grouping of what is similar, and in the studied contrasts of what is dissimilar, we shall certainly find more reason for observing a similar reflection of previous habits of life in the Gospel of St. Luke. The psychological comments which appear on its pages are almost as distinctive as the graphic touches of St. Mark, and form almost as recognisable a characteristic.

Let us substantiate these observations by a few examples, arranged under two or three heads.

First, let us call attention to our evangelist as the accurate *observer*, as one to whom we are indebted for more of those passing comments, that at once place an event in its true light, than are found in any of the other Gospels. We may trace this characteristic in the reflective comments upon the growth of the Divine Child (ii. 40, 52), in the explanatory remark on the behaviour of St. Peter during the miraculous draught of fishes (v. 9), in the brief and incidental elucidation of the manner in which the healing powers were extended to an eager multitude (vi. 19), in the mention of the subject of the mysterious converse between our Lord and His two attendant saints on the Mount of the Transfiguration (ix. 31), in the passing notice that the apostles were not wholly unprovided with weapons when they were leaving for Gethsemane (xxii. 38), in the allusion to our Lord's looking on St. Peter after his third denial (xxii. 61), in the specification of the renewed friendship and preceding enmity between Him and Pilate (xxiii. 12); and, to name a last instance, the position of the two malefactors at the crucifixion (xxiii. 33), so simply mentioned, and yet withal so deeply meaning and significant.

Closely allied with this reflective and observant character of mind, we may notice the frequent habit of our evangelist to state, or, perhaps, more commonly to hint at the *motives* which gave rise to certain actions and certain courses of conduct. Our preceding list contains two or three instances which might perhaps be equally correctly referred to our present head, but, besides these, we may

specify the notice of the reasonable way in which the difference between the behaviour of the multitude and of the Scribes and Pharisees was to be accounted for, when they heard our Lord's comments on the ministry of St. John (vii. 30). The one party felt themselves pledged by the baptism they had received; the other might have sought but had not received the holy rite, and so felt themselves free to disdain or to revile.

Another instance may be mentioned in the account of the perplexity of Herod, when he heard of our Lord's wondrous works. Though two other evangelists have mentioned the incident, yet it is from St. Luke alone that we discern the true reasons for the wretched man's disquietude (ix. 7). We might multiply instances, but will conclude with one which is in itself pertinent, and is further useful in suggesting a passing comment upon the whole method and principle on which parables seem to be introduced in St. Luke's narrative. This last instance shall be our evangelist's very explicit statement of the reasons which led our Lord to utter the parable of the pounds—reasons probably vouchsafed at the time, and preserved by apostolical tradition: "And as they heard these things, He added and spake a parable, because He was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear." This, perhaps, is the most distinct enunciation of the reasons which led our Lord to utter any one of the many discourses that are recorded in the four Gospels; and this we find, as we might have expected to find it, in the record of that evangelist who was moved principally to specify the reasons or motives of actions—the thoughtful and observant historian.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. SECOND SERIES. NO. 5. HEALING NOBLEMAN'S SON.

Chapter to be read—John iv., part of.

INTRODUCTION. Ask what was Christ's first miracle, and where performed? What did he manifest there? What glory was it? So Christ shared all our social life; was a welcome guest at a feast; invited to wedding at Cana; to house of rich Pharisee (Luke vii. 36); so also was looked for at a funeral. What did Martha say when he delayed his visit? (John xi. 21.) Shared every event of life—joy, sorrow, festivity, mourning; was in all points just as we are, so showed His full sympathy. (Heb. iv. 15.) To-day read of Him as relieving sorrow.

I. THE NOBLEMAN COMING TO CHRIST. (Read John iv. 43—47.) Let children trace the steps of the last few days. Christ had talked with the woman of Samaria at the well. She told the others about Him, and many believed. At their request he stayed there two days, then finished His journey to Galilee. How did the Galileans receive Him? Why so readily? What had Jesus done at the feast? What these miracles were are not told (John ii. 23), but were quite enough to set people talking about Him. Came home and told their friends. The news spreads—reaches even to this nobleman. He hears of some wonderful man healing the sick. He has a son sick, very near death; best doctors been called in; no use, his son is dying. Hears of this new and wonderful doctor, with his marvellous cures. He will go in search of Him. Can be no harm in trying. So sets off journey of twenty miles. Takes no servant; hurries off alone to Cana from Capernaum. Picture his hurried preparations; his anxious wife urging to make haste and return; his excitement; finds where Christ was staying; his eagerly rushing into His presence; his frantic request to Him to come and heal his son, at the point of death. He pictures to himself (and perhaps Christ) his great grief, and urges Christ to come at once, no doubt offering some handsome reward to Him if successful. What is Christ's answer? Want to try his faith. Why have the other people believed? Because have *seen* his signs and wonders, *i.e.*, miracles. Will the man believe without seeing? What does he beg Christ to do? Can at present only believe in His power when present. He *was* present at the marriage-feast. Where did other miracles? Surely He will come down to Capernaum with him now.

II. THE NOBLEMAN LEAVING CHRIST. (Read 50—54.) What answer did Christ make to his second earnest request? Thy son liveth. Not shall live, but does live. Now the nobleman fully believes. He believed before in Christ's power, now in Christ's word. He does not hesitate, but departs home. What trembling joy he must have had! the news is so good he can scarcely believe it. Will it be confirmed? What does he see in the distance? Surely he can recognise those faces—his own servants coming hastily along, with beaming faces. Picture them calling out from a distance; now hurrying up; the interview with the master; questions and answers rapidly given. At *what* time did he begin to get better? Just the very hour at which Christ spoke to him. He must believe now. Yes, but not only for himself, all the house must be told the wonderful news, every detail of the story, the arrival at Cana, the appearance of Christ, the conversation, the time,

the meeting with the servants. Will go over it again and again. The whole house will believe in Jesus as the Almighty Son of God.

III. PRACTICAL LESSONS. (1) *The benefit of sickness.* Ask what caused sickness? One of the consequences of Adam's sin. Can it have any blessings connected with it? What did it make this nobleman do? But for it might never have heard of, seen, known, believed in Jesus. Now both himself, his child and household, all believe. Just so still—sickness hard to bear, full of suffering, is one great voice of God to man. Realise, then, our feebleness is blessed when leads to seek Christ; not merely to have vague belief in his power, but to seek him as a personal friend; though out of sight, still to seek Him and find Him as our Saviour. (2) *The benefit of faith.* When Christ spoke, this man believed, not like Thomas, who required to see. The nobleman's faith, at first weak, grew stronger, till it showed itself by its works, doing as he was bid. Such a faith must be ours. All have greater sickness than that of this child. What is it? (Isa. i. 6.) Sin more terrible in its effect. There *is* the good Physician. We *may* go to Him for ourselves and others. What has he done to heal it? What does His blood do? (1 John i. 6.) We have not seen it, but have heard His word in His Bible, saying, "Believe . . . shall be saved." (Acts xvi. 31.) If believe that, and confess sins and turn from them, *i.e.*, repent, our soul's sickness will be healed, and we, like the nobleman, may depart in peace. But why did he go to Jesus? Do we *feel* our sickness? If so, seek and shall find.

Questions to be answered.

1. Describe Christ's progress from Samaria to Cana.
2. Why did the nobleman go to Him?
3. Describe the interview.
4. Who met him on his way home, and with what news?
5. What practical lessons may we learn?
6. Of what is sickness a type?

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXV.

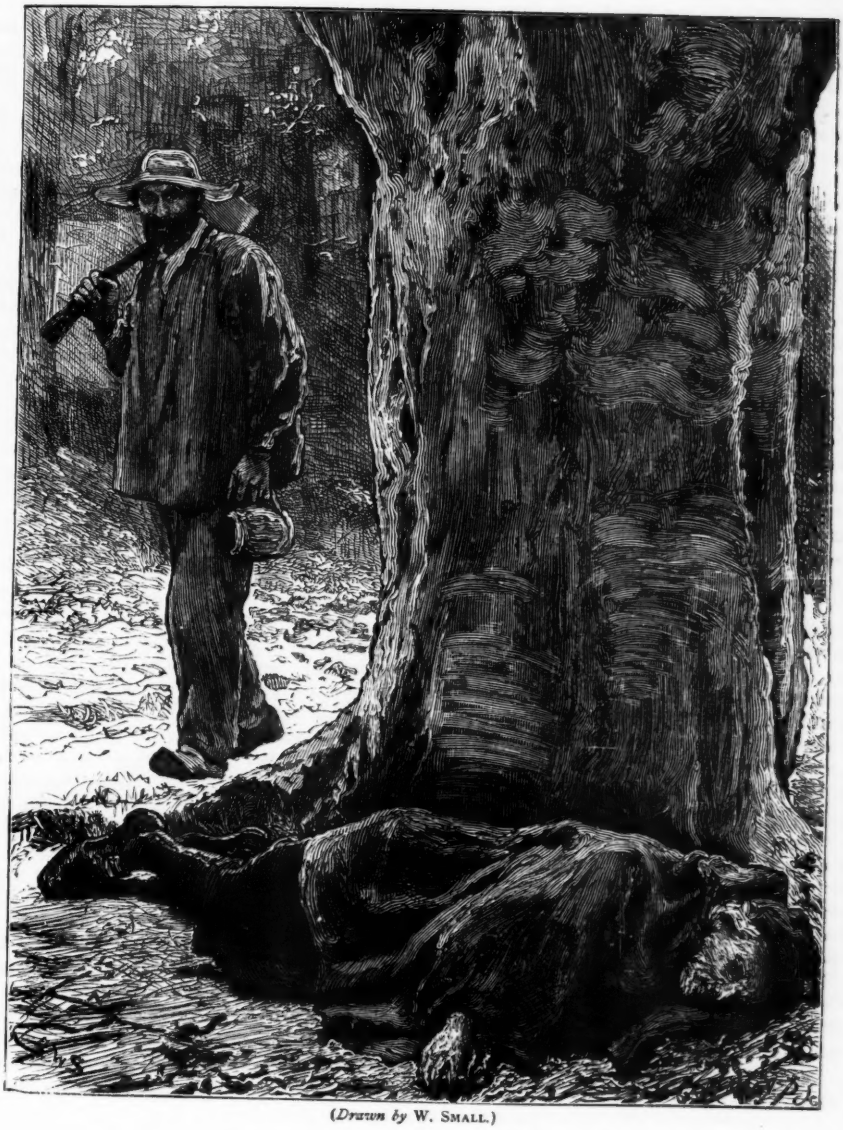
WHEN Bertrand Lisle, having removed all traces of his long dusty journey, walked down through the great room towards his uncle, with his handsome head erect, and his eyes bright with excitement, he looked in truth a worthy representative of the old de L'Isles, whose portraits gazed down upon him from the walls, many of them bearing that strange resemblance to his own pleasant face which is often to be traced in members of an ancient family, even with an interval of centuries between them. His appearance was in striking contrast to that of the actual possessor, who still sat in his great chair with a black velvet robe folded loosely round his wasted shrivelled form, and a rich crimson silk coverlet flung over his helpless limbs; he watched the young man admiringly as the servant drew forward an old-fashioned green velvet chair with a carved wooden back, in which he seated himself close to his uncle's side.

The old Comte stretched out one of his thin white hands, and laid it on Bertrand's, not less delicate and shapely, though tanned with exposure to the sun, and said, tenderly, "You are very like your father, Bertrand; no wonder that I forgot the lapse of years, and mistook you for him.

"Ah!" continued he, "life must have been greatly embittered for Louis before he could thus seek to bring you up as an alien from our country, and doubtless I had my heavy share in poisoning it; but Providence has overruled us both—him in his nobleness and me in my unworthiness—and at the end of it all you stand in your rightful place, beneath the roof-tree of your ancestral home. You did well, Bertrand de L'Isle, to leave the stranger country that you might fight for France; and France opens her heart to you, and bids you rest on her soil for ever."

"I scarce understand you," said Bertrand, looking anxiously at the old man, who spoke with feverish excitement.

"No," he said, "how should you till you know my history. But I will accomplish now the bitter task, and tell it you from first to last." He joined his hands for a moment as if in prayer, and then went on. "Your father was my nephew, the son of my eldest brother, but we were so nearly the same age that we were brought up together as children in this old home, where I, in my orphanhood, was sheltered by your grandfather, who was in possession of the estates. Louis, his only son, was of course, by the law of primogeniture, which was always observed in our family, the direct heir of the property and all its territorial rights and titles. He was generous to me after he became the head of our house, but we were never friends, we were too unlike; he was like one of the old cavaliers of the times of chivalry—loyal to his God and to his king, pure-minded and disinterested, holding principle more precious than gold, and truth



(*Drawn by* W. SMALL.)

"Lying on the ground at the foot of a tree."—*p.* 634.

dearer than life. As for me, I cared neither for religion nor for the throne, nor for my country; I desired only wealth and worldly honours and luxurious ease, and I was bitterly jealous of Louis because he held the position of lord of this castle and estate, which I coveted for myself. I rejoiced to see his enthusiastic devotion to the cause of the Bourbons, because I knew that their tenure of the throne was precarious, and I allied myself to those who were secretly labouring to undermine it, on purpose that if they fell I might stand well with the government inimical to them, and wrest the estates from Louis should he follow them in their fallen fortunes. I well knew that in doing so I should be false to the principles of our family as well as a treacherous usurper of that to which I had no real claim, but I cared nothing even for honour and justice so that I could gain my own ends. I had married by that time a woman of low birth, for whom I never pretended to have the slightest affection, but whose wealth had become necessary to me on account of my debts, and she was full of vulgar ambition to be made lady of the castle, and urged me on in all my unworthy plans. They succeeded but too well: Charles X. was driven from France, and Louis clung to him in his misfortunes. I seized on the estates at once, and succeeded in getting my possession of them, unjust as it was, recognised by the new dynasty to whom I gave in my adhesion, till the revolution of 1848 made me veer round to call myself first a Republican and then to court the imperial favour. During all these years I did my best to lose sight of Louis. I knew well that even if he chose to remain in exile, my plain duty would have been to ask him to let me care for the estates as his representative, and to have honestly transmitted to him every farthing of the revenue, but so far from that, I succeeded in getting a sentence of exile and deprivation passed upon him, through false representations which I made concerning him, to the reigning powers, and I established myself here as in my right. I forbad the mention of his name by any of our dependents, and after that one intimation of his marriage, and subsequently of your birth, which he sent through the family notary, I never heard of him from that day to this. But Bertrand, God is just, and not for one single hour did I find happiness in my usurped position. Nothing prospered with me. My wife was a woman of violent temper, coarse in language and in mind; she rendered my life miserable, and she made enemies of all around her. Our neighbours, equal to the de L'Isles in birth, and long the friends of the family, refused to associate with her, and her violence and insolence to our tenants and household were such that I dared not leave her alone in the château. We lived, therefore, a lonely life when we were here, shut up together, without a spark of affection between us to render our position tolerable, and when we went to Paris she tortured me by her plebeian manners and reckless extravagance. We had children, but they died one after another. The greatest desire I had in the world was that a son of mine should become lord of de L'Isle and head of our house, and again and again the hope was awakened only to perish. I had four sons, who passed from their cradles to their coffins. My wife and I were left alone face to face in our misery. Age crept on apace. Rather more than five years ago she died. It was too late then for me to marry again.

"It was about six months after my wife's death, when I had come down here to entertain some of my political friends who had agreed to meet at my house. They had spent a week with me, and had departed, leaving me alone; it was a beautiful summer evening, and I could not bear the solitude of these old halls; I went out, and roamed beyond the grounds, into a wood which lies at no very great distance from our domain. I did not feel well, but the fresh air seemed to revive me, and I had gone far into the recesses of the forest when suddenly a weakness seemed to take possession of me, a dimness passed over my eyes, then all became a blank, and I remained unconscious I know not how long; when I came to myself I was lying on the ground at the foot of a tree; darkness had fallen on the earth, save that one portion of the horizon was illuminated every now and then by sheet lightning, the thunder was growling in the distance, but in the wood itself all was absolute calm. I lay there for a few minutes, trying to understand what had happened to me, and I concluded I had fainted, but when I tried to raise myself to move my limbs I understood the fatal truth, I had had a paralytic stroke, and I had lost all power of movement excepting in my hands; I tried to cry out, but my dumb lips refused to make any sound: I have since regained my speech, though not the use of my limbs, but for the time even the power to ask help was taken from me, my head fell back again upon the earth, and I said to myself in despair, 'I shall die here unaided and alone. No one knew where I was, no one ever ventured into the forest after dark, where the peasants believed that the spirit of a man who was murdered years ago within its shade still walked by night; there was not a chance that any one would seek me till the morning, for my servants believed I had retired to rest. In my faintness and helplessness I felt as if I could not possibly survive through the night, stretched on the damp earth, without succour; death then, death speedy and terrible was surely before me, and as I closed my eyes in helpless despair I seemed to hear a solemn voice within me saying, '*and after death the judgment!*'

"The dreadful night wore on, while my awakened conscience held me in its grasp like an accusing spectre. But still I lived; and with the dawning light a wood-cutter, passing near, through the mercy of my God, perceived me, and I was rescued. My servants were summoned. They carried me home. For

days and months I lay dumb and helpless. Gradually the power of speech returned; but my limbs remain like those of a dead man.

"I believe that this much of life was given me only that I might make restitution of all my unlawful gains. I sought Louis by every means in my power, but nowhere could I hear of him. I had a deep conviction that if only I were permitted to restore these estates to the rightful heir, I might take it as a token that the pardon and mercy of God would be extended even unto me, repentant, when in actual fact I am summoned before the judgment-seat. And now, Bertrand de L'Isle," continued the old man, turning to him with a smile of ineffable contentment, "has not the good God been gracious to me indeed? He has tried the truth of my repentance by five years of anguish and almost hopeless waiting, and then he has brought you to me—you, the son and representative of Louis de L'Isle, the legitimate heir, the true and rightful lord of all this fair estate. Already have I sent for the family notary, and to-morrow, in the presence of competent witnesses, I make over to you this château, and all that belongs to the inheritance of your father. As for me, the good curé of the village will give me a lodging with him for the brief remnant of my days."

"No, dear uncle, not so," said Bertrand, earnestly; "I will never consent to your leaving this place. After all that you have told me, I dare not gainsay your will that it should belong to my father's son hereafter, if I survive this war, which is very doubtful; but while you live it is yours, and I will never deprive you of it."

"So Louis would have spoken," said his uncle, smiling. "But, Bertrand, we need scarce discuss the matter; it is but a question of a few months—the doctors have told me I cannot live longer. If you are good enough to let me linger out my days in a corner of your house, I will accept your kindness with gratitude; but all shall be made over to you before the day is many hours old to-morrow, and if you leave me here you leave me as your guest."

Armand de L'Isle carried his point; and when Bertrand rode away from the château the next day, his title to the estate was safe in the notary's hands.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Mary Trevelyan and her associates reached Paris (not without great difficulty, from the distracted state of the country) in the first week of September, 1870; and the events of that month, so fatal to France, are matters of history with which our readers are all well acquainted. The news of the terrible disaster of Sedan and the fall of the Empire, took place the day after their arrival, and within ten days from that time Paris was encircled as with an iron ring by the irresistible force of the Prussian army, and the siege had commenced. Ingress and egress became alike impossible, and Mary knew that she, and all those who, like herself, were devoted to the relief of the sick and wounded, were finally shut in, and must needs go through all the hardship and horrors of the siege, however protracted it might be. She was well content with this fiat, so far as she herself was concerned; she had come there to help the suffering, and was prepared herself to suffer in doing so, and a very few weeks passed in the capital (fitly called in those days the "bleeding heart of France") sufficed to show her that there was more than work enough for hundreds like herself, could they have been found, to devote themselves to the never-ending task. Ambulances were at first established in connection with the hospitals, for the greater convenience of surgeons and nurses, who had thus everything that was required at hand, and into these, day after day, were poured the wounded soldiers from the ramparts, or those who had succumbed to fever from exposure and hardship, along with numbers of men, women, and children who were stricken down in the streets by the shot and shell of the ceaseless bombardment. Very soon, too, the want of provisions began to tell on the poor, and never in this world will it be known how fearful an amount of misery was endured within the walls of Paris during those awful winter months; soon the hospitals, even with their supernumerary ambulances, no longer sufficed to hold all the sufferers, and different places were utilised for the purpose, until at last the very churches were put in requisition, and turned into receptacles for the sick and wounded.

In the first commencement of the long trying siege Mary Trevelyan was appointed chief nurse to the ambulance attached to the Hospital of Notre Dame de Pitié, where wooden sheds and tents erected in the courtyard were filled with sufferers, after all the wards had been crowded to overflowing; but in agreeing to remain there, chiefly, she had stipulated that she was to be replaced by some other person, if at any time it happened that she found her services suddenly required elsewhere; for the one thought that lay ever at her heart, and filled her with anxiety night and day, was the conviction she had that Bertrand Lisle was somewhere, even now, within the beleaguered city, wounded, it might be, or dying, and in sore need of the succour which she longed beyond all words to give him; she had calculated, from what he had said as to his movements in the letter to Laura, of which Charlie Davenant had spoken to her, that he must have arrived in Paris with his despatches a day or two before she herself had reached the city, and she knew that if this had been the case, it must have been impossible for him to leave Paris again—a French officer was the last person who would be allowed to pass the ranks of the Prussian army: where, then, was he?

and how could she know whether, disabled as he already was, he might not be in some great suffering or danger? This was the question that seemed to wear her very heart out, as night and day she laboured among the sick and dying; but she spoke no word of her dreadful anxiety to Mrs. Parry, when she snatched a moment to go and see her. Poor nurse Parry had enough on her hands already, without having to share Mary's cruel suspense.

Madame Brunot, the wife of the colporteur, was in the greatest distress; nothing had been heard of her husband, and it was certain that if he were alive at all he could not return to his family till the siege was over. She was herself in a very delicate state of health, entirely confined to bed, and she had no money with which to pay the exorbitant price to which provisions were already rising. Her seven children and herself depended entirely on the charity of others, and though Mary and Mrs. Parry gave all they had, it was far from sufficient for their wants.

Their condition would have been almost desperate had it not been for John Pemberton; he had been appointed by the Relief Society to the onerous task of distributing food from the English stores to the famishing population in a large district of the city, and the work taxed his energies to the utmost, from the scenes of distress in every possible shape to which it introduced him, and which he never failed to strive most earnestly to relieve without confining himself at all to his special department. The Brunots lived in the *quartier* which had been assigned to him, but he would in any case have known of their distress from Mary Trevelyan, whom he often went to see, and he soon became greatly interested in the family. Valerie, the eldest little girl, who was about ten years old, was one of those charming unselfish children to whom sorrow and trial had given wisdom beyond her years. Now that Madame Brunot was incapacitated she acted as the little mother of the younger children, and scarcely knew what it was to be without a baby in her arms continually; she it was who consulted with John Pemberton as to the wants of the family while nurse Parry was attending to the sick woman, and, as he spoke French only with great difficulty, he used to take her with him when he went to get the necessary provisions for them; gradually she came to be so useful to him as his little interpreter, that Mrs. Parry was often left in charge of the household while Valerie went with him to help in succouring families as badly off as themselves. Hand in hand they would walk through the streets of unhappy Paris, or stand in the long line of purchasers waiting at the shops of the butchers and bakers till their turn came to be supplied; and the child showed wonderful calmness and courage with the ceaseless thunders of the bombardment sounding over her innocent head and the lurid smoke of the cannon glaring before her eyes. She soon came to feel for John Pemberton that intense affection which an intelligent and warm-hearted child is so quick to cherish for the friend of mature years of whose kindness and wisdom she has had experience. She well knew that he was the benefactor of those who were dear to her, and she looked upon him as the embodiment of all that was good and noble; she would open her guileless heart to him as she trotted along by his side, and John Pemberton soon found that the services he had rendered to her family were more than repaid by the benefit he derived from his intercourse with her, and the insight he gained into her transparent nature and simplicity of mind; for she restored to him that faith in his fellow-creatures which had been so cruelly destroyed by Lurline's artful intrigues. Valerie taught him that the world is not all evil, that God has many a holy shrine in pure unworldly hearts that seem through all their lives to retain the freshness and brightness with which they first came from His creative hand. The patience, too, with which the child, in quiet submission to the will of the Heavenly Father in whom she trusted so implicitly, endured a life of joyless privation without a murmur, made the man of riper years feel ashamed of the gloom he had allowed to overspread his whole existence, because the one love on which he had set all his hopes had failed him in such bitter fashion, and she taught him, above all, a lesson of disinterestedness in her thoughtful and observant care for others and complete forgetfulness of self.

One evening Mary was seated in the midst of Madame Brunot's children, whom she was feeding with some rice, and she smiled gently on them, as they stood round her with open mouths, like so many hungry sparrows; but when the welcome repast was over, and they had all been carried off to bed under the guardianship of Valerie, Pemberton saw how instantaneously the transient brightness faded from her face, while a long shuddering sigh seemed to shake her whole frame. She went to the window, and stood there, looking out with a sad wistful gaze so full of yearning anxiety and pain, that he no longer doubted she had indeed some heavy secret trial that was blanching her wan face, and wasting her delicate frame with far more insidious power than all her labours on behalf of the suffering.

He was always in the habit of escorting her back through the dangerous streets to the hospital, when he happened to meet her at the Brunots'; and she was soon ready to go, for she never stayed away from her duties longer than the time necessary to do anything she could for the Brunots and to comfort Mrs. Parry with the assurance that she was quite safe and well. So the two soon found themselves walking, by the quietest way they could, in the direction of the hospital. It was a bright moonlight night, clear and cold, and Pemberton could study his companion's face as they went along as well as if it had been high noon.

"Valerie Brunot is a very wise little woman," he said presently.

"She is indeed a singularly thoughtful, intelligent child," answered Mary.

"She has made a discovery which I was too blind or too stupid to make," said Pemberton, "and has told me she is certain you have some great grief or anxiety which you are bearing unaided and in silence. If this is true, Miss Trevelyan, I should be so thankful if you would let me try to help you."

"It is true," she said, in her soft pathetic voice.

"Then do, I entreat of you, tell me what it is—if at least it is at all possible for me to be of use to you with regard to it."

She held down her head, and did not speak.

They were crossing one of the bridges over the Seine, and Pemberton resolutely stopped, and looked at her while he repeated, "Miss Trevelyan, can I help you? You must tell me. These are not days for conventionalities."

"I think you could," she answered; "but I fear that it might lead you into danger."

"As to that, I cannot be in greater danger than I am every day and every hour. My duties oblige me to be under fire half my time, near the ramparts. You may be perfectly certain nothing can make any difference to me in that respect. I shall not move from this spot till you tell me what I can do for you."

Then she raised her face into the full moonlight, and Pemberton saw that over it was passing a wave of emotion which made her lips tremble and her eyes shine with tears.

"Oh, how kind you are," she said; "it will indeed ease my heart to tell you. Think—think what it must be to me to spend every hour, night and day, attending to the sick and wounded who are strangers to me, and all the while to know that he, he who was my first and dearest friend on earth, is most likely lying somewhere within those walls ill, dying perhaps, with none to tend or care for him."

She could not go on, but, bending her face on her hands, sobbed unrestrainedly. John Pemberton looked at her with infinite compassion.

"You mean Bertrand Lisle?" he said, very gently.

"Yes," she answered, in a broken voice. "I know that he came into Paris at the same time that we did. He cannot have escaped from it, as you know; and in no possible way have I been able to hear anything of him. But I have an instinctive conviction that he is ill somewhere, and in need of help. I have visited every ambulance to which I could gain access, and looked in the faces of hundreds of wounded men; but never, never have I seen him."

"Then, Miss Trevelyan, from this moment leave the search to me; and I promise you that I will never rest till I have found him. I can go where you cannot, and I do not doubt I shall succeed."

She put both her hands into his. She looked up into his face, with eyes radiant with gratitude.

"I cannot thank you," she said, "for I know no words which could express what I feel; but our Father in heaven will bless you, Mr. Pemberton, with a great blessing for your mercy and goodness to me."

He pressed her hand in silence, and they walked on to the hospital.

"I ought not to wonder at any man's folly," thought Pemberton, as he turned away from seeing Mary within the gate, "after my own insane weakness at Chiverley; but certainly there never was madness like that of Bertrand Lisle, when he flung aside such a heart as Mary Trevelyan's for the sake of the syren Lorelei!"

(To be continued.)

"TO BE KEPT TILL CALLED FOR."

A TRUE STORY.

THE Farlingham coach was on the point of starting from the "Green Man and Still," the coachman and proprietor, honest Dan Rumble, had gathered up the reins, and was in the act of lifting his booted foot to the first step, when a small voice was heard calling on him to take charge of a correspondingly small brown-paper parcel. How it was that at such a supreme moment he could pay any attention to so insignificant a matter is a mystery. The largest-hearted coachman must be parcel-hardened at times, and, certainly, to have a miserable packet forced upon you by some urchin just as you are about to assume your high command, must be a thing below ordinary notice. However, moved by irresistible fate, Mr. Rumble *did* take the parcel, unmindful of all booking, and other irregularities, slipped it into the boot without looking at it, and, utterly regardless of repeated intimations from the small voice that it was to be "kept till called for," mounted and drove off.

That night the brown-paper parcel remained at the Farlingham coach-office, sole representative of all the manifold and multiform packages which had been brought from town. To the coachman's surprise there was no name on it—nothing but the direction that it was to be kept at Farlingham till called for, as the boy had said. And there it re-

mained, sometimes having for a short time the company of one or more other parcels or boxes, who soon, however, showed that they had friends in the world who cared for them; but more frequently all alone—a poor neglected common-place solitary parcel, that seemed to have been forgotten by everybody. Sometimes Mr. Rumble happened to notice it, and said, "Why, there's that parcel still; hasn't anybody been for it yet?" and then it would again be totally lost sight of for a time.

Weeks, months, a whole year, two years, passed away, and still no inquiry whatever was made about it. At last, one day, without rhyme or reason—just in the way we often arrive at petty decisions, without any external pressure—it came into Dan Rumble's mind all on a sudden to do something or other with that parcel. Like a very small foreign substance which the system cannot appropriate, it was producing a slight irritation, and he declared, in the hearing of his wife, that he must get rid of it.

"Why not open it, and see what's inside?" said she, with instinctive but somewhat languid curiosity—it was *such* a contemptible-looking parcel.

"All very well, missus," was the reply, "but suppose the owner should turn up to-morrow."

"Nonsense! a thing like that, that has been left unclaimed for a couple of years, can't *have* any owner. Look at it; why it's as light as if it were full of nothing but fluff," and she gave it a toss in the air, as if to show its unsubstantial composition.

"Never mind if it *be* only fluff, as you say, remember it ain't *my* fluff; there's the difficulty. What don't belong to me always has been and always shall be sacred as the Bible, whether it be golden sovereigns or only goose-feathers."

"You are such an honest old dear!" said the wife, admiringly; "but how you are to get rid of that miserable thing if you won't open it, or burn it, or give it away, is more than I can tell you. Sure enough, I have asked *everybody* if they knew *anybody* who was expecting a brown-paper parcel, till I am heartily sick of it."

"I know what I shall do with it," said Dan, all at once, after a long pause, "I shall take it to-morrow to Squire Clearhead, and ask him to open it in my presence."

"Do, my dear," said his wife, laughing; "and then, when you have found the goose-feathers inside, the squire will tell you that they rightfully belong to *you*."

She did not say this sharply, but in pure mischief, and all the while she liked him the better for his scrupulosity, and knew very well that there was no greater goose on earth than the man who fancied it would ever do him any real good to act dishonestly.

So Dan went accordingly to the squire's, and told his errand, and brought out of his capacious pocket the shabby packet, placing it before the worthy magistrate with a certain air of relief, as if he were about to get rid of a small bother.

"There it is, your worship," he said; "please to undo the string and let's see what can be done with the contents. I don't suppose they are worth all this trouble; but I hope you will forgive me, for I can't abear to have anything on my mind."

"Quite right, Rumble," said the squire, as he proceeded to cut the string, as requested, and leisurely to unfold the paper; "quite right; the highway of honesty may sometimes be the longest road, but it's worth while going miles out of your way to keep to it. Eh? what?—is it possible? Well, I declare! to think of such a thing!"

And, in the midst of such a fire of exclamations, Squire Clearhead revealed to light a compact nest of silvery pieces of paper, whose aristocratic crackle, as he turned them over, proclaimed at once the high breeding and careful culture of a Bank of England note.

"Why, here's a small fortune!" cried the astonished squire.

"False notes, I'll be bound, sir," said Dan, eyeing the notes incredulously, as the other turned them over with the dexterity of a banker's clerk; "the rogues were hard pressed, and so got rid of them in this way. Not a bad plan either."

The suggestion caused the squire to stop in turning them over, and he scrutinised one of them severely, holding it up to the light, and applying various other well-known tests.

"Nothing of the kind, Rumble, I'm positive of that," he said, at length, putting down the paper-examiner, and looking up into Dan's honest and unperturbed face, with evident interest in the growing mystery; "these are genuine notes, I feel perfectly confident. Of course," he continued, "they may have been stopped long ago at the Bank, and probably were, having, as I should think, been dishonestly come by; but that can easily be found out. If they have been stopped we shall be able to return them to their owner, or his representative, and may perhaps also discover some clue as to their coming into your possession. But if, on the other hand, they have not been stopped—which is very unlikely—and if we cannot trace them from the time of their first issue—which is more than probable—then, upon my word, we shall have a tidy little fortune upon our hands."

The squire began to reckon up the value of the notes. It took some little time to do it, and all that time the face of Dan Rumble altered not in expression one whit. No gleam of covetousness lurked in those steady eyes; not, forsooth, because he had any sublime indifference to feathering his own nest, but simply because, to his way of thinking, there stood between that possible fortune and himself the impassable gulf that it was not his.

"Eight thousand pounds, more or less!" ex-

claimed the squire, when he had turned over the last note; and he sat back in his chair, and folded his hands, and again looked up into Dan's face.

"Well, they 're not mine, sir, that's clear; I only wish it was as clear who the rightful owner is."

The squire liked those few bright words amazingly. There was a sweet wholesome scent about them, better than the best of flowery perfumes. He felt he could not trust such a man too much.

"What would you wish me to do with them, Rumble?"

"Whatever you think best, your worship; I leave them in your hands, and shall be glad to have got them off mine."

"Well, then, I tell you what I'll do," said the squire, after a minute's deliberation; "I will go up to town with you to-morrow, and we'll see my lawyer, and go with him to the Bank of England, and perhaps put ourselves in communication with the police, and sift the matter, so far as we can, to the very bottom. For my part, I don't think we shall have far to go. I shall seal the packet up in your presence, Rumble, and then you can leave it with me."

They went, they investigated, the notes were scrutinised, the bank books were searched, the police authorities were consulted, everything was done that could be done, but all to no purpose; not the slightest clue could be discovered as to the history of those notes.

They had never been stopped, there was no indorsement on any one of them that furnished the least trace of ownership that was of any use, the police—though they were wonderfully shrewd in explaining how the notes had come into Dan Rumble's hands—could find nothing whatever, upon reference to their records, that even hinted at any contemporaneous loss or robbery, advertisements in London as well as country papers published the fact of the discovery in general terms, but all in vain; and every scent that was followed only ended in the pursuers being as much as ever at fault.

(*To be concluded.*)

SURLY BOB.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER II.

THE bird stood erect on Bob's finger, as if she felt at home there, putting her head first on one side and then on the other, as she looked at him out of her small bright eyes. Bob returned her glances, and as he did so something actually approaching a smile broke over his rugged features and softened them, especially when, bending his head, he laid his cheek caressingly against the bird's soft plumage. Then he stroked it gently with his hand for a few moments, looking, as he did so, strangely unlike the boy who a short time ago had sat sullen and silent in his class in the school-room.

But some sudden sound from without made itself heard, and he was again his old self in a moment. The dove was instantly hidden from sight, as were also those softer feelings which seemed for the moment to have been stealing over him. Then he stood listening, apparently ready to repulse any attack upon or invasion of his domain. For Bob was always ready to fight for his rights, and he had come by degrees to look upon this out-house as his own property. For it was made no use of by the family (indeed, none of the cousins would have condescended to sleep in or inhabit such a miserable place), and having thus been given up entirely to the brothers, Bob had long considered it as exclusively his, and was as ready to defend it, and as resolved to keep off intruders, as if it had been his own castle by right of inheritance.

But he was generally left unmolested, there being little to tempt any one either in the place or its contents. Only sometimes the most provoking of the cousins, Sam and Bill, would come on purpose to annoy Bob, and try to force an entrance into his den. But they always met with such rough handling, that they had begun to think it best to leave "surly Bob" to himself. And the latter, having found out a way of shutting the crazy old door, when he went out, in such a manner that it would have been very difficult for any one but himself, who knew the knack, to open it, he felt pretty easy in his mind when absent as to the safety of whatever treasures he might have left within. Poor Bob's treasures, however, were soon numbered, the ring-dove apparently being the only one, as, besides the bed, the place seemed to contain nothing but a broken chair and a three-legged stool.

The sound outside he at length found was caused by little Johnnie's crutch; and, accordingly, as it drew nearer, he opened the door for his brother to enter. Then he closed it carefully again.

The little fellow came in looking blue with cold; and as he seated himself and laid aside his crutch, he exclaimed, "How bitter cold it is, ain't it, Bob? My hands and feet ache so I scarce knows how to bear it!" and he held up his numbed fingers to his mouth, that his warm breath might fall upon them and perhaps put a little heat into them.

"It's 'cause you can't run about like other chaps, that you get so starved," said Bob, as he went down upon his knees and took hold of one of Johnnie's feet.

"Whatever are you going to do, Bob?" he asked.

Bob did not reply, only bent lower over the small

foot he was chafing; but the face which generally looked so ill-tempered and harsh wore another expression now: the usually heavy listless eyes were soft and even glistening; the firmly set and rather thick lips were parted into a half smile, as at some pleasant thought. Was it, then, that Bob, in spite of his rough exterior, had a heart, and that little Johnnie—and Johnnie alone—held the key to it? Was the silent sullen lad touched to find that there was one who could love him—even him, "surly Bob"—and like to be with him? It almost looked so; and looked too as if he knew how to love in return, so gently did the boy—whose fists, half an hour ago had dealt out blows and a black eye to Tom Lane—rub and chafe, and try to warm the little brother's feet and hands.

"Have you been all this time a-coming home?" he asked at length, abruptly.

"No, I went into widow Black's," replied Johnnie.

"What did you go in there for?"

"She was at the door, so I just spoke to her, and then she asked me to come in a few minutes. You see, as she's blind, she's glad of any one to talk to."

"What d'you find to talk to her about? I ain't never got nothing to say."

"Oh, she asked me about the Sunday-school. She likes to hear what they've been telling us there; and I could remember some of it to-day, 'cause 'twas so easy to understand, wasn't it, Bob?"

"Dunno," returned the other, shortly.

At length he declared that Bob's rubbing had made him quite warm, adding, "We'd best go in, hadn't we? and see what we can get for tea, or it'll all be over, I expect, for it must be getting past the time, and I'm dreadful hungry."

"Come along then," returned Bob, handing him his crutch, and the two went out together, Johnnie saying, in a low voice, "And when we come back we'll have out our little dove, won't we, Bob, 'cause we shall be all safe then."

(To be continued.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

249. How does our Lord illustrate the close connection there is between Himself and those who do the will of His Father which is in heaven?

250. What special law was given by Moses in reference to cases where property was left to the daughters of a family?

251. Which of Christ's miracles were miracles of creation?

252. For what purpose does Jeremiah use the type of good and bad figs?

253. What proof is there that the early inhabitants of Canaan gained much of their power from the possession of chariots of iron?

254. State the punishment inflicted at God's command upon a man who had broken the Sabbath.

255. Quote a passage in which St. Paul says he was hindered in his work by Satan.

256. What command was given by God to the children of Israel as to the make of their garments—and why?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 608.

237. Joel (or Vashni) and Abiah (1 Sam. viii. 2).

238. "Then came Peter to Him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven" (Matt. xviii. 21, 22).

239. Because the prince of Tyre had set himself up as God, and lifted up his heart in pride (Ezekiel xxviii. 2, 6).

240. Five (Luke xvi. 28).

241. "Rise up, Lord, and let Thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate Thee flee before Thee." "Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel" (Num. x. 35, 36).

242. Under the oak in Jabesh, by the men of Jabesh-gilead (1 Chron. x. 11, 12).

"EVEN AS THOU WILT."

SOUL, where goest thou?
Whither? unto rest?
Whither? Then as now
Unto what is best.

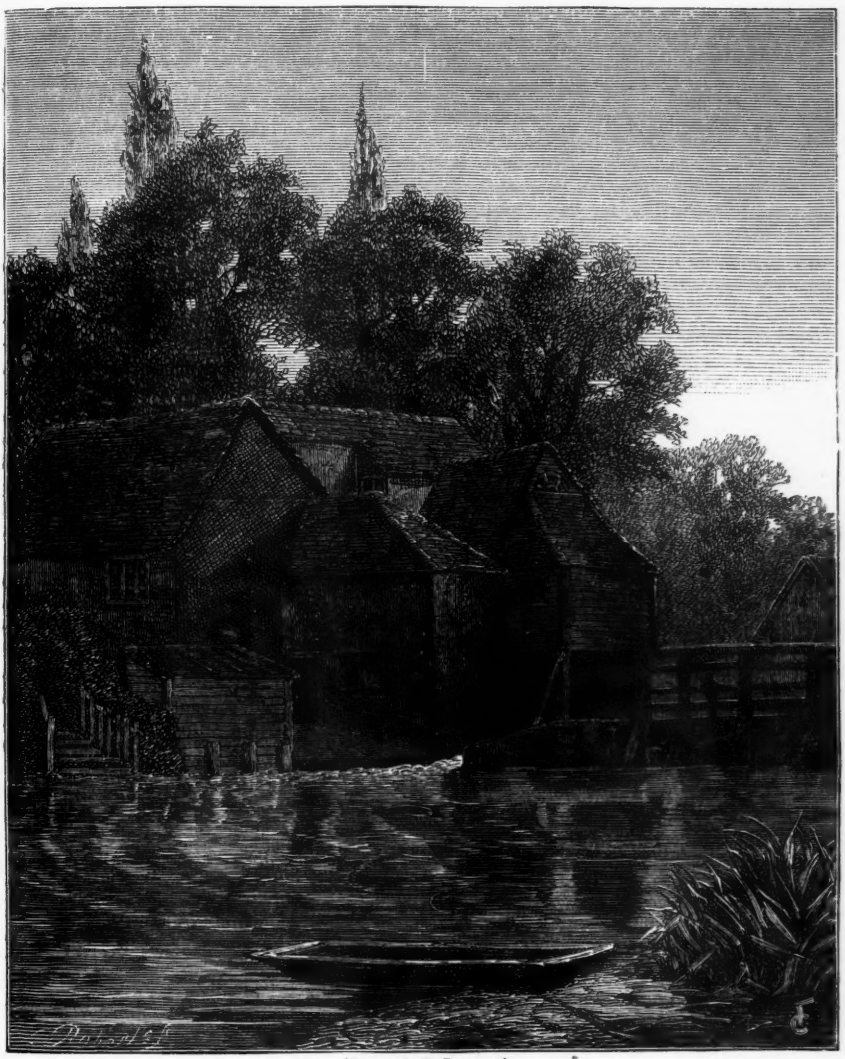
For Faith's trusting eyes
See, what to Doubt's sight
Thickest darkness lies,
Even as clearest light.

Dust shall pass to dust;
But the sure soul still
Flies, with perfect trust,
God, where Thou shalt will.

Be it dark with ill
To my trembling sight,
Lord, it is Thy will;
Lord, I know 'tis right.

Calm, through life, through death,
Joy and grief, I tread;
For, through all, Faith saith,
All by Thee are led.

W. C. BENNETT.



(*Drawn by* F. CARLESS.)

LET THEM SLEEP.

BY MRS. G. LINNÆUS BANKS.

THERE'S a twitter from the poplars,
And a flutter in the limes,
For the dawn is slowly breaking,
And the birdies wake betimes;
But the trees still cast a shadow
On the mill beside the stream,
Where the unawakened inmates
In serenest slumber dream,
As though the wash of waters
Was a lullaby supreme.

But the dawn is creeping upwards,
And the birds their matins trill,
To awake the drowsy sleepers
In the cottage and the mill;
But the human, worn with labour,
Has the longer need of rest,
And while night still spreads her pinions
(Like a blessing from the blest)
Let them sleep, to wake as blithely
As the birdlings in the nest.

There be those among the song-birds
Of the dense and stifling town
To whom the night brings no repose,
And the dawn comes with a frown,
Who would gladly sink to slumber
Like the miller and the thrush,
And awaken fresh and buoyant
When the dawn comes with a blush;
But *their* nests are not mid lindens,
And *their* stream runs with a rush.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—NETTA'S LETTER.

DOROTHY never forgot those dying words of Tortoiseshell's as long as she lived. Out of love for the kind old lady at first and for His own sake at last, she thought of that friend who "never failed," and so gradually the gap in the girl's life filled up, and new and holier thoughts took the place of the old ones, and Dorothy was no longer lonely, and would never be so again. She had found something now to dream about and think of, something which neither spoilt her life nor stayed her energies, but which made all labour easy and all self-sacrifice sweet.

"Do you know, Dorothy, you have grown so pretty lately," Sally said one day, as she looked up into her sister's truthful brown eyes, that had sometimes a far-off look in them, which the child only dimly understood then. "You are far prettier than Netta."

"Oh no, Sally," she said, "Netta was a beauty."

"Well, so are you; and Mr. Fuller thinks so too now." The quick colour came to Dorothy's face. Adrian Fuller was always at her side again. He resumed his old footing in the family, even in the shabby lodging. His old footing with all but Dorothy. She was never the same, and never could be again. She always remembered the summer days which had been so bright, and those dreary ones that followed, and above all the terrible day, in which he had all but accused her of the feeling he had himself fanned and encouraged, and that still more terrible evening when she had flung his meanness in his teeth. No, she could never be the same again. Her heart beat quicker when he came, the colour rushed to her face when he entered a room where she was, and her eyes drooped beneath his gaze. The fearless, frank little Dolly, who liked him in former days, and felt no shame in owning it, had vanished, and the Dorothy he knew now was a shy sweet maiden, who worked hard and laboured, not for her own happiness but for the happiness of those around her, and who seemed to have some world of her own far away from his, and which raised her above and beyond him. She had a fascination now for him that Netta in all her glorious beauty had never possessed—a beauty which is as different as that which appeals to the senses only as is the flash of diamonds from the light of stars, a beauty which we feel rather than behold, and which brings all our better nobler feelings into play, until in struggling towards the light we long to reach we leave our baser selves behind. So gradually Adrian Fuller learned to love Dorothy Woodward. But she never guessed it. She was too much engrossed with the work her hands had found to do, and the new happiness her heart had found to dwell upon. And yet there was something still wanting in the girl's life, something that made her creep away sometimes, and sob and fret, and pray that she might have strength to put away all longings from her heart, and be content with that happiness only which is to be found in the happiness of others.

They had not been many months in the shabby rooms before Dorothy received a characteristic letter from Netta in answer to the one she had written telling her of the family misfortunes. The Beauty was vexed. "I am very sorry for you all," she wrote; "but it is of no use telling me these things. It only makes me unhappy, and I did not at all like my husband knowing that my people were obliged to go into lodgings, and my sister to teach the children of an obscure doctor. Now, I have a good bit of news for you: Robert (Robert was the elder brother, who was stationed within a few miles of the Beauty) seemed quite touched with the account of the family troubles, and is going to write by this mail, making over the interest of the thousand pounds left him by grandpapa to you until better days shall dawn. This is very generous of him, though of course he is well off, and can afford it. I wish I could have done the same, but have too many things to buy, for in this place one is obliged to dress so much, and my husband is so absurd, and never understands this. I hope you will get one, and soon get into a house

again. We may be in England again next year, for this climate does not agree with me at all. I wish you were here, Dorothy; you would soon get off. You will believe this when I tell you that a girl who came out in the same steamer as ourselves, not at all pretty, and with very provincial manners, has already had four offers of marriage. This will show you what an excellent hunting-ground there is here, and how different is the conduct of the men from the indifference which they sometimes exhibit in England."

CHAPTER XXXV.—CHANGES.

She was sitting talking with George Blakesley about the old house at Hampstead.

"My friend wants to let it," he said, "and wants hardly any rent for it, merely a nominal one, so that his house is taken care of, and the garden—he likes your garden, Dorothy—is left undisturbed. It will be the best thing you can do to take it. I will manage the getting it entirely for you." She almost trembled with emotion. The happiness of going back into the old house seemed too great a one to bear.

"But we have no furniture now," she said.

"I know; I thought of that," he answered. "But I have given up the actuary business, and think of going abroad for two or three years."

"Two or three years?"

"Five or six perhaps. I want change, and rest and time to work." There was such a weary tone in his voice, it made Dorothy's heart ache, and yet her lips were tied, and he did not notice how pale she had grown when he told her of his intention to go away, and never even guessed how much he was unconsciously throwing from him. "I am going away," he continued, "and I thought that perhaps you would not mind taking charge of my furniture. It could be moved in immediately, if you wouldn't mind this. It would save me the trouble and expense of warehousing it, and be really a kindness;" and he looked as if he were asking a favour at her hands. She understood him though, and her eyes filled with tears. "It would make me so happy if you would, Dorothy," he added, in his quiet pleading voice.

She understood him, and answered, simply, "Very well, Mr. Blakesley," and so it was arranged.

Then an idea occurred to him.

"Suppose," he said, "we kept this little affair to ourselves, and got the house ready, and then pretended to take them out one fine afternoon, and drove them back to the old house."

She clapped her hands with glee.

"Oh yes!" she exclaimed. "Oh yes! only let's tell Tom!" So Tom was told, and made joyful demonstrations thereupon.

"He is a regular brick," he said to Dorothy, when they were alone. "Can't think what he sees in us to be so good. Why, he's the sort of fellow who does things not merely because it pleases him, but because he thinks he ought to be good to his fellow-creatures." The colour went slowly out of Dorothy's face, and then came rushing back.

"Tom," she said, "do you think that is why he has done this? If so, I would a thousand times rather ——"

"No, don't be a donkey," said Tom. "But he is an awfully good fellow. Why, last year, Doll, I got into no end of a mess about that beast of a boat, and was awfully in debt, and at last I told Blakesley, and asked him to lend me some tin, and he wouldn't."

"Well?" asked Dorothy, not seeing that this story was redounding to the honour and glory of the once interloping Blakesley.

"He said it would ruin me if I began borrowing money; it ruined almost every fellow who tried it on; and so he wouldn't, unless he found I absolutely couldn't pull through without; then he investigated everything, and bullied me well, and helped me, and got me all straight again, and went down to the office, and made them keep me on. Blakesley's an awful brick, I mean to say, and I shall be as glad as possible to see his old spider-leg chairs and crockery about the place."

"Yes," she said; "but if he only does it ——"

"Now look here, Doll, I think you ought to know him well enough to leave his motives alone, and trust to their being all right. I do, at any rate. Besides, think how the old folks will kick with delight at going back to the old place; you have no business to do them out of that pleasure, just because you have taken an idiotic notion into your head."

"No," she said, after a pause, "you are right, I haven't." And so the matter was settled; but Dorothy was not happy about it. The fact is, Dorothy was not happy at all; the long strain on her energies had tired her, and her face was getting worn and thin. George Blakesley noticed the difference.

"You want rest," he said; "rest, and quiet, and freedom from care, and I think you work too hard."

"Oh no," she said; "I shall be well again soon."

"You must try," he said, cheerily, "and now I want to tell you something. I go out of my house to-morrow, so you can have the things moved in. My servants will help you, and Tom says he means to work hard at it, because, of course, you have your teaching to do in the day. Then when all is ready you can give every one a surprise; and, Dorothy, make your father and mother understand that they are really doing me a kindness in taking charge of the things. And I don't think I shall be round again, for I am going down to Oxford to visit some old friends in the morning, and I shall not be back till the day before I start for America."

"Not be back! Shan't we see you again, then?"

Her face was blanched with a sudden fear, and her heart stood still with a faint sick feeling.

"In a year or two."

"Yes, but come and see us before you go," she pleaded.

"No," he answered, so coldly that she felt her pride coming to the rescue, and could not ask again. "I shall have so little time, and must say good-bye to my aunts. I wish you would go and see them sometimes," he added, as if asking a favour at her hands.

"Yes," she answered, "I will."

"I shall come and see you all as soon as I come back, from America I mean. I am only going for a few years, you know. I shall find you all in the old house, I hope;" he said this when he was taking a final leave; "or, at least, most of you. Perhaps you will be married.

"I! no, never."

"Ah! that is what they all say," he answered, with a wintry sort of smile. "But I hope you do not mean it, more than the rest. I should like to see you happy, Dorothy."

She understood him now. He wanted her to understand that he no longer took an interest in her.

"Thank you," she answered, almost haughtily; "I will let you know when the event is likely to take place." *(To be continued.)*

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE.—III.

BY THE RIGHT REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL.

WE may here not unfitly add a few remarks on the parables peculiarly recorded in this Gospel, as they admirably illustrate those characteristics of St. Luke's Gospel which we have already observed; that large-heartedness, tenderness, compassion, and broad spirit of pity and loving-kindness, with which the whole narrative seems pervaded and animated. Let us briefly run through the list of the parables which are peculiar to the Gospel we are now considering. These appear to be eleven in number: the Two Debtors (vii. 41), the Good Samaritan (x. 30), the Friend at Night (xi. 5), the Rich Fool (xii. 15), the Barren Fig-tree (xiii. 6), the Lost Coin (xv. 8), the Prodigal Son (xi. 11), the Unjust Steward (xvi. 1), the Rich Man and Lazarus (xvi. 19), the Widow and the Judge (xviii. 1), and the parable of the Pounds (xix. 11), to which I have recently alluded, and which it seems reasonable to consider as different from the parable of the Talents in St. Matthew. The mere enumeration illustrates the first comment—that the general subject and character of these parables is in completest harmony with that pervading tone of love and mercy to all men, which we have seemed so specially to recognise in this comprehensive Gospel. We may add, too, the remark, that several, if not the majority of them, obviously wear that same historical character which we might naturally have been led to expect in the inspired record of St. Luke. While in St. Matthew the parables are rather of a more definitely Oriental cast, and refer more commonly to the nature, extent, and diffusion of the kingdom of God, the parables of St. Luke are more of a historical character, and refer more to the life of the soul, and to the spiritual necessities of the individual member of the heavenly family. So distinctly, indeed, is this character marked, that in the case of one of the above list of parables, that of the Rich Man and Lazarus, it has often been debated whether we ought not rather to consider the narrative as belonging rather to the province of actual history than of mere shadow and similitude.

More need scarcely be said on the general character of these parables. We may pause, however, to add a few remarks on the way in which they are introduced into the sacred narrative, and may thus carry out that hint afforded us by the parable of the Pounds, which has, in fact, led to the present digression. In the case of that parable, we have just observed, that its introduction was accounted for by definite historical facts—our Lord's nearness to Jerusalem, and the mistaken notions about His kingdom which were now prevailing among those who heard him. The connection, in fact, between the parable and the history is close and immediate. Is this, however, merely exceptional or accidental, or is it a principle which apparently prevails throughout the third Gospel? Such a connection is certainly what we might have been led to expect in the record of the historian-evangelist; can it, however, be substantiated by examples? Let us briefly test this in the case of the other parables. If we take, for example, the eleven parables which have been recently specified, we may certainly observe this connection in the case of at least nine of the number. The parable of the Two Debtors, for instance, stands in immediate connection with the narrative of the Woman who was a sinner; that of the Good Samaritan is the answer to the question—"Who is my neighbour?" that of the Friend at Night illustrates the subject with which

the chapter opens—the subject of prayer; the parable of the Rich Fool stands in closest connection with the worldly-minded request of him who would fain have had our Lord take the part of a judge and divider of earthly goods; the parable of the Barren Fig-tree forms the sequel to the subject of God's judgments, as alluded to in the case of the Galilæans, and the fall of the tower in Siloam; the Lost Coin forms a practical rebuke to the murmuring of the Scribes and Pharisees at our Lord's eating with publicans and sinners; the Prodigal Son continues and concludes the same subject; the Rich Man and Lazarus is the answer to the Scribes and Pharisees, whose covetous spirit had led them to gainsay and deride; the parable of the Pounds, as we have already observed, was to repress ill-founded expectations. The only two exceptions to this connection of the parable with the history occur in the cases of the parables of the Unjust Steward, and, perhaps, of the Widow and the Unjust Judge, though in this latter case it may be observed that the words with which the end and object of the parable is specified, and the precise terms in which it is applied, seem certainly to hint at some connection between the foregoing prophecy of the Lord's coming and the exhortation which follows. If prayer is to be a permitted instrument in hastening that coming, great indeed is its necessity, paramount indeed the duty of the elect to faint not, and to pray alway for the advent of their avenging Lord.

One further subject demands our consideration, and our survey of the general characteristics of St. Luke's Gospel may be concluded. This subject, though really first in point of importance, I have reserved to the last, as serving to illustrate several of our foregoing comments, and as standing in some degree of connection with the present aspect in which we are considering our evangelist as "the beloved physician." This concluding subject is the portraiture of our Lord, as presented us by the writer of the third Gospel. Here, indeed, all the characteristics of St. Luke, that we have previously noticed, appear combined in the most perfect and harmonious unity. The large-hearted Gentile proselyte, the reflecting historian, the thoughtful observer, pass and repass before us in the inspired delineation of our Master's earthly life. He appears to us, not so much the Jewish Messiah, not so much the wonder-working Son of God, not so much the Word made flesh, as the Redeemer of our lost race, the Saviour of the world, the God-man, who had come to heal that which was wounded, and to find that which was lost. We may illustrate this, both negatively and positively. On the negative side, we may observe certain omissions, which, in the general and comprehensive Gospel of the historian-evangelist, it does not seem wholly precarious to refer, if not to studied design, yet, at any rate, to a mode of contemplating our Lord's life and works so true to itself and so consistent, that what seemed imperfectly to accord with it passed unconsciously out of view. One of these general classes of omissions is the prevailing absence of reference to Messianic prophecies having any limited or Judaical reference; and another, the general and prevailing silence on our Lord's special relations to the polity of Israel in events where the other sacred writers seem to give them emphasis and prominence. The isolated instance in which our Lord in this Gospel does refer to Messianic prophecy in its Jewish relations seems to evince the truth of this first remark; the omissions in the narrative of our Lord's triumphal entry may be urged in illustration of the second. In the case, for example, where our Lord refers to this form of Messianic prophecy, it is in fact to show how incompatible with the actual truth is every narrow and national application: "And He said unto them, How say they that Christ is David's son?" Again, in the case of the triumphal entry, while both in St. Matthew and St. Mark we read of the royal name of David mixed up with the acclamations of the multitude, and while in St. John we have alike Messianic prophecy and reference to the Lord as King of Israel, in our present evangelist we have only the inclusive title—"the King that cometh in the name of the Lord;" to which, it may be parenthetically observed, is an addition, which still more clearly seems to set forth the significance of the omission, even this remarkable addition, which we alone find specified by St. Luke, as heard from the lips of the clustering multitudes, "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" What, in but little changed words, had been heard sung by the tongues of angels on the slopes of Bethlehem, is now heard on the Mount of Olives. Angels and men alike imply the universality of the reign of the coming King.

If, however, St. Luke's special portraiture of our Lord is thus apparently recognisable in its negative characteristics, most surely is it to be seen in vivid clearness in its positive features. The words of the prophecy of Isaiah, which this evangelist alone gives in all their fulness, supply the key-note to the whole: "All flesh shall see the salvation of God." To all has Jesus come as the Saviour and as the Redeemer, the Healer of the sick, the Freer from the powers of darkness, the Son of Adam both in descent and in sympathy, though the Son of God in essence, majesty, and power. "He hath sent me," said the Lord Himself by the mouth of His prophet, "to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Some of the illustrations of this have

been already incidentally referred to under other heads; as, for example, the tenderness shown to the widow of Nain, the forgiveness extended to the woman that was a sinner, the mercy vouchsafed to the dying malefactor, and, generally, the repeated notices of the all-inclusive love, which showed itself in healings, not of the few, but of the many; not of isolated cases, but of all.

In reference to this portraiture of our blessed Lord, we must certainly call attention to one class of miraculous healings which seem somewhat studiously dwelt upon by St. Luke, as serving to set forth our Lord as the Friend of man in its truest aspects—his Saviour from the power and tyranny of darkness. All the synoptical evangelists specify these cases of the healing of demoniacs, and St. Mark perhaps in some instances more graphically than St. Luke. There seems, however, a recognisable difference in the drift of the narratives of the two evangelists. In St. Mark the recital of this class of miracles appears to involve a different design—the design of setting forth the wonder-working Son of God, while in our present evangelist the studious mention of these manifestations of divine power seem rather designed to set forth our Redeemer's loving-kindness and mercy, especially as vouchsafed in His rescue of suffering man from the thraldom of the spirits of evil. The mention of this form of divine mercy is at any rate frequent and persistent. Not only have we all the more notorious cases which are mentioned by the other evangelists, such as of the demoniac and the synagogue at Capernaum (iv. 33), of the Gerasene demoniac (viii. 26), and of the hapless boy who was healed when our Lord was returning from the Mount of Transfiguration (ix. 37)—not only have we very clear and explicit accounts of these, not only have we all those references which are also found in one or the other of the remaining evangelists, but still further we meet with various allusions to this particular exercise of saving power which are peculiar to this present Gospel. It is in St. Luke alone that it is noticed that this form of healing was performed in the presence of the two messengers of the Baptist (viii. 21); it is St. Luke alone who tells us that the women who were permitted to minister to our Lord and accompany Him in His circuits through Galilee, were healed not only of general infirmities but of evil spirits (viii. 2); it is in St. Luke alone that the power entrusted to the apostles over these enemies of the kingdom of our Lord is defined in the comprehensive terms as over "all devils" (ix. 1). It is only in St. Luke that we read of the holy joy with which the returned disciples declared unto their Lord how even the devils were subject to them in His name (x. 17); and it is there, too, alone that we read that mystical assurance of the victory of the kingdom of light conveyed in the declaration that He who had sent forth His followers had Himself seen their success in the lightning-like fall of Satan from heaven (x. 18). More instances might perhaps be found; we might perhaps even with justice allude to the suggestive fact that in one case—namely, that of the woman bowed by a spirit of infirmity (xiii. 11), and perhaps in another, the restoration of St. Peter's mother-in-law—the physician-evangelist recognised the direct working of Satan, even in cases which, especially to one educated as he had been, might have been deemed only the ordinary manifestations of sickness and disease.

There is yet one more point which it is necessary to specify in St. Luke's portraiture of our Lord, and it is this—the frequent mention he makes of His prayers to His heavenly Father. Perhaps it is thus that the evangelist would convey to us what St. John reveals to us by our Lord's own solemn declaration—the essential unity between the eternal Son and the eternal Father. Prayer in the aspects of the third evangelist may have been the outward symbol and token that the Father and the Son were one, the hours of return as it were, to the glories which He had from everlasting, the holy departures for a season from the darkness of this world to the glories of that inaccessible light. Be this, however, as it may, the fact itself—the frequent mention of our Lord's prayers—cannot but be regarded as an important peculiarity in St. Luke's portraiture of our Lord, and as one that occurs too often to be considered a historical notice without special significance and design. A few examples will not be out of place. At the baptism in the Jordan our evangelist reminds us that his Master was then praying (iii. 21); it is he who tells us that his Lord's wont was "to retire to the deserts and pray." It is he again who specifies that before the choice of the twelve apostles "He went out in a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." It was after "He had been alone praying" (ix. 18) that He put the question to His disciples, which St. Peter answered with the affirmation that He was the Christ of God; it was when in prayer, as our evangelist tells us, that He exhibited to His amazed apostles the glories of Transfiguration (ix. 28); it was as He was "praying in a certain place" (xi. 1) that His disciples besought Him to teach them to enter into this communion with the Father of Spirits, and, according to our evangelist, it was at that time that He taught them that blessed form of prayer whereby we, too, say, "Abba, Father." Lastly, out of the seven sayings on the cross, the only one that can be described as a definite utterance of prayer, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (xxiii. 34), is found only in the narrative

of St. Luke, even as it is there also alone that the last words of prayerful resignation, those words that tell of the holy and everlasting unity of the Father and Son, are specially and solemnly recorded—"Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit: and having said this He gave up the ghost."

Such is a general survey of the characteristics of the third Gospel. Much more might be added, but if this and the foregoing articles help to induce our younger readers (for whom these pages have mainly been written) to search for themselves the Holy Scriptures, to mark as well as to read, and to strive more and more to realise and to love the Book of Life, enough will have been done. The comments on this one Gospel may perhaps lead some of our readers to apply the general principles of simple criticism which we have here followed to the remaining Gospels. Such efforts will be alike instructive and edifying. They will more and more make them feel as well as see the truth, and realise that "these things were written that we might believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and that, believing, we might have life in His name."

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. Second Series. No. 6. A Sea Side Talk.

Chapter to be read—Matthew xiii. (part of)

INTRODUCTION. Ask where Christ spent most of His time? Why in Galilee and not Judea? Why would His own people not receive Him? for what sort of a king were they looking? Was Christ a temporal king? From what does He deliver us? Who alone can forgive sins? What did He do to show that He was God? But was He always working miracles? No; used to talk to them about His spiritual kingdom, and what they must do to attain to it. Had been preaching a good deal in Galilee. At whose house did He often stay? What was Simon Peter? Going to read to-day of a conversation by the sea.

I. The Parable. (Read xiii. 1—9.) Try and picture the scene to the children—a hot day, bright sky overhead; the lake of Galilee cool and calm, surrounded by mountains; Christ comes out of the house, finds multitudes gathering around Him, first tries sitting on the shore; crowd too great; cannot talk comfortably; gets into Peter's boat (Luke v. 3.), has little anchor let out to keep it steady; sits down in the end of the boat and begins to talk. Picture the crowd on the shore standing or sitting about in groups—little children running about; boys throwing stones into the water, perhaps spelling out Peter's name on the stern of the boat. Now suddenly a sower comes in sight on the hill-side opposite. Christ points him out—"Look, look, a sower," &c. In how many different kinds of places did the seed fall? Yes; and in three produced no fruit, in one produced some fruit of three different degrees. (*a*) *The first.* Two accidents to this: either trodden down or picked up; anyhow, did not sink in at all, made no impression on the ground. (*b*) *The second.* Where did it fall next? Just in a little soil on the top of a rock; very little depth; could not go far; soon sprung up, but as soon withered; roots no depth, no moisture to keep alive; soon scorched under the sun. (*c*) *The third.* This the first time a plant actually formed; but what grew up with it? What effect did the thorns have? therefore no fruit to perfection. (*d*) *The fourth.* Same seed, sown by same man now produced fruit. Why? Where was it sown? What makes the ground good? Must have had previous careful preparation; weeds removed, soil cared for; here produces fruit, some more, some less, but all some.

II. The Explanation. (Read 18—23.) First explain what a parable is—a story or picture of what goes on in earth to teach some lesson about Christ's kingdom—this parable about the *Word* of the kingdom, *i.e.*, about the word of God. How does God's word come to us? By voice of spirit speaking to conscience; by voice of Bible read by or taught to us; by voice of ministers telling us about God. What is the ground? Speaks not only to ear but to heart: let us see with what success. (*a*) *First class*—trodden down or picked away. Who comes and takes it away? Yes, but Satan can be resisted. If he takes it away it is because we let it go; because we hear it, but don't heed it; because we let other thoughts or words drive it away. This especially case with young—are careless, heedless, thoughtless, often hear, but without profit; how often has this been the case with all? must always ask for hearing ear and attentive heart, or will lose all good. (*b*) *Second class*—stony ground. At first seems more hopeful; seed *has* sunk in; who are represented here? hear with joy: all sounds so delightful—singing hymns, hearing of heaven, pleasures of religion; all so nice, they determine will indeed serve God. But no root; trusting to good resolutions instead of God's help; then comes persecution, perhaps laughed at, called a saint; person begins to leave off reading the Bible, praying so much; drops religious habits of church-going, &c., gets tired, or is laughed out of it—no fruit. (*c*) *Third class*—among thorns. A little advance here; plant formed; fruit looked for; why fail? because other things, foul weeds allowed to grow up with it, should have been pulled up. What are these? love of pleasure, excessive cares, love of

money, &c. Remind how Christ requires whole heart; his disciples must, like Abraham, be ready to give up a child; or the young man to give up money; or St. Paul, friends; all that comes between us and Christ, or will bring forth no fruit. Solemn question to be often put: "Is anything keeping me back from Christ?" any secret sin, any bad companion, any too exciting pleasure, if it cast any shade over profession, must be abandoned. (*d*) *Fourth class*—good ground, *i.e.*, well-prepared. How can heart be prepared to receive seed? sin must be put away, bad habits left off, God's Holy Spirit prayed for to make heart tender, ready to receive impressions—that so seed may spring up and bear fruit. What is this fruit? See Gal. v. 22, knowing God and His love in salvation of world will produce *love* to Him, *joy*, at the glad tidings—*peace* in the heart because sins forgiven—*gentleness* towards others, *meekness* in our character—*patience* under trial, &c. Should also aim to increase these fruits, 30 become 60, 60 become 100—aim at highest standard will thus fulfil design of sower, and make soul meet for eternal glory.

Questions to be answered.

1. What is a parable? Where was the parable of the sower spoken?
2. Describe the scene of the story.
3. Name the kinds of soil.
4. Explain what is meant by the sower and what by the seed.
5. Explain the four classes of hearers.
6. What are the fruits intended?

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE promise made by John Pemberton to Mary Trevelyan seemed to lift a mountain-load from her anxious heart. During the long hours which she spent by day at the sick-bed of the sufferers, she was ever listening for the sound of his step, coming to tell her he had found her Bertrand; and through the dark night, when she took her turn to watch with Marthe—a stout elderly woman, who seemed to have not a care in the world—Mary was always glancing out eagerly for the tokens of the dawn, in the hope that the new morning would bring her tidings of him. But night followed night, and day succeeded day, and she seemed no nearer to a termination of her cruel anxiety than she had been at the first.

This much Pemberton ascertained—that Bertrand had certainly been in Paris, and that, in spite of his disabled arm, he had gone to take part in the defence of one of the forts; but beyond that point all trace of him was lost. With some difficulty John Pemberton succeeded in ascertaining that he was no longer in any part of the fortifications; but no one could give him any tidings whatever of his fate. His own private opinion was, that he had fallen, like so many other brave men in those fatal days, and been flung, along with hundreds of others, into some of the deep trenches which were dug as burial-places for the countless dead; but when he cautiously and tenderly hinted this opinion to Mary, she calmly said that she knew certainly it was not so. She might never be permitted to see him any more in this world; but she felt assured that his spirit had not passed from the realms of sense, or hers would have been cognisant of its departure.

John Pemberton deferred to her opinion, in so far as to continue his search for the missing man, but he quite despaired of success. In fact, he began to feel very desponding at the state of matters altogether, for the siege had by this time been many weeks protracted, the bitter frost of that terrible winter had already set in, and the scarcity of provisions was becoming so great that even the most large-hearted charity could not ensure the poorer classes from an absolute famine. The young man, whose whole heart was given up to the desire of proving to his Divine Master that now, at least, he was true to Him, worked with an energy which, to those who witnessed it, seemed quite superhuman. He no longer restricted himself to the task of conveying food to the starving people, but toiled to relieve the suffering all around him, in whatever shape he met it. He grew thin and gaunt, and his eyes seemed to become larger and blacker, in contrast with his haggard face; but still he never rested, or relaxed his efforts, till those who saw him marvelled what could be the secret of his strength.

Many a sickly fancy tormented Mary, in her uncertainty as to Bertrand's fate; and sometimes she would imagine that while she was wearing out her life in anxiety for him it was possible that he might be perfectly safe and happy in England, with Lurline for his wife, as there had been some few cases of escape from Paris, in disguise and otherwise; and it seemed to her that if he were still in the beleaguered city Pemberton must have found him. If he had escaped, it was to Laura, surely, that he would go;



(*Drawn by* WILLIAM SMALL.)

"'They call me Pierron,' said the little waif, as he ran along by her side."—*p.* 625.

and in spite of all that Charlie Davenant had told her, it was utterly impossible for Mary to believe that any one could be false to that dear Bertrand, for whom she would gladly have given her life. When she mentioned this idea as to Bertrand's escape to John Pemberton, he told her at once he felt convinced it was impossible, and he still adhered to the impression that there was a darker solution to the problem than she could be induced to admit.

However, there came a day when the question, so far as Laura Wyndham was concerned, was thoroughly set at rest. One evening, when Mary had gone to the Brunots', with the portion of her own scanty meals which she often saved for the hungry children, she was met by little Valerie in an unwonted state of excitement, which had quite roused the child out of her usual sedate womanliness. She had been watching from the window for Mary's arrival, and came flying down the stairs to meet her.

"Oh, Miss Trevelyan," she exclaimed, "if you had not come soon I should have gone to the hospital to you all by myself, for there has been such a wonderful thing. A letter has come for you from England, and the *commissionnaire* who brought it said it came in a balloon; do you really believe it? Did the letter come flying through the air?"

"I think very likely it did, Valerie; letters come only by balloons or carrier pigeons now; but where is it? Let me have it, dear; it makes me anxious to hear there is a letter;" and the little girl felt that the hand she held was trembling.

"It is here," she said, drawing her into the little salon; "I hope it will be a happy letter."

It was a small thin envelope, such as alone was allowed to be conveyed by balloon, and it had been laid in state on the table while the children stood round, gazing on it as if it were something strange and wonderful; Mary saw at a glance that the handwriting was not that of Bertrand Lisle, and at once she grew calm and almost indifferent; but when she had opened it there fell out from it another note, enclosed in her own, which bore the name that always was in her heart and thoughts, and she saw that both were from Lurline. When she opened her own note, which was written on a half sheet of paper only, to meet the requirements of the balloon post as to weight, her eye caught sight of the signature, and she started uncontrollably, for the name, written in the Lorelei's strong decided characters, was, "*Laura Brant.*" The note dropped from her hand. "Married, actually married!" thought Mary; "false to Bertrand! can it be possible? Oh, how will he bear it, my poor Bertrand!" All her thought was for him, and, gentle as she was, her indignation against Lurline was so great, that she could scarce bring herself to touch the letter which announced her faithlessness; when she did at last take it up and read it, she found it written as if the Lorelei was quite unconscious of there being anything objectionable in her conduct. She began by saying that she was sure her dearest Mary would be pleased to hear that a very great change had taken place in her fate, and that she was most happily married, and just about to start for Italy with her husband; and she was anxious that dear Bertrand Lisle, for whom she would always feel a sisterly regard, should hear the fact from herself. Of course, she said, he must have known that in giving up his appointment, and becoming a poor soldier in France, he was abandoning all chance of marriage with her, and she had no doubt some reason to complain of his conduct; but she would not reproach him, oh no, she felt too much affection for him, and for that reason she was specially desirous he should receive the letter she enclosed, in which she assured him she should always love him as a brother, and that her husband was quite prepared to receive him as such whenever he liked to visit them in their Italian home. She knew Bertrand was in Paris, she added, for he had written to her from thence a letter which she had not yet answered, and doubtless Mary must be in communication with him; she therefore entrusted her letter to her, and begged her, without fail, to transmit it to him. So ended the letter of Mr. Brant's newly-married wife; and it was long before Mary could almost realise that it was possible her Bertrand could have been so betrayed, and truly, were it not, as we have said before, that the character and history of Laura Wyndham are real and not fictitious, it might be hard to believe that any woman could be so heartless.

The next time that Mary saw John Pemberton, after she received the letter, she silently placed that written to herself in his hand; he read it slowly through, with a grave face.

"I am not surprised," he said, sadly; "poor Lurline! the day will come when she will have a terrible awakening." He sat silent for a few minutes; then he said, "Miss Trevelyan, you may have the opportunity of seeing Laura again, which I shall never have, and therefore I want to bespeak your charity for her. She is not all evil, be very sure—none of God's creatures are; her nature has been warped and perverted, but there are good qualities, I feel sure, under all that crust of worldliness and selfishness, and I should like you to know," he continued, softly, "that I pray for her continually, night and day, ever beseeching that she may be brought back to God, to light and truth, by any means; and I do not doubt the merciful Father will one day grant me my petition, though in this world I may never know it, only I fear it will need some sharp discipline of sorrow to break down the barriers she has erected between herself and the blessed heaven, and if ever you can aid her in the time of her tribulation, and can help her to come out of it with her robes washed white and clean in the fountain opened for all sin, I

beseech you then to take pity on her, and do all you can to bring her home to our dear Lord."

"Oh, that I will!" said Mary, fervently, "if ever it is in my power; but you are far more competent for such a task than I am, and you may be able to go to her with the authority of a minister of God. Why do you think of using so weak an instrument as myself, when you could do so much more for her?"

"Because I shall never have the opportunity," he said, quietly; "I shall never be a minister of God, in the sense you mean, nor shall I ever see Laura again."

"How can you know that?" said Mary, wonderingly.

"That I cannot tell you," he answered; "but you will find that I am right." She asked no further question, with her usual quietness, but presently she said, in a low voice, "I suppose, if I ever have the opportunity, I am bound to give Bertrand the letter Laura has enclosed to me for him?"

"There can be no doubt of that, surely," said Pemberton, surprised.

"But it will be such a cruel shock to him, and one he could never have anticipated."

"Still, it is better he should know the truth at once, and it is impossible not to feel—considering what Lurline is—that he has had a most fortunate escape."

"I am afraid it will darken all his life," said Mary.

A smile passed over Pemberton's lips.

"I think, on the contrary, that it will open the way for him to far purer and more lasting joy than he could ever have known with Lurline. I know, Miss Trevelyan, that, to one of your character, it seems impossible that the heart can ever change its allegiance, but I think, in Mr. Lisle's case, it was a sort of spell which Lurline threw over him, a passing frenzy which seized him, rather than a true deep-seated affection, and it will vanish as speedily as it came, when he hears that even while engaged to himself, she has become the wife of another man. I only wish I could see any prospect of being able to tell him the news."

"You have still no clue to him then," said Mary, wistfully.

"Alas, none!" he answered; "but I do not give up the search, Miss Trevelyan, nor will I to the end."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

It was now the month of December; and those who remember what the weather of that period of 1870 was in England, may form some idea of the additional suffering caused by the intense cold in Paris, where both food and fuel were almost beyond the reach of all but the most wealthy, and still the siege went on, with all its horrors, and the state of matters generally was enough to make even the bravest hearts quail and lose their courage.

It was about six o'clock, on one of those bitter evenings of hard frost, when the stars were glittering in the steel-blue sky, and the glare of the incessant firing lit up the frozen snow on every housetop. Mary Trevelyan was seated at one end of a long wooden shed, which had been erected in the garden of the hospital for the accommodation of the wounded, and which was filled with a long row of beds, each one of which contained a suffering tenant. She had been dressing the wounds of an old soldier, whose foot had been carried off by a cannon-ball, and, soothed by her tender handling, he had dropped off to sleep, with his rough fingers holding tight by a fold of her dress, so that she was afraid to move for fear of disturbing him. She had become absorbed in her own thoughts, when she was aroused by a disturbance of some kind, which seemed to be going on at the entrance to the shed. Looking up she saw Marthe, with her long black veil thrown back, and her arms stretching out of her wide sleeves, engaged in what seemed to be a pitched battle with one of the little street Arabs, who were amongst the most active of the population in fomenting excitement during that disastrous time in Paris. The stout old woman was trying to prevent his entrance, which she had summarily concluded must be for some nefarious purpose, and he was obstinately determined to make his way past her; as Mary rose and came towards the combatants, knowing that poor Marthe's sharp temper was apt to beguile her into actions which she afterwards deeply repented, the keen black eyes of the little boy caught sight of her, and he exclaimed, with a triumphant shout, "There she is, the English lady; I know her; I have seen her with my Englishman in the streets, and I will go to her, I have something to give her!"

"Pray let him pass, Marthe," said Mary, eagerly, "he may have a message for me;" and at her request the woman reluctantly withdrew the strong arms with which she was barricading the boy's entrance, and let him pass. He flew up to Mary, and gave her a piece of paper, which seemed to be a leaf torn out of a note-book, and she saw these words written on it in pencil—

> Come at once to the Church of the Trinity, Bertrand Lisle lies there very ill. Take my little messenger with you to show you the way; he is an ally of mine, and can be trusted.—In haste.
>
> JOHN PEMBERTON.

For a moment Mary's long-tried strength almost gave way, under the sudden revulsion from the feeling, akin to despair, with which she had begun to think of Bertrand's fate, to the certainty that in another half hour she should see him. She staggered, and would have fallen, had not kind Marthe caught her. "There!" said the voluble Frenchwoman, as she held some water to her lips, "did I not tell you,

Mademoiselle Marie, that you would wear yourself out completely? Now, you must go to bed, and stay there till morning, and I will attend to your patients for the night."

But Mary was making a great effort to control her weakness, and soon she raised herself from the supporting arm of the kind woman. "Dear Marthe," she said, "I shall indeed be grateful to you if you will do what is required for my patients to-night; but not that I may sleep—I am going out: the friend I have lost so long is found."

"You are no more fit to go out than your old soldier there, who has only one foot left, and that one damaged; wait till the morning, my child."

"Wait, after all these weary months!" exclaimed Mary. "Oh, my dear friend, you do not know what you are asking!" and she rose at once to her feet, and, after looking in her pocket-book, to be sure that she had Laura's letter with her, she went out, followed by the boy.

"They call me Pierron," said the waif, as he ran along by her side; "and I can tell you, Mademoiselle, that I should have been Pierron dead and buried long ago but for my good Englishman with the hard name which I cannot say. My mother died last year, and my father was shot on the ramparts, and I have no one; but this kind man has fed me every day, and I follow him wherever he goes. I shall never leave him."

"You must try and be of use to him, then, Pierron, for he works very hard."

"Ah, he does indeed! but am I not of use? Did I not run all the way to Notre Dame de Pitié with the note? am I not conducting you to him?"

"Mr. Pemberton is in the church ambulance, then?"

"Yes, surely; it is crammed with sick people, and wounded, some dead, some dying, all heaped together: it is a spectacle! I jumped over two or three dead men to come to you."

Pierron was a specimen of what the little Parisian boy of the streets became in those dark days—utterly indifferent to the sight of pain and death, and heartily enjoying the excitement. Mary tried to rouse him to some gentler thoughts as they walked along, but in vain; he persisted in entertaining her with an account of the terrible sights he had seen, till they reached the door of the great church which had been converted into a hospital, and which, at this day, bears an inscription on one of its pillars commemorating the fact.

It was indeed a strange scene which presented itself to Mary Trevelyan as she walked in through the principal door. The church was large and lofty, and the ceiling was richly painted with figures of saints and angels, which looked down with their serene beauty on the terrible spectacle below. The chancel, and the space immediately in front of it, had been left untouched; all was confusion and pain: the chairs and wooden barriers had been removed, and the stone pavement was strewn from end to end with rude couches made of straw, having pieces of old sacking for coverlets, on which men, young and old, in every stage of physical suffering, were laid, while surgeons moved about from one to another, and a few kind ladies flitted to and fro doing what little they could amid an amount of misery which baffled human help, and administering to such as could take it small quantities of soup, made from ingredients of which it was best not to inquire the nature. And, through the misty air that overhung it all, there went a low murmur, the many mingling voices of weariness and pain, which made the whole place seem like one of the visions in Dante's terrible description of the realms of woe beyond the grave.

Where, amid these hundreds of prostrate forms, was Bertrand Lisle? Pierron had darted away from Mary's side so soon as they entered the church, and was already plucking at the sleeve of a tall man who was bending over one of the miserable couches in a corner of the vast church. At the peremptory summons of the quick-witted little boy, John Pemberton turned round and saw Mary Trevelyan standing motionless under the lamp which overhung the doorway, her dark eyes luminous in its light, and her pale young face seeming in its sweetness and purity almost like that of a pitying angel come to bring comfort and succour to the dying. He could not help watching her for a moment in her stillness and patience—her little hands clasped close on her breast, her dark mantle flung back from her shoulders, and her long grey dress falling in statuesque folds round her to the ground; and he remembered how Lurline used to call her a block of marble. "How little she could understand her," he thought, "and how miserably Bertrand has failed to appreciate her. There is the imperishable love of a most noble heart beneath that calm exterior, and happy had it been for her if it had been altogether fixed on imperishable treasures; but she is a true and blessed child of God, and He will protect His own, even if she have to pass through a fiery furnace of affliction." He was advancing to her as he said this to himself, and in a moment she had seen him and was at his side, breathing quick, in her silent agitation. "Yes, he is here," he said, answering her unspoken question; "but come aside with me one moment, much as I know you long to go to him, that I may describe his state to you before you see him."

He drew her into the shadow of a pillar, and she leant against it to support herself while he spoke to her.

"I found him here," he said, "where apparently he has been for some time, but unfortunately my duties never led me to the spot until this evening. He has been suffering from violent intermittent fever, like many others who have been exposed on the

ramparts; now raving in delirium, now completely exhausted and unable to speak; he was conscious, but very feverish, when I first found him this afternoon, and he knew me at once. Instantly, before I had time almost to say a word to him, he overwhelmed me with a series of anxious questions about Laura. He was certain I could give him tidings of her, he said, and you may think how strange it seemed to me to notice the jealousy of myself in his look and tone as he spoke. I asked him what it was he wished to know, hoping to find he was in a measure prepared for her faithlessness, but it proved to be quite otherwise. It seems he is so impressed with the belief of her love for him, that he has been tormenting himself by fears that she is broken-hearted for his sake, pining away, dying perhaps; and when I began by telling him such was not the case, I saw that he did not trust me to tell him the truth, knowing how I myself had loved her formerly. Then I told him him there was a letter waiting for him, from Laura herself."

"You did not tell him it was in my hands, I hope!" said Mary, anxiously.

"No, I did not mention your name, for I could not tell what your wishes might be in so delicate a matter. I told him a friend of mine had the letter, and that I would send for it, but his excitement and impatience to see it became so great that he was quite unable to control his restlessness, and was so unreasonable and almost violent in his feverish state, that the doctor, when he came to him in his rounds, gave him an opiate, which he said would keep him quiet for at least a few hours. It soon took effect, and he fell into a heavy sleep in which he is now lying. I know that you will wish to take care of him yourself, Mary, at least for to-night; and as I am imperatively wanted in another part of the town, I have only waited for your coming to leave him with you. He will probably sleep a few hours longer, but when he wakes you must give him the letter; it may shock and pain him at first, but it will put an end to all his needless anxiety about Lurline, and I believe that in the end it will make him far happier than he has been since first he had the misfortune to know her."

"He has no idea, then, that I am even in Paris?" said Mary.

"None whatever, so far as I know," he replied, and quietly she determined that she would not reveal her identity to him, that night at all events, since it was necessary that her hand should be the one to give him the letter which would finally part him from her who was in fact her rival.

"Take me to him now then," she whispered, and John Pemberton drew her gently forward.

(*To be continued.*)

TO BE KEPT TILL CALLED FOR.

A TRUE STORY (*concluded*).

A FEW months after this fruitless but most thorough inquiry had been set on foot, honest Dan Rumble found himself again in the study at Squire Clearhead's; Mr. Gimlett, the lawyer, and two or three other magistrates of the neighbourhood being of the party.

"We have been considering, Mr. Rumble," said the squire, "what is best to be done with the packet that has been giving us so much trouble for the last few months; and we have come unanimously to the conclusion that you had better take charge of it again."

A deep groan all but escaped from Dan's breast, nor did he in the least perceive the humorous expression of the squire's face, who seemed to enjoy the coachman's disconsolate appearance.

"Never!" was his deprecatory reply; "why, how will it ever lie quiet in the booking-office again after all this fuss has come abroad about it? Mercy on us! but I and my old woman will be murdered in our beds. Oh, gentlemen, do what you like with it, but never let me be pestered with that bit of brown paper any more, though it does contain such a sight of notes. I never liked it, but now it has got so much under its shabby coat, like a seedy old miser. I hate the very thought of its company."

"Ah, but Mr. Rumble," interposed lawyer Gimlett, "the old miser, as you call it, shall change his coat, and be a miser neither into the bargain. You shall have its company under an altered appearance."

"Don't understand you, sir," replied Dan, bluntly.

"Well, what I mean is this. We have turned the old parcel into hard cash, and invested it in your name in the good old *Three per cents.*; and we have such an opinion of your honesty, and of the upright way in which you have behaved in this affair, that we want you to take the money and buy a little property with it, as soon as you can, and live upon the income of it."

Dan shook his head. "'Taint likely," said he, "the money is no more mine than the notes were."

"Well said, old Truepenny," replied the lawyer; "there we are all agreed. Make that excellent conscience of yours quite satisfied on that point. *The money is not yours*, and we don't want to persuade

you that it is yours, or to take it as if it were yours. We want you to take it as a trust, and to use it as a trust until the rightful owner comes to claim it, which, to my fancy, will not be in your life-time; and for this purpose we advise you to invest the money in real property, and to sign a bond to give up the same whenever the lawful claimant to those bank notes has come forward and proved his right."

Dan Rumble looked very thoughtful, in fact anything but comfortable; and it was all that the gentlemen could do to persuade him to agree to any such a course. But they did persuade him at last—chiefly by the argument that the money must otherwise lie idle and useless to everybody, and by convincing him that he and his heirs would be bound to deliver up possession whenever the lawful owner made good his claim.

"Then they can always come down upon us, can they?" was his last of many questions, repeated in every shape and form.

"To be sure they can," said the lawyer, "even down to the *Greek Calends*."

"When are they?" inquired the innocent sceptic.

"When nobody shall want money, lands, lawyers, coaches, or anything else," was the ready reply.

"Humph, that time is a long way off," said Dan, laughing with the rest.

"Exactly so; and not till then will the original owner make his appearance, take my word for it."

"What is your opinion, Mr. Gimlett," asked one of the party, "as to the probable explanation of this mystery?"

"My theory is this," replied the lawyer, "that there has been a double death in the matter. Some eccentric individual—not a miser, for such a miserable reptile would want to handle *gold*, he would not be content with *paper* money, but some one just the other way—perhaps a person of eccentric, reckless benevolence, one of those people who send a bank note in answer to every appeal, however absurd—though, by the way, I would rather be in their shoes than in the miser's—but some such person, living alone, without relatives to interfere, was taken ill, and dies. The nurse, or housekeeper, precious creature, instantly sweeps up all the cash she can find, but is frightened at the quantity of notes lying about, hastily wraps them up in a piece of old brown paper—you remember how shabby it was, and how irregularly the notes laid—bethinks herself of our friend here, whose coach, perhaps, she has travelled by, scribbles the writing outside, which was by no means good, if you recollect, charters a small boy to take the packet, with strict injunctions to give it into the coachman's hands, 'to be called for,' intending to call for it herself by-and-by, but 'by-and-by' never comes, for *death suddenly overtakes her*, and spoils the game. This is my theory, and if I am wrong it will not be the first time I have been so by a long way."

"The only objection I see to it," said the squire, "is the extreme improbability of *such* an amount of bank-notes being found lying about, even in the wildest case of eccentricity."

"No doubt it is almost incredible; but so should we say of the whole affair, did we not know it to be true. Human nature is a marvel of eccentricity; and as to leaving notes about, it is not long since that an eccentric old gentleman died who gave away thousands anonymously every year, and on whose table was found lying, as a thing of naught, a Bank of England note *for a thousand pounds*."

As this story, in all its extraordinary features, is a perfectly true one, it may serve to render more forcible the illustration which a certain minister once drew from it, as follows:—

"That brown-paper parcel, with its valuable contents of bank-notes, is like the Bible. Plain and unattractive to the eye of sense, it is full, nevertheless, of God's promises, which, when their hidden virtue is unfolded to one who seeks to know it, make every leaf of that Bible literally a *bank note of heaven*—a promise to pay, for Christ's dear sake, some good thing to him that truly asketh. The collective preciousness of that volume is infinitely greater than if each leaf were a bank note for a thousand pounds. So that he who said of old, 'The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver,' spoke no hyperbole. He, therefore, who sees no beauty in his Bible, and leaves it neglected on the shelf, is like the man who had such wealth within the despised packet and knew it not. How many such there are! How intense will be their regret should they discover too late what their neglected Bible really contained! None need say, 'These promises are not for me—I have no right to appropriate them.' They are for all who possess a Bible. The fact of possessing it is enough. For all the promises of God are, *for Christ's sake*, paid in full to them that demand their fulfilment. 'Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it you.' 'All the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen.' Only the secret of its contents must be revealed by God's own teaching. It is a sealed book till we ask to have *Him* open it to us. 'Did not our hearts burn within us,' said the disciples, 'while he opened to us the Scriptures?' The words of His mouth 'are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.' We have but to persevere in that prayer of old, 'Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law,' and we shall find the Bible a repository of 'exceeding great and precious promises,' that make us well provided for in time, and for all eternity."

SURLY BOB.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER III.—AN ACCIDENT.

WHEN the boys crossed the little garden on their return to their sleeping quarters, they found that the snow had begun to fall fast, whilst the wind, which blew in their faces, was very sharp and penetrating. It was a night cold enough to make even those who had plenty of warm food, and clothing, and good fires, shiver and draw their wraps more closely around them with perhaps a half fretful murmur at the severity of the weather. Bob and Johnnie, however, who had none of these comforts, did not complain or grumble at it, but took it, as they did other hard things in their lot, almost as a matter of course, and bore it with a kind of silent patience.

But they felt it keenly enough, and long after they had lain down in bed they still remained awake, unable to sleep for the cold.

"Let's lie a bit nearer each other, Bob, and then may-be we'll get some heat into us," said Johnnie, at length.

The elder brother turned, and putting his arms round the younger, drew him close to him, whilst at the same time he wrapped the coverings well about him, regardless of the fact that by so doing he left himself with only a very small share of blanket.

"You'll get warm now, little 'un, won't you?"

"Ay, soon, I dare say. But, Bob, you're cold too; your hands feel like ice! and you've given me 'most all the blanket. You must take it back over yourself, Bob."

"Oh, *I* don't care for the cold," returned Bob, in a half contemptuous tone, as if it was an evil too trifling to affect a big fellow like himself.

"Then I won't care for it either."

"Oh, you're different; you can't help it, 'cause you're a little chap, and you get chilblains and all sorts of things."

"And so do you, Bob; you've got a dreadful sore foot with chilblains."

"Oh, that ain't nothing—I don't care for that!"

"Bob——" began Johnnie, and then broke off.

"Well," returned the other.

"You're always so kind to me, Bob; I do so wish——"

"What?"

"Why, that you'd be kind sometimes to the other fellows as well. They don't know a bit what you're really like, 'cause you only fight 'em, or beat and cuff 'em. If they knew you like I do they'd love you too."

"What 'ud be the good of that?"

"Well, I don't know; only I like people to love me. And I can't bear 'em to say you're the worst boy in all the class, like I've heard 'em say many a time. If I could speak up and tell 'em all I know, they'd say different."

"Don't you go telling no tales 'bout me," muttered Bob, "and they may call me what they likes. 'Tain't no matter to me."

"Oh, Bob, don't you care? I do; 'cause 'tain't fair, and it vexes me so when they make you stand out, and keep you in, and say, 'He's a reg'lar bad 'un, he is,' 'cause you ain't, Bob; you ain't bad, or you wouldn't be so good to me," and Johnnie's voice had a half sorrowful half-appealing tone in it.

"Have you been vexing yourself over that?" exclaimed Bob in astonishment. "Why, what a queer little chap you are! Who'd ever have thought that you'd have gone and fretted over their giving of me a bad name!"

"I don't like it, Bob; I couldn't bear to think as you deserved it."

"Why not?"

"'Cause, Bob—you won't be angry, will you?"

"No, not I."

"Well, then, 'tis partly 'cause of what teacher said to-day, about its being them as *love* Jesus as He takes into His fold. And He said them as love Him try to be like Him; but if boys are always quarrelling and fighting that shows they aren't trying to please Him, and don't care about Him. And, oh, Bob! I do so want Him to be able to take us both into His fold, don't you?"

"Dunno; I'm a deal too bad, I am."

"But Jesus can make us good. And you aren't too bad, Bob; you're real good to me, and I love you ever so, and Jesus loves you too; teacher said He did—every single boy in the whole class."

Bob made no reply, only tried to put his corner of the blanket more closely round Johnnie, and at last the little fellow's eyes closed in sleep, whilst the elder one, who was still wakeful, lay for a while looking at the pale thin little face, which seemed paler than ever in the moonlight, which was streaming in through the small window, and falling right across the bed. Bob's face relaxed into a softened expression as he gazed, until, at last, he murmured to himself, "The Shepherd as he's been a talking about has got *him* safe in His arms, that's certain; but as for me I'm too bad—a deal too bad."

Meantime the snow outside was falling silently and noiselessly, working a change in the whole face of Nature, as it clothed everything in its own mantle of beauty, and made even that which in itself had no loveliness of form or colouring look pure and stainless in its dress of spotless white. Everywhere it fell alike—on the stately tree or the stunted shrub, the rich man's roof, or the lowly out-house in which two poor boys were lying closely huddled together

for warmth, a meet emblem of that Holy Spirit which descends so silently, and steals so secretly into hearts here and there; not singling out only the great or learned, but visiting alike the simple and untaught, and revealing His presence within them by changed actions, and gentler words and looks, clothing them with a beauty not their own, but put upon them. Might He not even now be drawing near to "Surly Bob," though he knew it not, but lay murmuring, "I'm too bad—a deal too bad."

The next day, on coming out of morning school, the boys lingered about in the road, or rather lane, outside, as was their custom, some of them generally having a quarrel to settle, or some piece of mischief to plan. This morning they all seemed to have made common cause against Bob, as if determined to pay off old grudges, of which each of them could count up a score or more. Tom Lane in particular was still smarting from the treatment he had received yesterday, and was ready enough to join in any scheme of revenge upon his enemy, who often got the best of it in a hand-to-hand fight.

Dull and obtuse as the boys were in some matters, they had penetration enough to have found out by this time that the way to inflict a wound on Bob was to aim a dart at his little brother; for though Bob before others was generally cold and indifferent enough in his manner to Johnnie, taking but little notice of him, still his companions had somehow discovered his one sensitive part. And now, bent on "paying him out," they set themselves to tease Johnnie; not because they disliked him, for none could bear ill-will to the gentle unoffending child, but because they knew it was the surest way of annoying their mutual foe.

Accordingly, when Bob, who had been kept behind for a few minutes, came out of the school-house, he found a group of them surrounding his little brother, imitating his lame walk, and pretending to have a crutch, by the help of which they were limping along, whilst the child stood looking like a wounded stag at bay, more wondering and perplexed at their unkindness than angry a bit. But Bob, as at a glance he took in the state of the case, was furious, and with a face dark with passion, rushed upon them, and dealt his blows right and left with an unsparing hand.

Before, however, he had settled off all his adversaries he heard a cry from Johnnie, and turning, saw him lying on the ground with Tom Lane sprawling on the top of him. The little fellow, not noticing it, had been standing on a slide which the boys had made before going into school, and Tom—whether accidentally or on purpose no one could say—coming along the slide behind Johnnie, and unperceived by him, had apparently been unable to stop himself, and so had tripped the other up, and fallen on him.

Bob rushed to his rescue, pausing first, however, to vent his anger upon Tom by giving him a sound thrashing. A fierce scuffle followed between the two, but though both boys were in a usual way pretty equally matched as regarded size and strength, Bob's outraged feelings lent on this occasion such unwonted force to his blows that Tom was soon overcome. Then, throwing him from him, Bob turned to Johnnie, whom he found still sitting just where he had fallen, all doubled together, crying and sobbing.

(*To be continued.*)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

257. Quote passages in which the rainbow is mentioned after the Flood.

258. What passage in the New Testament leads us to think that Moses considered he was doing God service when he slew the Egyptian?

259. What other inhabitants of Canaan were giants besides the Anakims?

260. How many years did God provide manna for the children of Israel; and when did they last eat of it?

261. On what occasion did St. Paul conform to the Jewish ceremonial law, in order to conciliate the Jewish converts?

262. For what purpose did Jeremiah hide stones in the clay near to the house of Pharaoh, King of Egypt, in Tahpanhes?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 624.

243. "Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand and the other on Thy left, in Thy kingdom" (Matt. xx. 21).

244. The blessings from Mount Gerizim; upon which stood the elders of the tribes of Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph and Benjamin. The cursings from Mount Ebal; upon which stood the elders of Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali (Deut. xxvii. 12, 13).

245. Consumption and burning ague (Lev. xxvi. 16).

246. "Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother, and whoso curseth father or mother let him die the death. But ye say, if a man shall say to his father or his mother, it is Corban, that is to say a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, he shall be free, and ye suffer him no more to do aught for his father or his mother; making the word of God of none effect through your tradition" (Mark vii. 10, 11, 12, 13).

247. The son of Shelomith, of the tribe of Dan (Lev. xxiv. 10, 11).

248. As a token against the rebels, and as a proof that Aaron had been especially chosen by God (Numbers xvii. 10).



(*Drawn by* TOWNELEY GREEN.)

MOTHER'S GARDEN.

BY THE REV. M. G. WATKINS, M.A.

DEAR children, do ye seek to know
Where mother hopes for better flow'rs—
Unfading ones—than earth can show?
Blooms suited for the heavenly bowr's?

Though starlings dot the great south lawn,
And lengthening tracks of sunshine lie
Between its mazy patterns, drawn
In flowr's of gold and crimson dye;

Though midst the wood-walk's dripping wreaths
  Of snow, warm blustering zephyrs bare
The primrose from a myriad sheaths—
  Still mother's garden is not there!

Nor is it hid in lofty walls,
  Where wasps fret autumn's purple plum,
And blackbird to its fellow calls:
  To see its brightness this way come!

The gate beside that close-clipped bush
  Leads onward to the church's bound
Beneath the drooping beeches. Hush!
  For where we tread is holy ground!

Pass by the orange-lichened stones,
  Which mark where wearied youth and age
Laid down through distant years their bones,
  And ceased the Master's strife to wage.

But halt by these small grassy mounds,
  Sun-kissed, bedropped with nightly dew;
Above the thrush's song resounds,
  Around are blooms of every hue.

Here mother's garden meets your eyes,
  But not this turf, each smiling flow'r—
Beneath these mounds her treasure lies,
  And patiently waits Time's last hour.

Waits patiently good seeds here sown
  In faith, until God's trumpet sound,
To bid them blossom by His throne,
  And round the Lamb be found.

CHRIST THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

BY THE REV. D. MOORE, M.A., VICAR OF HOLY TRINITY, PADDINGTON, CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO THE QUEEN.

"I am come a light unto the world."—JOHN xii. 46.

LIGHT was the first-born of all God's material creatures. Before its appearance the world was an invisible and shapeless void. The firmament above was blackness, and darkness sat on the face of the deep. A word changed the aspect of all things. "Let there be light," said a Voice from the uncreated glory; "and there was light."

And light is the first-born of God's spiritual creatures also. There is a chaos in the life of souls, a time when all the objects of the spiritual world appear to us without form and void—men seen as trees, and trees as men. The Spirit of God is just moving on the soul's troubled waters, but as yet darkness abides on the face of the deep. Blessed moment, when in such a soul God says, "Let there be light!" let the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, shine into that heart. Let him see that a light has come into the world.

We can hardly wonder that the apostle St. John, both in his Epistles and in his Gospel, so frequently recurs to this noblest of all the creature types of Christ; for not only had he heard his Divine Master in the days of His flesh declare Himself to be the light of the world, his own eyes had seen that light, had seen it all under all its phases and obscurations—as "the day-spring" from on high, breaking up the twilight of the nations; as a struggling sunbeam, forcing itself through the mists of Jewish prejudice; as a flood of sudden brightness, glistening on the Mount of Transfiguration; as eclipsed for three hours on the day of the Crucifixion; and, lastly, as revealed to him, in his sweet visions of exile, as "the bright and morning star." Hence he alone, of all the four evangelists, has preserved those conversations of our Lord, in which He is compared to the physical element of light; and he evidently clings to the image. His Gospel opens with it, "That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world;" whilst in four successive chapters, from the 8th to the 12th, we find him constantly recurring to the same source of illustration.

The text is only one instance of several in the chapter from which our text is taken. In the 35th verse, our Lord had been uttering some solemn admonitions on the folly of rejecting His message, for very soon they would have no message to reject. "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you." But with many this darkness was judicial; the prophet Esaias had foretold it long ago. Nevertheless, the light was there—open to all who would come to it, and a blessing to all who would walk in it. "I am come, a light into the world, that whosoever believeth in me should not abide in darkness."

We may find our profit, then, in the inquiry in what relations Christ would have us consider He stands to us, by declaring Himself the "Light of the World." Much of high philosophy and much of holy comfort are veiled under inspired poetry; and if those who write and if those who read will alike pray for the spirit of holy illumination to guide them, in that light we shall see light. Now, the light of the natural world answers many and truly beneficent purposes. It enables us to see our way, it cheers and revives the daily task, it exerts a beneficial influence upon the productions of the vegetable kingdom, and it sheds loveliness

over the face of all Nature. Hence, if the light of the spiritual world produce effects at all answerable to these, we should expect to find in Christ, and to have derived to us through Christ, something like analogous and corresponding blessings. Let us see how far such expectations are met. Thus answerable to that great benefit of light to the natural world, which enables us to see our way, we should expect to derive from Christ—

I. DIRECTION—teaching *knowledge of what we are, and whither we are going.* This is the first form of benefit we should look for from one who should proclaim himself "the light of the world." We have our Lord Himself making this application, "If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of the world; but if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him." Now, for 4,000 years the world had been walking in the night; groping for the wall like the blind; seeking the Lord, if, in the midst of such thick and cheerless gloom, haply they might find Him. But few they were that found Him. Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. Men had no just views of God. They knew neither the perfections of His nature, nor the eternal rectitude of His government. The great mystery of the universe was still unsolved—"how man could be just with God;" or yet, until he were just, how God could be merciful to man. But the light of the world appeared. The clouds of ignorance broke up. On the dim horizon of human speculation began to appear the first traces of life and immortality; and men saw how, without contradiction, and without compromise, God could be just, and yet "the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

And as it was with the world, while it was without the Gospel, so it is with individual souls while they are without Christ. They are all in darkness; all stumbling; all together gone out of the way; and though they may take different paths, yet of those who take not Christ for their light, there is none that chooseth the way to heaven—no, not one. They are all walking in darkness somewhere. One is going consciously in the downward path that leadeth to death, acquiring at each step an accelerated speed, and hastening to a swift destruction. Another, hurried along a course of giddy pleasure, has a feeling that he is not going right, but he has a certain point where he intends to turn back, and get into a better path. A third is led the wrong way, by over-much eagerness about lawful things, by the claims of the farm, the family, and the merchandise, not knowing whither he is going, but having a vague and indefinite hope that he may be found right at last. Whilst a fourth is of bolder aim. Scorning to enter heaven by the strait gate, he would fain climb up some other way—by the ladder of duties, and repentances and prayers; expecting salvation as the price of his moralities, and heaven as the recompense of his prayers.

Yet so hath darkness blinded the eyes of these men, that all their ways seem right unto them. "The light of the world" is no light to them: for the "light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not." But let the light shine savingly. Let Christ reveal himself to the ignorant who are travelling out of the way; let Him reveal Himself to the ungodly, as one whose sufferings are the sternest monument of God's anger against sin; to the worldly, as the enemy of all disaffected and divided hearts; to the cumbered and the careful, as an all-sufficient portion; and to the formalist, as the sinner's true righteousness—the first, the only, and the last—and their eyes will open upon a new world. Henceforth they will feel they need stumble no more, nor stray no more. They have only to follow Christ, to walk in the light of that example which He has left, that we should follow His steps. He who delivers souls from death will always preserve feet from falling; and having given "light to them that sit in darkness," He will also "guide their feet into the way of peace."

II. But the comparison of our Lord to light, we observe, in the second place, naturally suggests the idea that He would be to us *the source of all gladdening, and comforting, and reviving influences.*

"Truly the light is sweet," says Solomon, "and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun." There are few of us, perhaps, who have not felt the exhilarating influence of light upon the natural spirits. We have been passing, it may be, a night of weariness and sad unrest, and this hour is as the last, and that as the one which went before. There is neither sight nor sound to break up the dull monotony of sorrow, or relieve the one dark universal blank. How cheerful, at such times, is that first mantling greyness which makes objects just discernible, which tells us of the near approach of day. We should number the light among the greatest of our common mercies. Its connection with our spirits, with our health, with all that renders life grateful and enjoyable, makes it, while we have it, as it were diffused Deity, the type of a beneficent Omnipresence, a reflected material spark from Him who came as a light into the world.

And this connection between light and gladness on the one hand, and between darkness and misery on the other, is found to hold with equal truth in spiritual things. See this illustrated in the case of the heathen. Go, ask him whether there is not a settled gloom connected with all that senseless homage which he offers to gods of wood and stone? whether he has not a sad heart, when he bows the knee to an unknown god? and whether—even "more

than they that wait for the morning; I say more than they that wait for the morning"—he does not long for the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. We can form but a faint idea of the joy which Gospel light brings to the minds of the benighted heathen. His darkness is not a dreary undistinguishable void merely, it is peopled with spectral forms, dark spirits, untrusted and unloved divinities. Oh, how refreshing to those who sit in this darkness, to see a great light, to have an object of worship revealed to them rich in mercy, beaming with grace, glorious in holiness—a light to lighten the Gentiles, and a day-star to guide the world!

And this connection between light and cheerfulness in spiritual things is commonly assumed in Scripture in the case of the believer. "The Lord make His face to shine upon thee," was the ancient form of priestly benediction. "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart," said the Psalmist. And, again, "There be many that say, who will show us any good?" "But of all the good under heaven," he goes on, "I know but one which can put 'gladness into the heart.'" "Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us." Especially is this reviving influence felt after a child of God has been for some time under a cloud. "Who is among you," says the prophet, "that feareth the Lord and obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light?" Many such there are, and often, during this midnight of the heart, are they heard to exclaim, "Would God it were morning!" But this morning must be waited for. The light of the world knows the time for His appearing, even as the material sun knows the time of his going down. The one as well as the other will be better prized by us for being occasionally withdrawn. Peter wist not what he said, when, his face reflecting the effulgent brightness of the transfiguration, he said, "Lord, it is good for us to be here." This would not be always good. A time of vivid spiritual manifestations is often our most dangerous time. There is only a step between the waters of baptism and the wilderness of temptation; and this perhaps is permitted, because if the opened heavens were to continue their bright light, we might come to think that it was a light of our own kindling. We see, then, a spiritual benefit in seasons of despondency and sadness. They show us our utter helplessness; they discover the weakness of our strength, the iniquity of our holy things, the thick darkness which surrounds us the moment we attempt to walk in the light of our own fire, and in the sparks that we have kindled. No: He who is the light of the world must also be the light of all duties. Cheerful these will never be, happy they will never be, unless we see Christ in them. He must be the lamp which goes not out upon the altar. He must be the candle which shines upon our domestic tabernacle. We can bind no sacrifices to the altar, unless God be the Lord who hath showed us light, and Christ must be the soul's everlasting light, before the days of our mourning can be ended.

III. But besides direction in our spiritual doubtings, and comfort under our spiritual fears, the analogy of the text would intimate that all our spiritual health and fruitfulness are to be found from Christ.

When speaking of light and its blessings, we do not always think of the powerful influence it exerts on the life and fruitfulness of the vegetable kingdom. Yet this is one of the most obvious facts noticed by naturalists. Plants shut up in a dark room will never come to perfection. If they do not wither and shrivel up, they lose all fragrance, and their leaves wear a sickly hue; whilst if there happen to be in this room one aperture only through which a little light is admitted, to that aperture all the leaves of the plant will turn. Those flowers which, for a pardonable gratification, you deprive of their loved light and liberty, making prisoners of them perhaps in a close room, see how they love that sweet emblem of their Creator, the light—how every flower, the fairest and the best, turns towards it, as if it could only unveil its beauty on the side where God is—for God is light. Oh, note we the religion of the flowers, worshipping this holy and beneficent agent in quiet gladness, and languishing in its withdrawal, even as a soul that mourns an absent God!

And such as the physical element of light is to the plants and flowers, such is Christ, the light of the world, to every tree of the Lord's planting. A state of darkness, in Scripture language, is always identified with a state of unfruitfulness. "Have no fellowship," says the apostle to the Ephesians, "with the unfruitful works of darkness:" and in another passage, when describing the moral darkness of the Roman world, he asks, "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?" And as darkness implies all barrenness, so light and knowledge are the types of all saving health. "When thy light breaks forth as the morning," says the prophet, "thy health shall spring forth speedily." And no sooner do the nations "see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God," than "the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose."

But the action of light on vegetable fruitfulness is involved in mystery; hardly so the action of Christ's light upon the soul, to make it bring forth fruit unto God. For these fruits are good works; but good works without Christ have neither object, nor motive, nor recompense. Every effort in this

direction made by mankind before life and immortality were brought to light by the Gospel was unavailing. Philanthropy made no advances, truth no conquests, holiness no converts. But the Sun of Righteousness arose, and on His wings He bore not light only, but healing—healing for the diseased spirits of men, and a balm for all their spiritual wounds. And now, in the revealed character of God, in the constraining love of Christ, in the openings up before us of glimpses into a bright and beautiful future, the soul is conscious of an influence fresh and life-giving, as heaven's pure light upon the outer world. And instantly, on the soul's becoming acquainted with this light, its drooping powers revive. There is a going forth of all holy acts and confidences towards Christ. The light, lifted up, draws all men to itself. We live only while we are near to it, and are fruitful only while warmed by its beams. The life and the light, we are taught, are one. "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men."

If, then, we are barren or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is because we have knowledge only, and not light. We have heard of the light by the hearing of the ear, but we cannot say, "Now mine eye seeth thee!" There has been no in-shining upon our souls of heaven's spiritual brightness—we have not yet seen the light of the world. Let us not forget that all spiritual barrenness is the effect of deficient light. The heart is barren because the eyes are blind. Year after year the husbandman has come to us seeking fruit—fruit of conquered habits, renounced attachments, hatred to sin deepened, and love to all holy things gathering strength—but he findeth none; we still droop, and are still cumberers of the ground. Why is this, but that we will not come to the light, and often, it is to be feared, hinder the light from coming to us? But let us pray God to send out His light and His truth. Let them lead you. "After two days He will revive you, and you shall live in His sight." God is health wherever God is light; and where the true light shineth in the heart, there shall be both fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

IV. Once more, by comparing Himself to light, our Lord seems to point out that He is the source of all moral beauty and loveliness in the world.

St. Paul's definition of light is "whatsoever doth make manifest"—that is, whatsoever enables the eye to see that which otherwise it could not see. Nature, therefore, for the discovery of all her beauty, confesses her entire dependence on this element. The gathering of the evening shadows is the signal for her glory to depart. She prepares to shut up her beauties, as some plants close up their leaves, waiting till morning comes again, to show us beauty as it shows us light.

And does not Christ, the light of the world, shed beauty over the moral creation also? Does not a saving knowledge of Him make manifest, not only the bliss, but the beauty of holiness? Is there not, wherever His light shineth, an order in the spiritual economy, a holy beauty about the divine plans and purposes, a moral loveliness about our religion and its founder, which makes us glad while we believe, and love while we adore? Oh yes; light is not more instrumental in clothing Nature with all that is rich in hue and fair in form than is Christ, rising with holy light upon the believer's heart, in calling up a new world of beauty. Nay, we may pursue our analogy even one step further. The physical element is not only the revealer of material beauty, but is often its efficient cause. The beautiful plant loves the light, because the light makes it beautiful—it is the action of this element which gives it its quality of colour, so that in the dark it becomes a colourless and unfragrant thing. And it is so in the spiritual creation. There is no beauty where Christ, the light of the world, is not. The very virtues of the heathen were but splendid sins, says one. Souls without Christ are like the world without the sun—they have neither life, nor health, nor fruitfulness, nor beauty. It is all night with them. But let the light of the world arise, let the sun of righteousness appear, and what spectacles of moral beauty rise up before us! In every age of the Church we see the moral triumphs of Christianity; we see martyrs rejoicing at the stake, philanthropists bearing food to the dungeon, missionaries quitting the home of their birth, and patriots who have a heart for all mankind. And other fruits are witnessed also. We see the afflicted man kiss the rod that chastens him; the injured pray for the foes that wrong him; the sick, in all the majesty of trust, triumphing over Nature's weakness; and the dying discoursing calmly of an unseen world to the friends that surround his bed.

Oh, that upon each one of us Christ would cause a ray of this glorious light to shine; that He would make us children of the light and of the day, filling our hearts with bright hopes against the days of darkness, and taking from the valley of death its gloom, because Christ, the light of the world, is there!

Yet let us not forget, as we conclude our subject, those solemn words of the Master, "Yet a little while is the light with you." It will not shine always—that is, to any saving purpose; though, in the case of those who reject it, it will shine as a witness to barren resolves, and hushed convictions, and half repentances, and broken vows. No, the night cometh—that long night—when none can work and none can walk; when the sun of truth shall be darkened, and the stars of hope shall give

no light; and then the witness shall give up His office to the Judge. "I judge him not," says the verse after our text, "he hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day."

While, then, we have the light of the world, let us walk in His light—in the light of His word, to teach us; in the light of His providence, to guide us; in the light of His Spirit, to sanctify us; in the light of His promises, to bless us. So, when our spirits shall have passed from the darkness of this visible scene, and shall enter into a world of bright and holy things, He who was our "light" shall be found our "salvation" too, "bringing forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day."

"ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."

BY THOMAS ARCHER.

HEALING THE SICK.

AMIDST the numerous great charities which distinguish this vast metropolis, hospitals must always hold a prominent if not pre-eminent place. Helpless infancy, the weakness and infirmity of old age, and prostration by sudden accident, or the ravages of disease, are the conditions that necessarily appeal to humanity. The latter especially is so probable an occurrence to any one of us, that we are at once impressed by the necessity for providing some means for its alleviation. Helpless childhood has passed, old age may seem to be in too dim a future to challenge our immediate attention; but sickness, sudden disaster, who shall be able to guard against these, in a world where the strongest are often smitten down in the full tide of apparent health; where, in the streets alone, fatal accidents are reckoned monthly as a special item in Registrars' returns, and injuries amount annually to hundreds?

The great endowed hospitals, therefore, those magnificent monuments of charity which have distinguished London for so many years, and the value of which in extending the science of medicine can scarcely be overrated, are regarded by us all with veneration. At the same time we ought to feel a certain thrill of pleasure, a satisfaction not far removed from keen emotion, when we see inscribed on the front of some building, large or small, where the work of healing is being carried on, the words, "Supported by Voluntary Contributions." One other condition, too, seems necessary to the complete recognition of such a charity as having attained to the full measure of a truly beneficent work—admission to it should be free: free not only from any demand for money payments, but untrammelled by the necessity for seeking, often with much suffering and delay, a governor's order or letter, by which alone a patient can be received in many of our otherwise admirable and useful institutions for the sick. It should be remembered that immediate aid is of the utmost importance in the effort to heal the sick, and that delays, proverbially dangerous, are in such cases cruel, often fatal, always damaging to the sense of true beneficence, of the extension of help because of the *need* rather than for the sake of any particular influence. It would seem that we have no right to hesitate, or to insist on the observance of certain forms, before succouring the grievously sick and wounded, any more than we have to withhold food from the starving till ceremonial inquiries are answered, and certificates of character obtained. There are cases of poverty, and even of suffering, where inquiry before ultimate and continued relief may be useful, and personal influence may be necessary, but extreme hunger and nakedness, cold and houselessness, sudden injury or maiming, the pain of disease, the deep and touching need of the sick and helpless, are not such. Prompt and effectual measures for relief, and, if necessary, admission to the place where that relief can alone be afforded, will be the only means of completely meeting these wants. Free hospitals, freer even than workhouses, are what we need, and I am about to visit one of them to-day which rejoices in its name, "The Royal Free Hospital," now in its forty-seventh year of useful and, I am glad to say, of vigorous life.

To any one acquainted with that strange neighbourhood which is represented by Gray's Inn Lane and all the queer jumble of courts and alleys that seem to shrink behind the shelter of the broad thoroughfare of Holborn, there is something consistent in the establishment of such a noble charity as this hospital in Gray's Inn Road. Its very position seems to indicate the nature and extent of its duties. Near the homes of poverty, the streets where people live who cannot go far to seek aid in their extremest need, it receives those who, breaking down through sudden disease, or requiring medical and surgical skill to relieve the pain and weakness of recurrent malady, have no resource but this to enable them to fulfil their one great desire "to get back to work." The causes of much of the sickness which sends patients thither may be preventible: they may be found in foul dwellings, impure water, insufficient clothing,

want of proper food, alternate hunger and intemperance; but whatever may be its occasion, a remedy must be found for it. Till all that is preventible *is* prevented, the consequences will have to be mitigated, the fatal results averted where it is possible; and when boards of health and sanitary measures have done, there will still be sick men to heal, failing children to strengthen, weak and wasting women to restore.

It is well, then, that this Institution should stand as a landmark of that free charity, which takes help where it is needed most; and this qualification is the more obvious when we turn from the sick wards to the accident wards, and remember that those great railway termini are close at hand, and others not far off; that all round that teeming neighbourhood men, women, and even children, are working at poor handicrafts, which render them liable to frequent injuries, and that in the crowded streets themselves—from the great busy thoroughfare of Holborn, to the bustle and confusion of the approaches to the stations at King's Cross—there is constant peril to life and limb.

There is something so remarkable in the external appearance of the building itself, such a military look about its bold front, such a suggestion of a cavalry yard about the broad open area behind this tall wooden entrance gate, that you begin to wonder how such a style of architecture should have been adopted for a hospital. The truth is that like many—nay, like most of our noblest work—this great provision for healing the sick began by not waiting for full-blown opportunities. The need was there, and the means that came to hand were used to meet it. This building was originally the barracks of that loyal and efficient regiment, the "Light Horse Volunteers," and so excellently had those gallant defenders of king and constitution provided for their own comfort and security, that when in 1842 the premises were vacant, and the lease for sale, the governors of the Royal Free Hospital became the purchasers, the long rooms were easily turned into ample, cheerful, and well-ventilated wards, and the various outbuildings and offices were quickly adapted to the reception of patients.

But the hospital had at that date been working quietly and effectually for above fourteen years. Fourteen years before its inauguration in Gray's Inn Road, this "free" hospital, which was not then "royal," had been commenced in Greville Street, Hatton Garden, and the immediate incident which led to its foundation is so suggestive, so inseparable from the recollection of the want which it was designed to alleviate, and from its own generous recognition of the unfailing freedom of true charity, that it might well be the subject of a memorial picture. Alas! it would be a tragic reminder of those days before any provision was made for extending medical aid to sufferers who had no credentials save humanity and their own deep necessity. It would be a grim reminder to us, also, that some of our great charities established for the relief of the sick are still trammelled with those restrictions which demand recommendations, to obtain which the applicant is often condemned to delay and disappointment. It would show us that our hospitals are not yet free.

Those of my readers who can remember the entrance to the broad highway of Holborn nearly fifty years ago—stay, that is going back beyond probable acknowledgment, let me say those of us who knew Smithfield when it was a cattle market, who had heard of "Cow Cross," and been told of the terrible purlieus of Field Lane; who had occasionally caught a glimpse of that foul wilderness of courts that clustered about the Fleet Ditch; had read of Mr. Fagin, when "Oliver Twist" was first appearing in chapters, and had dim recollections of nursery tales about Bartlemy fair and "hanging morning" at the Old Bailey; those of us who remember the cries of drovers, and the lowing and bleating of herds and flocks in the streets on Sunday nights; the terrible descent of Snow Hill; the confusion and dismay of passengers and vehicles on the steep incline of Holborn Hill; the reek of all that maze of houses and hovels that lay in the valley; those of us, in short, who can carry our memories back for a few years beyond the time when the new cattle market was built at Islington, the pens and lairs of Smithfield demolished, the whole Holborn valley dismantled, only a remnant, a mere corner, of Field Lane being left standing after the great viaduct was built—can imagine what the church of St. Andrew was like when, with its dark and dreary churchyard, it stood on the slope of Holborn Hill, instead of being as it now is in a kind of subway. That churchyard, with its iron gate, was reached by stone steps, which were receptacles for winter rain and summer dust, the straw from wagons, the shreds and sweepings from adjacent shops, the dirt and refuse of the streets. On those steps a young girl was seen lying one night, in the winter of 1827—lying helpless, lonely, perishing of disease and famine. The clocks of St. Andrew, St. Sepulchre, St. Paul, had clanged and boomed amidst the hurry and the turmoil of the throng of passengers; had clanged and boomed till their notes might be heard above the subsiding roar of vehicles, and the shuffling of feet, till silence crept over the great city, and more distant chimes struck through the murky air, tolling midnight. Still that figure lay upon the cruel stones, under the rusty gate of the churchyard, as though, unfriended and unpitied by the world, she waited for admission to the only place in which she might make a claim in death, if not in

life. Not more than eighteen years old, she had wandered wearily from some distant place where fatal instalments of the wages of sin had done their work, and had come to London unknown, unnoted, to die. That she had come afar is but a surmise; she may have been a dweller in this great city, lost amidst the stony desert of its streets, friendless with the friendlessness of the outcast or the wretched, to whom the acquaintances of to-day have little care or opportunity to become the solacers of to-morrow; she may have crept to that dark corner by the churchyard gate, amongst the rack and refuse of the street, as a place in which she, the unconsidered waste and refuse of our boasted civilisation, could most fitly huddle from the cold. She was not left actually to die there, but two days afterwards she passed out of the world where she had been unrecognised. Not without result, however. Among those who had witnessed the distressing occurrence was a surgeon, Mr. William Marsden, who for some time before had repeatedly seen cause to lament, that with all our endowed hospitals, our great medical schools, and the advance of scientific knowledge, the sick poor could only obtain relief by means of letters of recommendation and other delay, until the appointed days for admission. The sight that he had witnessed awoke him to fresh energy. He determined to establish a medical charity, where destitution or great poverty and disease should be the only necessary credentials for obtaining free and *immediate* relief. His honest benevolent purpose did not cool; in February in the following year (1828), the house in Greville Street was open as a free hospital, and it was taken under the royal patronage of George IV., the Duke of Gloucester becoming its president.

(*To be concluded.*)

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

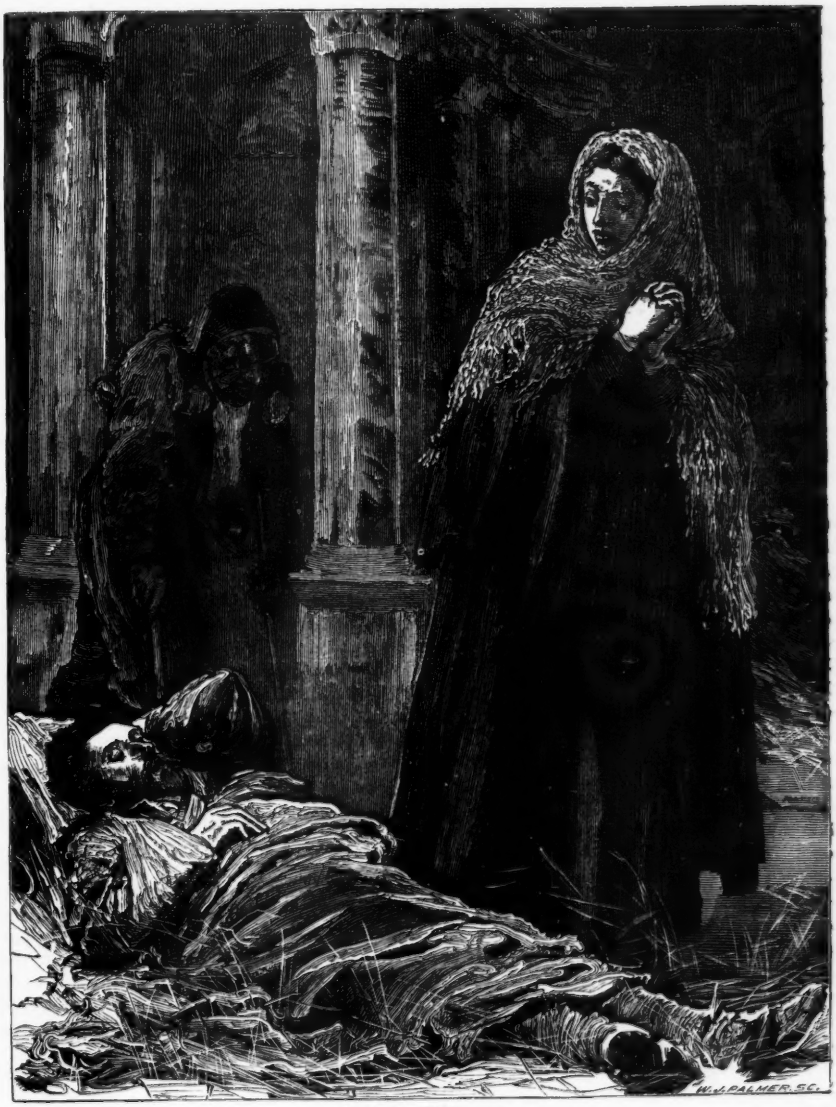
CHAPTER XXXIX.

In a quiet corner of the church, lighted only by a lamp which hung before a little side altar, Mary Trevelyan found him she had sought so long—her Bertrand—her one love, dearer than ever in his helplessness and poverty. He lay on a heap of straw, with his knapsack for a pillow, and his military cloak thrown over him as a covering, and he was still wearing a uniform torn and scorched in several places. He was asleep, in the attitude of a tired child, with one arm round his head; as he lay on his back the lamplight shone full on his face, showing the change that had taken place in the appearance of the once brilliant handsome chargé d'affaires. The rich brown hair, which used to be so soft and silky, was matted and lustreless, the beard untrimmed, the features seeming almost too strongly marked, from the hollowness of the sunken cheeks; but it was still the dear face that had haunted her dreams and lived in her thoughts, and there was no reason now why she should not let her eyes dwell on it with all the tenderness that filled her heart, for he was no longer bound to any other, even though she no longer believed that he had ever loved herself.

John Pemberton, whispering to her that he would see her in the morning, disappeared among the motley crowd which thronged around, and Mary sank on her knees by the rough couch, murmuring, "Oh, my darling, my darling, have I lived to see you again!" and then she poured out her whole heart in thankfulness for her unexpected joy.

It was perfect bliss to Mary Trevelyan to remain there by his side, letting her hand rest with a caressing touch on his long thin fingers, as they lay listlessly across his breast. There were sights and sounds of anguish all around her, yet she could not still the ceaseless song of praise within her soul, for all the love her heart could feel was lavished on the wasted form stretched out before her, and that was breathing, palpitating with the life on which her own depended. One thought of sadness only she had, and that was in the certainty of the pain which the Lorelei's letter would give him, although she could no longer doubt that Laura had never really loved him, and therefore that he was well quit of what would have been but a mockery of happiness, almost in her estimation a sacrilegious union; yet it did grieve her to know that she must herself be the instrument of his sorrow, and that from her hand he must take the letter which would give his trust in Lurline's affection such a rude awakening. Mary determined that she would, if possible, prevent him finding out who she was, until he had passed through the shock of Laura's faithlessness, and could disconnect her from any share in bringing him such evil tidings.

The evening wore on while Bertrand slept. Hour after hour passed; it was near midnight, but there was little rest or silence within the great church. Some of the sufferers, like her own charge, found a temporary relief in slumber, and one by one a few sank into the surer sleep of death, and were borne away by the attendants to await their burial on the



(*Drawn by* W. SMALL.)

"He was asleep, in the attitude of a tired child, with one arm round his head."—*p.* 664.

morrow; but for many there was no ease from pain, nor could those rest who had come to succour them.

Gradually Mary noticed from Bertrand's restless movements that the effect of the opiate was beginning to wear off. He turned from side to side, stretched out his arms, muttered a few indistinct words, and at last he opened wide the bright blue eyes she had scarce hoped to see again, and, raising himself on his elbow, he looked round eagerly.

The moment she saw any sign of his awakening Mary had drawn the hood of her mantle over her head, and she sat beside him, bending down her face so that he could not see it. He took her, no doubt, for one of the kind women who habitually nursed the wounded, and asked her in French if she knew where Mr. Pemberton the Englishman was?

She answered in the same language, thinking it might prevent his recognising her voice, but he started visibly when the low soft tone met his ear, as she said, "He is gone away for the night, but he will come to you in the morning."

"Whose voice was that? who spoke?" said Bertrand, sharply, in English.

Mary did not answer, but held to his lips a glass of some restorative she had been preparing for him. He drank it, and then leant back with a sigh.

"My mind is wandering back to those I loved of old," he said, speaking again in French. "I thought I heard the voice that once was sweetest to me in all the world, but no doubt it was yours, kind nurse. Tell me—did the Englishman give you no message for me? Did he not leave with you a letter? He has belonging to me a letter from England. He promised I should certainly have it to-night."

"Yes, and it is here," whispered Mary; "I have it quite safe for you."

"Ah, give it me!" he exclaimed, with feverish excitement. "Why do you delay, nurse? It is mine; let me have it at once!"

With trembling hands, she took it from her pocket and put it into his eager fingers. He almost snatched it from her in his anxiety, and as he saw the peculiar handwriting, which any who had once seen Laura write could never mistake, a flush of eager pleasure glowed over his pale face, and he pressed the letter to his lips, as he murmured, "My poor Lurline!"

The lamp hung on the other side from that on which Mary was sitting, and he turned completely round to get its full light upon the paper as he tore open the envelope.

Then Mary rose very softly, and moved away, saying, gently, "I will come back to you when you have read your letter."

Her sensitive nature shrank from watching the first moments of his bitter humiliation and disenchantment. He took no heed of her; he was already absorbed in the lines he was reading, and she went along through the rows of prostrate forms, towards a peaceful spot some little way removed from all that confused mass of suffering, and there sunk on her knees in prayer.

After a time she rose to go back to Bertrand, and as she turned to walk through the ranks of the sick she involuntarily looked down towards the entrance door, and saw a dark figure in the act of passing out behind the curtain which hung over the opening. How or why it was she could not tell, but a sudden chill and terror struck into her very soul, and she hurried breathlessly to the spot where she had left Bertrand. Was she blind, or dreaming, or could it be true, that she saw the straw couch where he had lain, the knapsack which had formed his hard pillow, the cloak flung on one side which had covered him? but he—her Bertrand, her one love—so long lost, so lately found—he was no longer there—he was gone! Her senses seemed abandoning her; she flung herself down by the bed; she passed her hands over the straw, as if to satisfy herself that his form rested there no more—then she started up, and appealed almost frantically to those lying around.

"Where is he? did you see him go? what has become of him? oh, tell me!"

Some were asleep, some too weak and ill to answer her; she got no response. But suddenly a lithe little figure rose up from behind a pillar near her, and came bounding towards her. It was Pierron, who, after wandering about the church for some hours, to abstract what morsels he could from the provisions of the sick, was preparing to take his night's rest among them.

"If you want the monsieur who was lying in that bed," he said, "I can tell you all about him. I was watching him, for you left a piece of chocolate beside him which he did not eat, and I had it."

"Oh, tell me, Pierron! where is he? only tell me, and you shall have all the chocolate I have left."

"Yes, that is right," he said, taking hold of her hand; "come, he is gone out."

"Out! but he was ill, feeble!"

"He was in a fever, madame, like a madman; he read a letter he had over and over again, and his eyes grew wilder, and his breath came short, and he flung himself about, and at last he looked at the words on the paper again, and sprang upon his feet. He seemed quite strong, but I think he was mad, for he laughed, and he crushed the letter in his hands, and flung it away."

"Where is he then, Pierron? where is he now?"

"Do I know? I can only tell you he went out when he had thrown the letter away. He said words which sounded like 'I will go home, I will go home.'"

Through Pierron's curious pronunciation of the English words, Mary could detect what they had been.

"And then," the boy went on, "he rushed away down the church, as if he were quite strong, with his

eyes blazing, and his lips laughing, and he lifted up the curtain over the door, and went out into the street, and I saw him no more."

"No more! no more! Oh, my Bertrand!" said Mary, with an almost unconscious wail; "but I will seek him! I will never rest till I find him!" and, hastily putting the food she had promised into the hands of the child, she in her turn rushed down through the crowded church, and went out into the bitter cold night.

The stars were shining bright as diamonds in the clear expanse of heaven, the snow lay deep and hard all round, no human being was in sight in the deserted streets. Mary drew her cloak over her shoulders, and hurried on, she scarce knew whither.

"I will find him," she said, "or die!"

CHAPTER XL.

JOHN PEMBERTON was greatly distressed and alarmed when he returned to the church ambulance next morning and heard from Pierron of the disappearance of Bertrand Lisle, and of Mary Trevelyan's rashness in having gone out alone into the disturbed city to seek him. He guessed rightly enough what had happened as regarded Bertrand. The shock he had received from Laura's letter, in his feverish state, had brought on delirium, under the influence of which he had been seized with some delusive idea that he could at once start for England. The condition of high fever in which he was might to a certain extent have preserved him from suffering by the bitter cold which had prevailed through the night; but Pemberton thought with dismay of Mary's delicate frame having been exposed to it, and he could only hope that she had long since found her way home, either to the hospital or to Madame Brunot's house. He could not rest, however, till he had ascertained where she really was; and he was walking from the door, with the intention of seeking her, when he met her, coming with slow and wavering steps along the street. She seemed utterly exhausted, but apparently had wandered back to the church with the faint hope that Bertrand might have returned there; and when she saw John Pemberton advancing from it, she tottered towards him, and, stretching out her hands, said in a faint voice, "Has he returned? Oh, has he come back to me?"

"Alas, no!" said Pemberton; "but I hope we shall soon find him."

She threw back her head with a gesture of despair; then her eyes closed; her lips almost unconsciously murmured, "Oh, my Bertrand!" and she sank down in a heap on the snow at John Pemberton's feet. He lifted her up, and carried her into the church, while he sent Pierron flying off to procure a carriage.

Mary's face and hands were cold as ice; and he guessed—what was indeed the case—that she had been wandering about all night in the snow, expecting each moment to find Bertrand extended somewhere on the pavement. When the cab arrived, Pemberton placed her in it, still quite insensible, and took her home to Madame Brunot's, where nurse Parry seized upon her at once, loud in lamentations. With Valerie's help, poor Mary was soon placed in the bed from which she was destined not to move for many days to come.

Meanwhile, for days, and even weeks, John sought for Bertrand, but altogether in vain. Nowhere, far or near, could he find any trace of him. It was well perhaps for Mary that a serious illness, the result of fatigue and exposure, rendered her for some time incapable even of knowing his ill-success.

She lay helpless on her bed while the year which had been so fatal to France closed in sullen gloom, and another opened which was destined to be yet more terrible. The gleam of hope which the armistice of January had brought was again extinguished, and the siege had been renewed with double vigour. It was plain, however, that the cruel struggle must be ended soon, were it only for the sake of the famishing women and children. But the prospect of the bitter humiliation which awaited them had deepened, if possible, the deadly hatred felt by the French soldiers for their Prussian foes; and the position of the resident German tradespeople who had not been able to escape from Paris before the siege was becoming extremely dangerous; they were perpetually liable to the suspicion of harbouring designs for the betrayal of the city into the hands of the enemy; and any one, even amongst the French themselves, who showed them the smallest friendliness, was in danger of being accused of complicity in their supposed treachery.

Not far from the Brunots' house was a little toy-shop, kept by a quiet old man, a native of Nuremberg, who, in happier times, had been a great friend of the colporteur's children, and had often bestowed playthings upon them which they could not afford to buy. Naturally, the little ones, French though they were, could see no reason for giving up their acquaintance with kind old Herr Klein; and it was only in obedience to John Pemberton's strong prohibition that Valerie ceased from going daily into his shop, as she passed, to wish him "Good-morning."

One afternoon in the month of February, Pemberton went as usual to Madame Brunot's, to inquire after Mary Trevelyan, and to report to her the continued failure of his endeavours to find Bertrand Lisle. She was now well enough to sit up, though she had not yet been out of doors; and he found her in her usual position, reclining in an easy-chair drawn close to the window, whence she could look out on the street, as if she hoped to see him pass on whom her hopes were ever fixed.

John Pemberton was pleased to see Mary looking stronger than she had done since the dreadful nights

which had so nearly proved fatal to her; but he at once perceived that she, as well as all the rest of the family, was in a great state of anxiety and alarm; and the cause was soon told to him.

Valerie had been sent out, early in the morning, to purchase some rice and bread, on which the household now chiefly subsisted, and had never returned. The baker's shop was at a considerable distance from the house, and they knew that she would have to wait a long time till it came to her turn to be served amongst the patient crowd who often had to pass hours at the door of the bakehouse before they could obtain their scanty supply; and, therefore, for a considerable period even weak nervous Madame Brunot was not surprised at Valerie's non-appearance. But as the day wore on they all became very uneasy at her unaccountable absence. Mrs. Parry had gone out to look for her, and had walked about for some time without seeing any trace of the child; but she had not dared to venture far. The good woman was excessively timid, and in the present state of Paris she never voluntarily went outside the door. On the present occasion, her inability to speak French, so as to make inquiries for Valerie, rendered her comparatively useless when she did go. She soon came back, and even Madame Brunot did not ask her to go again. They all relied on the hope that John Pemberton would call, as he so often did; and they knew how speedily and energetically he would seek the poor child, wherever there was the remotest chance of finding her.

"If you had not come soon I must have gone out myself," said Mary, anxiously; "it would have done no good for nurse Parry to have gone again."

"You do not look very fit for such an expedition," he said, with a smile; "but I will go to the bakehouse at once, and I hope I shall bring her back with me. I trust it may only be that she has had to wait longer than usual."

"You always bring us so much comfort," said Mary, looking up at him gratefully. "What a friend you have been! You will have a great blessing, I am very certain, for the goodness you have shown us."

"It has been by special mercy that I have been allowed to be of any use," he answered, humbly; "but, dear Mary, you can repay me a thousand times any little help I have been able to give you, if you will sometimes remember me when you speak to our Father in heaven, and ask for me that when my hour shall strike I may be permitted to go swift and straight to the feet of Him through whom alone I hope for pardon."

"I think you may be very sure that it will be so," said Mary, "though not perhaps for many years to come."

"Many years!" said John, looking up thoughtfully into the blue cloudless sky; "sometimes I feel as if I could not wait many hours, I long so inexpressibly for the vision of that Divine One, the only Pure and True." Then he coloured violently at having been betrayed into an expression of feeling on so sacred a subject, and pressing her hand, he went hastily out on his mission. Never while Mary Trevelyan lived did she forget those words, or the yearning look in John Pemberton's dark eyes as he uttered them.

The young man hurried along the street, much more seriously uneasy about Valerie Brunot than he had cared to let her friends see. He went in the direction of the bakehouse, looking carefully on either side as he advanced; when he reached the shop, he found himself at the end of a long string of persons who were waiting to be served, and saw at once that Valerie was not among them. It was in vain to ask the busy men in the shop if, amongst such a crowd of applicants, they remembered one little girl; and he was turning away more anxious than ever, when he suddenly observed a small figure crouching under an archway at the opposite side of the street, which he recognised at once as the lost child; and the moment she saw him Valerie bounded towards him, and flung herself into his arms, sobbing hysterically, and clinging to him in evident terror.

"My dear child," he said, soothing her, "I see you have somehow been very much frightened; but we had better go home as fast as we can, and then you will tell us all that has happened."

"Oh no, no!" she exclaimed; "I must tell you first. I am so frightened I dare not go near our house. I should have stayed out all night if you had not come."

"Let us go in here then," he said, drawing her within the portico of a church which stood near; "we can sit down on the bench here while you tell me."

She obeyed, nestling close to him, and clasping both her hands round his arm while she told her story.

"It is poor Herr Klein that has done it all," she said; "but he could not help it. You know that little house near ours which was thrown into ruins by a great shell bursting on the roof?"

"You mean the cottage that is uninhabited now, with only part of it left standing?"

"Yes; I was just passing it, on my way to the baker's shop, when I heard a most dreadful noise of shouting and screaming, and people calling out that they were betrayed, as they always do when they want to kill somebody. I was frightened, and ran inside the doorway of the little house (for there is no door on it now); and I had hardly done so when I saw Herr Klein come flying down the street, without his hat, and his face all white, with a red streak across his forehead, and he came dashing into the little house where I was, and went down on his hands and knees on the ground behind me, and said, 'Valerie, stand in the doorway, for Heaven's sake, and hide me!' And I did, though I was dreadfully afraid, for there came a crowd of soldiers next, rushing along

with their swords drawn and their guns on their shoulders, and they were calling out, 'Death to the Prussian spy! death to the Prussian traitor!' I suppose they never thought at first that Herr Klein was hiding in the ruined house, and they went on past it. But, you know, a little way further on they could see down the long boulevard, and in a minute they could tell that he had not gone that way; and so they all came storming back into the house where I was, saying, 'He must be here;' but that very moment Herr Klein had crept through a window at the back, and was gone; and so then they caught hold of me, and asked if he had been there. I could not tell a lie, you know, so I said, 'Yes,' and then they demanded where he had gone, and I said I did not know. Then one of them called out, 'She is an accomplice, the little viper! I know her: it is the *fillette* Brunot; I have seen her in his shop. He uses her as a spy. Let us crush the little serpent! let us kill her!' And another said, 'We must make her tell us where he is, first; but we can get her at any time—I know where she lives. In the meantime, we may catch him yet, if we are quick. See, there are marks of blood on this window; he has got out that way.' So then they flung me down, saying, 'Don't think to escape us, little traitress! We will find you in your nest of serpents; no doubt the whole family are traitors!' And then they all went scrambling through the window, and left me, and I ran away as fast as ever I could, and came here. I got our bread, but I have been afraid to go home, for I am sure those terrible soldiers will be waiting for me, and perhaps they will go to our house and kill us all—*maman* and Mary and little Jacques."

Valerie began to sob afresh, while John Pemberton sat in great perplexity, considering what would be the best course to take. He thought it probable, as Klein had a considerable start of his pursuers, that he would escape them, in which case it was but too likely that the soldiers would seek to wreak their vengeance on the child whom they chose to pronounce his accomplice. Yet matters might be worse if they burst into Madame Brunot's house when there was no one there to protect it; and he came to the conclusion at last that he must risk the endeavour to take Valerie home, and he trusted that, by using the most unfrequented streets, they might reach the house in safety. Valerie trusted him too implicitly to object, and hand in hand they started.

(*To be continued.*)

TWO-EDGED PROVERBS.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A., AUTHOR OF "THE 'I WILLS' OF THE PSALMS," "THE FEET OF JESUS," ETC.

"A STITCH IN TIME SAVES NINE."

THERE are some proverbs which, if universally acted upon, would have almost turned the tides of human existence. They would certainly have altered the flow of many of its streams, and in every case for the better. For almost all proverbs are more or less warnings against evil, perhaps not directly, but none the less surely because indirectly. They might be said to have grown out of the evil soil of an evil world, to have come into existence because they were needed as warnings against or correctives of evil manners of some form or other.

The world is full of ruin and loss and misery which need not have been, and which would not have been if even this solitary proverb had been attended to, and that stitch in time had been taken, which, according to the proverb, saves nine.

Ever since the Fall we seem to live under the law of decay. The tendency of all things seems to be to fall to ruin. We seem to be continually repairing; ever so much of our energies goes to keeping things barely in order; and as to the bills for repairs, and the marvellous items of which they are composed, we are almost afraid even to think of them.

There are two classes of persons of whom we have to say a little in connection with this proverb that "a stitch in time saves nine"—some who do not see this, and some who do, but who neglect to make use of the truth they know, so that in point of fact it is practically no truth to them at all.

There are some persons who do not see this. They expect perishing things to last. Though they see walls crumbling to powder, wood rotting away, the perishing look beginning to come up very soon on the newest things, they take but little notice; the matter is too common to arrest practical attention, and they let things just take their course. Now, the course which things generally follow in this way, is from bad to worse; the world, if not all down hill, is down hill most of the way; and that is just one of the reasons which makes life hard work to many of us—we have to be going up hill, to be always keeping things right; not only to be taking a step forward, but to secure the step we last made. We are very much like people in ships, whose cabin furniture is knocking about, and being knocked about; and yet with all this, you find folk expecting things to continue in one stay.

But there are others who see well enough when and where repairs are needed, but it does them

little good, they are fair and easy-going people, and they don't do anything; they say, "'Twill do by-and-by," or they let things take their chance, and the chance almost always turns out the wrong way.

The world is full of neglected things, of those ruined beyond repair, of those wanters now not merely of the nine stitches, but ninety and nine, of those awaiting the one stitch which would avert so many more, and which they may wait long enough for, for they await it in vain.

There is my neighbour's fence, or what was once a fence, and that not so many years ago. Now it is no longer a fence, but an offence, for it makes the whole neighbourhood look shabby and disreputable, stretching as it does for nearly half a mile along the Woodthorp road, up to the very entrance to Woodthorp itself.

The first beginnings of that fence's troubles were on this wise. A loose nail allowed one of the staves to become unfastened. Farmer Joyce saw it, but he never heeded it, and the stave wagged about until it became quite unfastened. A gipsy tramp passing along, and having a far more practical eye than Farmer Joyce, determined at once that that stave was the very thing that would suit him, when split up with a handy little bill-hook he had in his wagon, to boil his kettle that evening.

I really don't think the tramp would have stolen that stave if it had not in almost so many words said to him, "Come take me; you see no one cares whether I'm in or out, they don't seem to think me worth even a nail and the little trouble of driving it in;" and so the tramp gave it the least twist in life; he took it out, just as an encouraging dentist assures us he will take out a loose tooth, almost with his finger and thumb, and that night that stave boiled the tramp's kettle, and made a beginning of the end—the unhappy end which, long before its proper time, overtook the unhappy Woodthorpe fence.

The next piece of wood soon loosened, and boys, seeing that no one took any notice, began to pull off the top bits, and then the wet soaked down into the body of the wood; and one tramp and another made tea with it, and it was even believed that the neighbouring baker's oven knew something about it; and so it came to pass that the fence became a public nuisance. Cattle strayed through it into the road, and were put in pound; boys crept in here and there through it, and were continually being brought before the magistrate for trespass; the hay was trampled down; sheep were stolen; and, to come to the end of the fence, nearly five hundred pounds had to be spent before the property could be put in order again.

I really do not much care where you look to find the truth of this proverb practically shown, for it seems to me that you will find it everywhere.

A word of apology spoken at the beginning of a quarrel would have hindered many family estrangements, would have prevented many a duel, many a lawsuit, many damages for libel, the eating of three or four helpings of humble pie—aye, the whole pie itself—instead of as much of it as would have gone into a tea-spoon at the most.

(To be concluded.)

SURLY BOB.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER IV.—SYMPATHY.

NOW Johnnie, though a delicate little fellow, had a tolerably brave spirit, and was not given to cry and whine over every trifling hurt; therefore Bob knew something must indeed be the matter to call forth these signs of pain. He bent over him—that strangely softened look coming into his face, and chasing away the angry scowl it had worn a minute before, whilst he asked, and his usually harsh, gruff voice had a thrill of tenderness in it—"Be you hurt, little 'un? What have they been and done to you?"

"Oh, Bob, do help me; I can't get up, and it hurts me so I can't help crying," and little Johnnie's tearful face grew quite white from the pain.

"Where does it hurt?" asked Bob.

Johnnie pointed to his knee, the poor diseased one, where was the seat of all the mischief which had resulted in his lameness.

The elder brother's face again grew dark, as he hissed out the words, "Shame! Brute! See if I don't give it to him!" whilst he threw a glance around, as if intending another attack upon his enemy; but by this time the other boys had all cleared off, leaving the two entirely alone.

"Give me your hand, Bob, and I'll try to get up."

Instead, however, of doing that, Bob stooped and, with as careful and even gentle a touch as if he had been a woman, took his little brother in his arms, saying, "If you can't walk, why I'll carry you. We ain't got far to go, and you needn't be afraid as I'll drop you. Am I hurting of you?" he asked, as Johnnie seemed to wince.

"Not much—not more than you could help," answered Johnnie, trying to force back his sobs of pain, as he put his arms lovingly round Bob's neck, and clung to him.

The other carried him as if he had been a mere

feather's weight; and bearing him through the kitchen, which he found empty, his aunt being at that moment up-stairs, he took him straight out to their own quarters at the back, and laid him down on the bed.

"How did it happen, Johnnie? What was that sneak Tom Lane a-doing to you? See if I don't pay him out, that's all!" and Bob set his teeth, and clenched his hand.

"No, Bob, don't be so angry. Maybe he didn't mean anything, for you see I was standing right on the slide—though I didn't notice as I was—and then he came up behind sliding, and couldn't stop himself, and so he knocked me down and fell down himself, too, on the top of me. Maybe he didn't do it a purpose."

"Oh, that's likely, ain't it? But he shall be paid out for it. See, if I don't give him such a licking as he never got afore!"

Bob's face, as he spoke, had hardened into an expression of such set and sullen hatred that Johnnie seemed half-frightened by it.

"Bob," he began, laying his hand upon that of the other, as if to detain him beside him, "you won't go and do nothing bad to Tom, will you now? Do promise me as you won't."

The child paused, but no response came from the elder lad.

"Bob, do say as you won't do anything to him; please do," and this time the little fellow's tones were full of entreaty.

"What d'you want me to promise that for?" muttered Bob.

"Oh, I do want it so much," returned the other, without giving a direct answer.

"Why?" persisted Bob.

"Well," answered Johnnie, forced to tell his reasons, "it's 'cause of what teacher told us yesterday. Don't you mind, Bob, how he said that if we wanted to belong to Jesus and keep safe in His fold, we must try and be like Him. And he said Jesus was never angry, or cross, or wouldn't forgive, though they did such dreadful things to Him. So, Bob, don't let us be cross or angry, or else it'll show so plain that we don't belong to Him."

The little boy paused a minute, and then went on, still in a low dreamy voice. "I was dreadful naughty just now I know. I was so angry when Tom threw me down, 'cause it hurt so, that I thumped him with my fists as hard as ever I could till he got up. And I called him bad names too. But I'm sorry now. 'Twas because I forgot about Jesus then; but, oh Bob, He saw it all! and He must have thought I didn't care about Him a bit! But I do: I love Him so I can't bear to think of vexing Him," and Johnnie's sobs mingled with his words. "Do you think He'll forgive me, Bob? 'cause I am sorry, real downright sorry!"

Bob had turned his face quite away, so that nothing of it could be seen; and now when Johnnie paused, he gave for answer nothing more than a sort of grunt deep down in his throat, which sound might have meant "yes," or "no," or anything. But Johnnie seemed to think it meant the former, as he pressed for nothing further, though his tender little heart seemed still full of sorrow.

CHAPTER V.—AN INDEPENDENT ACTION.

Dinner time came, but Johnnie could not move without such pain that Bob told him to "'bide still," and he would bring his dinner out to him. Accordingly he went in, and asked for his brother's share of the meal.

"Why don't he come and get it for himself?" said Mrs. Saunders, shortly, as she stood rocking in her arms a sickly, fretful baby.

"'Cause he's bad," returned Bob, quite as shortly.

"Bad! What's the matter with him?"

"He's hurt."

"How? What has he done to himself?"

"Some of 'em knocked him down."

"Oh, is that all!" exclaimed Mrs. Saunders, as she gave herself to the task of endeavouring to still the infant's cries, which grew louder and louder. "Can't he stand a tumble without making all this fuss over it! my word, it's time he learnt not to be such a baby!"

Bob shot an angry glance out of his eyes at these words; but Mrs. Saunders was too much taken up with her sick child to notice it; and Bob, having secured his own and Johnnie's portion, took no further heed of her or any of the others, but hastened back to his little brother.

"I don't know how I'm ever to get to school," remarked Johnnie, when the time drew near. "It hurts so dreadful bad when I try to move!"

"Then you 'bide here; and I'll make the door fast outside so that nobody shan't get in to you; and I'll come straight back after school."

"But aunt 'll be angry if I don't go, she's so strict about school!

"Oh, she shan't know anything about it; or if she does, I'll settle it. You 'bide still here, and Mary Jane 'll keep you company."

And Bob drew forth the pretty little dove, which nestled close up to the child in a confiding manner, whilst he stroked its soft plumage, and murmured gentle words of endearment in a caressing tone, the bird meantime making a low cooing, as if replying to all he said. Bob watched them a minute, and then turned to leave; taking care to fasten the door very securely on the outside.

Tom Lane was not at school that afternoon, so that Bob was not tempted to endeavour to revenge Johnnie's hurts upon him. But on the way home his cousin Sam overtook him, with the question, "Where's Johnnie? 'cause he wasn't at school."

"That ain't no business of yours," growled Bob, with a threatening look.

"Yes it is: and I shall tell mother he's been shirking school," answered Sam, defiantly.

"You dare to, you sneak!" shouted Bob angrily. "Let me catch you telling tales, that's all, and I'll soon teach you not to do it another time!" and forthwith Bob, who was the bigger of the two, seizing the other boy by the collar, gave him a violent shaking, accompanied by a stinging box on the ear.

Then he flung him from him, with the muttered words—"You'd best hold your tongue, I warn you;" and, regardless of Sam's whines and howls as he held his hand to the ear which was still tingling from the blow, he stalked off homewards. Sam gazed after him with glances of hatred and ill-will; but apparently he judged it best to take heed to Bob's hints, for when he arrived at home he said nothing on the subject of Johnnie's absence from school that afternoon.

The little fellow himself turned towards Bob on his entrance with looks of such bright welcome that the latter could not fail to perceive that his presence brought pleasure to the child. Johnnie cared for him, he could not doubt that; but he was the only one in all the wide world who did care for and love him—"Surly Bob." It seemed strange that such affection should be bestowed upon him, so ill-tempered, ill-mannered, and ill-looking a lad as he knew himself to be. Wonderful, it appeared to him, that Johnnie, whom nearly every one loved and praised, should turn to him, and cling to him, and like to be with him; should take it so to heart when he got blamed or punished, and be so grateful for any little thing he did for him. How could he help returning such love?

He didn't try to help it, though he often tried not to show it; but in the depths of his heart—that heart of which so many felt inclined to doubt the existence—there dwelt a fund of tenderness, and devotion, and half-reverential love for the little brother, who was so good, so clever, so altogether different from himself. The praises which Johnnie so often received from his teachers—whilst *he* had nothing but blame bestowed upon *him*—awoke no feeling of jealousy in his breast, but only served to confirm his sense of Johnnie's superiority and his own inferiority.

And now, with the almost womanly softness and gentleness which Johnnie's helplessness and weakness called forth in him, he stooped over him, and in a few words—for Bob was never known to waste *them*, whatever he might have done with other things—he asked how he had been getting on, and if his pain was any better.

But though poor little Johnnie tried to put a good face on the matter, and said, with a smile, that Mary Jane had been very lively, and had gone on chattering to him all the time that Bob had been away, yet he could not conceal from his brother's sharp eyes how much he was suffering; and the latter's countenance darkened, and again he clenched his fist, as if preparing to deal out blows to some unseen enemy. (*To be continued.*)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

263. It is supposed, when St. Paul dwelt at Rome with a soldier who kept him, that he was chained to the soldier; what passage in the Acts tends to strengthen this idea?

264. What price did Amaziah, King of Judah, pay for the hire of one hundred thousand of the Israelites?

265. On what occasion did Samuel express a fear that Saul would kill him?

266. Quote a passage in which St. Paul states to what tribe he belonged.

267. In connection with the gathering of the manna in the wilderness it is said, "He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack." Where does St. Paul use this passage in connection with almsgiving?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 640.

249. "And they said unto Him, Behold thy mother and thy brethren seek for thee. And He answered them saying, Who is my mother or my brethren? And He looked round about on them which sat about Him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, my sister, and mother" (Mark iii. 32—35).

250. That the daughters should marry to some one in their own tribe (Numbers xxxvi. 6).

251. The turning water into wine (John ii. 7—11). The feeding the multitudes on two occasions with a few loaves and fishes (Matt. xiv. 15—21 and xv. 34—38).

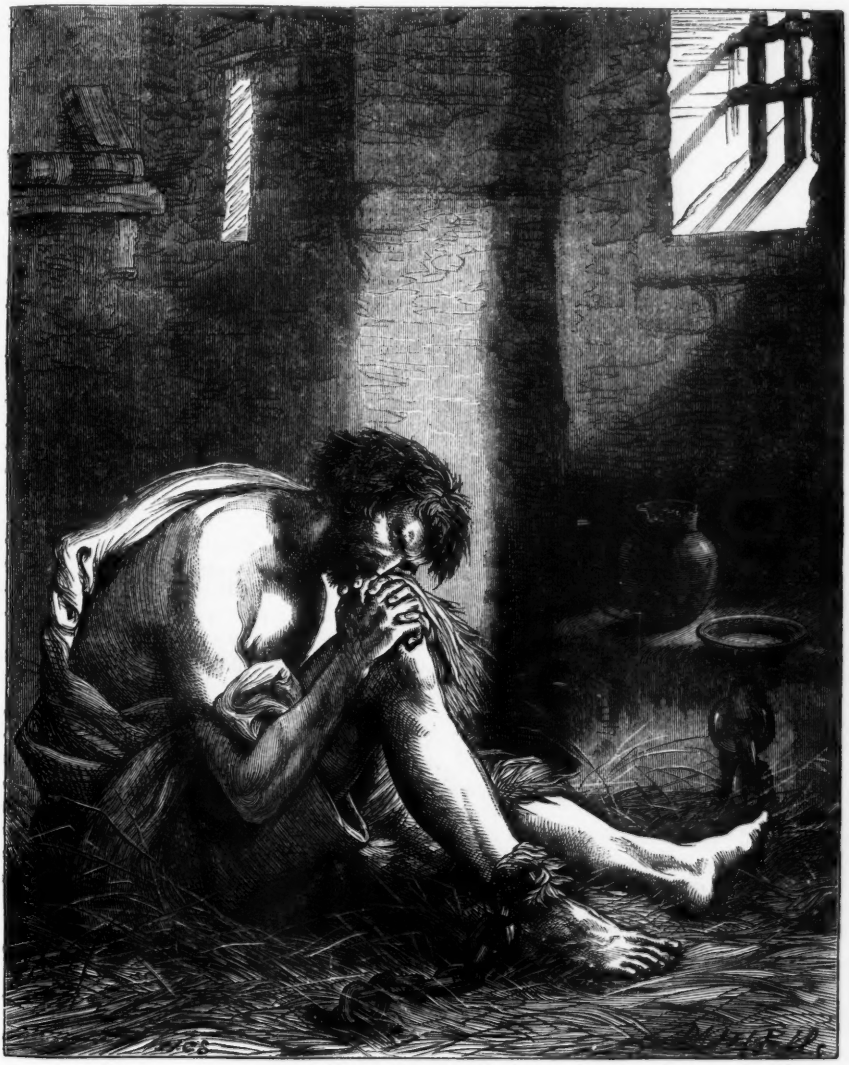
252. To illustrate God's dealings with those of the houses of Judah who had gone into captivity, and with those who were left behind in Jerusalem (Jeremiah xxiv. 1—3).

253. The fear that the children of Israel felt towards those nations who used them (Joshua xvii. 16; Judges i. 19 and iv. 3).

254. "All the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died" (Numbers xv. 36).

255. "Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I, Paul, once and again, but Satan hindered us" (1 Thess. ii. 18).

256. "Speak unto the children of Israel and bid them, that they make fringes in the borders of their garments; and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a riband of blue, that ye may look upon it and remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them" (Numbers xv. 38, 39).



(*Drawn by* H. C. SELOUS.)

THE FIRST STONE.

FORSAKEN, down-trodden, crime-laden, heart-broken,
He lies in the dust. Cast thou not the first stone;
And be not, by thy too-ready lips, his doom spoken;
On high sits the Judge who may judge him alone.

He hath sinned. Well, *who* hath not? If to us were given,
To each and to all, what stern justice deems due,
Not a man of us ever could hope to gain heaven,
Nor e'er the strait gate of salvation pass through.

Forgive him! Who art thou dar'st sit on thy neighbour
In self-assured judgment? Say, hast *thou* no spot?
No speck on thy conscience? Why shouldest thou labour
To prove *him* all guilty, yet dream *thou* art not?

Oh, hypocrite! know that far sweeter to heaven
The tears of a sinner than those of the just,
As fresh scent gains the rose after tempest hath striven,
And sweeter her blossoms bloom out of the dust.

ASTLEY H. BALDWIN.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—AN EVENTFUL EVENING.

IT was indeed a happy day for the Woodwards on which they returned to the dear old house at Hampstead. The old sweet smile (which she had bestowed on Netta) came back to Mrs. Woodward's kind face, and Mr. Woodward recovered his health in the familiar study and in sight of the wild overgrown garden. Fortune smiled on them too, and Mr. Woodward was offered the editorship of a magazine, which he was only too glad to accept, and so things balanced themselves again, and the burden no longer fell upon Dorothy.

"I don't know what we should have done without you, my child," he said to her as they sat in the study one evening—the study which looked almost the same as in former days, for they found to their surprise that George Blakesley had bought in most of the things which had been in it, and had replaced them as a pleasant surprise on their return. "You have saved us all from ruin," he went on. "There would have been nothing but starvation or the workhouse for us if you had not kept the family together. I did not think there was so much in you, Dorothy."

And this was her reward, the knowledge that she had begun to live not only for herself but for others, that if she went from among those around her they would miss, not merely a face and form they loved because by kinship she belonged to them, but that they would miss also the work her hands had found to do and the thoughts her heart conceived. She had learnt to make herself necessary to the comfort and happiness of those within her reach, and in this satisfaction to find her own. They were very happy days, those of the first six months, spent in the old house. The garden had been untouched, and the sycamore-tree came into leaf, and all looked the same as in years past—

"The same, the same, yet not the same,
Oh never, never more."

thought Dorothy as she wandered down the moss-grown pathway with Adrian Fuller, "just as of old."

"It is like the days of our youth returned," he said.

"Oh no," she answered. "It is changed altogether, and we most of all."

"No," he said, "not changed, only we are a little tired. You have worked too hard, and I have never felt satisfied with life."

"You never will," she said, simply.

"Yes I shall some day," he answered, looking down at the frank fearless face and the drooping contradictory eyes, "I shall be some day, when I have secured enough to buy ease (I don't mean luxury), and can live quietly by the sea and dream away my life, and no longer have to work. Would *you* like that, Dorothy?" He was so certain she loved him still, as she had done in days gone by (and as he had learnt to love her in those that followed), that he did not think it necessary to trouble himself about any other possibility.

"No," she said, almost with a shudder. "I should be miserable, you cannot really mean it! you would not waste all your life and all your talents and let your energies lie dormant. Life was given us for something higher than that."

"For what was it given to us, you little Methodist?" he asked.

"To work and to help others, so that we in turn may be helped, and so that we may make the world, if only in the persons of the one or two around us, better than we found it; and for you, Adrian," for her reverence had vanished with her love for him, and she called him by his Christian name now, "you have talent, and can not only help others with it, but can leave your work to delight them long after you are forgotten, or only your name is remembered. It is not one's self one wants remembered, only to know that one's works are. It is not many who can hope for this, but you can. Such as I can only try to make the passing time here and there a little pleasanter for others, but even this is no mean thing."

"What an odd child you are, Dorothy; but I don't care a jot for these things. I don't *want* fame, only to be lazy and enjoy myself and dream away my life. Come in the house and play over some of your snatches to me," and they moved down the dim pathway.

"But you *must* care for these things," she said, "or you have no business to take up that place in the world which a better worker and a nobler nature might occupy. you bar up the way for him, and this is a crime. And day-dreams are things which we should only value as we try to fulfil them. We may have

other dreams as well, and we want rest and quiet and all that, I know, but there can be no real rest unless we first tire ourselves with honest work; and I cannot think there will be any place hereafter in the Master's house for those who have not tried to do Him honour in the world." He let her hand slide from his arm. He was getting afraid of the girl—a quaint grave child still in look and years, who talked so strangely.

"Come into the house," he said, and drew her gently through the dark passage. Mr. and Mrs. Woodward were in the study. Tom was out, and Will and Sally had gone to look at men and women, so that the latter might carry them home in her memory, and draw new pictures. They went through the house and into the sitting-room, furnished with George Blakesley's "spider-legs and crockery," yet still bearing a vague likeness to former days in that it contained the old piano and the glass into which Dolly and the Beauty had looked one morning long ago. "Come and play," he said, and she, glad of the rest, sat down to the keys. He went to the other end of the room, and sat leaning back on an old uncomfortable sofa, while she sent odd snatches of music, strange and sweet—like herself, Adrian Fuller thought—through the fast-darkening room.

"I wish you would sing," he said. Dorothy had taken to singing to herself lately, but at best it was a poor little voice, though always sweet and in time.

"I can't," she said.

"Yes you can," he contradicted, "and I like your queer little voice; so sing."

She gave a nervous laugh, that ended almost in a shudder. It was so like one of the lordly speeches he used to make long ago, when she and Tom and Will were all children, and Sally could only just toddle, and he was then their great friend and playfellow. It seemed like an echo from a dead summer. She waited a minute, and then began, and sang song after song, till she thought he must be tired or asleep, for he made no sign, not that she had been thinking of him, for her thoughts had been far away, and the tears were stealing slowly down her cheeks.

"What sad songs they are," he said.

"I like sad songs," she answered, drearily.

"What was that one you was singing last night? I liked *that*," he said. She waited a moment or two and then began:—

"I made another garden, yea,
For my new love,
I left the dead rose where it lay
And set the new above.
Why did the summer not begin?
Why did my heart not haste?
My old love came and walked therein
And made my garden waste."

The symphony died away, but no second verse came or could come that night, the sounds from the piano ceased altogether, and the girl sat silently before it, hidden by the friendly darkness. He got up, and crossed the room quickly, and knelt beside her so as to be level with the face, which, he could dimly see, was buried in the two slender hands and bent forward over the keyboard.

"I understand you, you foolish child," he said, soothingly. She looked up flushed and afraid; he could not surely dream of repeating the mistake of long ago, she thought. "But we understand each other now, and you know I love you at last," he said, gravely and earnestly, in calm assured tones such as Netta Woodward with all her fascination had never listened to from him. She looked at him blankly, hardly realising what he meant, and he, mistaking her, went on. "It is all right now, and we belong to each other, do we not, Dorothy? and if you only will promise not to preach any more sermons," he put in almost laughing, for he had no idea of any answer but one from her, "we shall lead such a happy life together and"—but she managed to find her voice at last, and spoke, with the tears still on her cheeks, and a voice that was firm enough, though its tone was sweet and gentle.

"You are mistaken, Adrian; you are altogether mistaken; and must never speak to me like this any more, for I should like us always to be friends."

"What do you mean, child?" he asked, aghast at her manner rather than her words, not that he thought it really meant anything but the only one he considered possible. "You know you belong to me, and you shall, you little goose."

"Oh no, no!" she answered. "It is all gone by, it is indeed. Friends, yes, but that is all, Adrian; never anything more."

"And why not?

"We should never be happy, we think so differently. We used to be alike once perhaps, but it is all changed now, and if we lived our lives together we should still be far apart."

"But why is this?" he asked, his face looking grave and anxious. She could see it in the dark. It was such a handsome face, with large pleading eyes, that made her tremble and turn away, but only because a remembrance of old feelings came keenly back, and, for a moment, she "saw her soul in last year's glass" and wavered. "You cared for me once;" and feeling her wince, he added, "long ago when we all played in the garden together."

"Few things have a second summer, and then it is generally only a reflection of the first," she answered.

"It was Netta, I suppose. She spoilt everything," he said.

"No," Dorothy answered quickly, indignant that he should try to make a woman bear the blame. "*You* spoilt her life, she said so! If you had really cared for her as you pretended, she might have been different, but you were only fascinated, or if you loved her the feeling was not strong enough to move you from your love of ease."

"I say, are you going to finish your song, Doll?" said a voice that startled them to their feet. "We have been listening to your performance and want to

know what you left off for? Are you two spooning in the dark, or what?" It was Tom's voice, of course. Dorothy rushed to the window, and opened it.

"Spooning," she began, indignantly, "we were talking"—the words died away on her lips. Tom was leaning against the outer wall of the house, and by his side was George Blakesley.

"How did you know I was here?" Adrian Fuller asked.

"Guessed it," answered the tormentor, concisely, "just as we guessed you were spooning."

"We were not spooning," she said, excitedly, almost crying with rage.

"Very well, Dolly dear," he said, teasingly, "then she wasn't spooning."

"We were listening while you sang, Miss Woodward, and as you did not finish the last song, we got impatient," George Blakesley said. His voice and his manner were the same as ever, but he called her Miss Woodward, and she heard it, oh so plainly! "I know the song you were singing—the words I mean."

"I did not expect to see you again," she said, trying to change the conversation, and wondering also what had brought him.

"I know. I have said good-bye to all my friends, and I sail the day after to-morrow;" he was really going, then, and the faint hope roused in her heart by his coming died out. Then a silence fell on the group—on the two looking out and the two looking in at the window, and presently, almost mechanically, she began watching a carriage in the distance, which was advancing along the road, the lamps looking like two fiery eyes in the distance. Dorothy's heart was standing still, and her hands were trembling with suppressed emotion, and she saw and knew and heard nothing till Tom exclaimed, almost with a shout, "Why, it's stopping here!" and the carriage drew up, and by the fitful light of the lamps she saw, amidst a cloud of wraps, the face of Netta the Beauty.

While Tom rushed forward, and Adrian Fuller went slowly round to the door, and Dorothy, in her surprise did not move, George Blakesley turned to her.

"I understand it all perfectly now," he said. "I thought it was so before I heard the song and you brake down to-night. *I* knew what it meant, though Tom never guessed. I am very glad, for I guess the end, and know he loves you."

"Oh, Mr. Blakesley!" she began, the tears coming to her eyes.

"I shall often think of you, and I am very glad," he said, in his unchanged manner, and then he pressed her two hands, hanging listlessly over the window-sill, and moved off.

"Oh stay, do stay! oh do come in!" she entreated.

"No," he said, "I have said good-bye long ago, and I sail the day after to-morrow;" and, evidently anxious to escape from the advent of the Beauty, he went, and she had no power to keep him, only to feel something that was like a sudden feeling of despair.

(To be continued.)

DAVID AND ABNER.

BY THE REV. W. HANNA D.D. LL.D.

IT was as king only over their single tribe that the men of Judah crowned David at Hebron. According to the Mosaic constitution, which gave the right of self-government to each tribe, and barred the interference of the others, they had no power to go further, nor does any step appear to have been taken by David towards inviting or constraining the other tribes to join Judah in acknowledging him as their king all through those five years* that appear to have intervened before Abner had Ishbosheth proclaimed as king over Israel at Mahanaim. Something like an invitation in this direction may perhaps be detected in David's message to the men of Jabesh-Gilead. Saul's first kingly act had been to rescue the Jabesh-Gileadites when on the very edge of a fearful calamity. The kindness thus shown they did not forget, and the day came for them to requite it. When the Philistines came to strip the slain on the bloody field of Gilboa, they found the bodies of Saul and of his three sons. Cutting off the head, and stripping off the armour of Saul, to hang them up as trophies in their great idol's temple, they gibbeted the bodies by nailing them up to the walls of Bethshan. To Jewish eye and feeling—among a people whose law forbad the suspension of a dead body, even of the bodies of those executed for the worst crimes, over a single night—a greater indignity could not have been shown to them. It was a poor and pitiful thing to wreak their vengeance thus on the lifeless corpses. It gives us, however, a striking proof of how complete the victory of Gilboa was, and how thoroughly the terror of the conquerors had pervaded the northern districts of the land, that not an Israelite was found there bold enough or grateful enough to rescue these bodies from the shameful exposure. The Jabesh-Gileadites took that burden and honour upon themselves. In face of a Philistine garrison, by a rapid night march,

* Ishbosheth, we are told, reigned two years over Israel (2 Sam. ii. 10), and David reigned seven and a half years as king in Hebron (2 Sam. ii. 10). There must, therefore, have been five years of David's reign during which there was no king over Israel.

they took the bodies down, burned them, that they might be beyond the reach of a second such indignity being put upon them, and buried what bones the hasty fire had left beneath a memorial tree—a deed which, when reported to David, kindled the liveliest admiration, the warmest approval. Instantly a message was sent off to the Jabesh-Gileadites, applauding to the highest what they had done, speaking of it indeed as if it were a favour bestowed upon himself. Had it been his own sons whose bodies had been borne thus to honourable burial he could not have thanked them more cordially than he did. Beyond however the generous grateful feeling that breathes throughout the message, there might have been a wise yet delicate policy in his saying to them, "And now the Lord show kindness and truth unto you; and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing. Now, therefore, let your hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant, for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them." He speaks as one having official right to acknowledge and reward an act of public virtue; and, by telling what the house of Judah had done, hints at what the other tribes might do also. Summoning them to valiant action against the common enemy, he virtually promises them his protection—a promise that took in more than the Jabesh-Gileadites, that gave all Israel to know that David was under no such ties of recent obligation to the Philistines as would interfere in any wise with the duty he owed to all that sought the shelter of his throne. Such was the only attempt—assuredly a very modest and gentle one—to sway the movements of the northern and eastern tribes. Left wholly to themselves, these tribes, after some petty displays of tribal jealousy, would have fallen in with Judah in acknowledging the supremacy of David. Left wholly to himself, Ishbosheth would never have set himself up as a rival to David. He had not the ability, if he had had the ambition, to occupy such a post. He had however in his cousin Abner one with ambition and ability equal to that or any task. His near relationship to Saul, the high place he had held as chief captain of the army, the pre-eminent ability that he had shown in the many public services he had rendered, all conspired to give him great weight with the people. The opportunity was an inviting one. None knew better the irresolution and incapacity of Ishbosheth than Abner. Could he succeed in planting him on the throne of Israel, the power would all virtually be in his hands, otherwise his consequence and influence in the state must be comparatively small. David had relatives of his own—captains trained under his own eye—to elevate and to reward. Keeping Israel well in hand, holding them back from joining Judah on the one hand, and from prematurely kindling again the strife with the Philistine, slow and weary, he waited full five years, and when at last it seemed to him that all was ripe for action, knowing well that it would be by the tribes beyond the river that the scale would be turned, and that it was in their territory alone that the new king could at first at least be safe, he carried Ishbosheth to Mahanaim, and there had him proclaimed king.

It does not appear that David took any steps to thwart the project thus carried out, and had Abner been content to remain at Mahanaim, consolidating there the kingdom he had set up, David would have remained at Hebron, peaceably awaiting the will of God. But Abner had grown bold and over-confident. He mistook the inactivity of David. Timidity, he well knew, was foreign to David's spirit; he attributed it, therefore, to conscious weakness. Under this impression he led a large and threatening force to Gibeon, on the confines of Judah, with evident intention of attack. He thus took upon himself the responsibility of the civil war which followed, and for every drop of Israelitish blood that was shed in it must he be held guilty. Threatened in such a way, David took measures of defence. He did not however, as he would have done had he meditated aggressive action, lead out his army in person. Remaining himself at Hebron, he devolved this office on Joab, whose whole conduct in the affair that followed—the readiness with which he recalled his men from the pursuit when it would have been easy for him to have reaped still larger fruits of victory, and especially the words that he addressed to Abner (2 Sam. ii. 27)—conspire to tell us that his orders had been to act entirely on the defensive. But when the two armies stood front to front at the pool of Gibeon, it was difficult to prevent collision. The proposal of Abner, to settle the dispute by a passage of arms between twelve chosen soldiers on either side, reminds of like incidents both in Roman and Scottish story. The issue in this case was unique, and when all the twenty-four champions lay slain before their eyes, it was impossible to prevent the two armies from engaging in the conflict. Some sudden panic must surely have seized upon Abner's soldiers. They must have fled at the first onset, else, in such a conflict, always a bloody one where men of the same nation fight with one another, there had been a larger number slain. It was a sense, perhaps, of the unrighteousness of the cause they were fighting for that stripped Abner's soldiers of much of their strength, and turned them to speedy flight. In that flight we mourn the early death of the light-footed Asahel. Undoubtedly he brought that death upon himself. Twice warned, he would not turn back; and yet how natural was it for him to neglect the warning, borne on in the hurry of the

pursuit, outstripping all his comrades, singling out the man who had been the cause of all the mischief, getting nearer and nearer to Abner at every stride, the glory apparently within his reach of at once ridding his king of his chief enemy, and restoring peace and unity to Israel. We follow his fleet footsteps with trembling interest, as at last he comes up quite close to his foe, and as that backward thrust of Abner's spear transfixes him, quenching that young life in all its glowing warmth, stiffening those active limbs into the rigidity of death, we stand still for a moment, as those did who came to the place where he fell down dead, to drop over the lifeless body the tribute of a tear. Abner knew well to what this deed exposed him. He knew that, by the law and usage of the land, the duty of avenging the blood of Asahel lay on Joab and Abishai. He was well aware how thoroughly by such men this duty would be discharged. But he was not prepared for the treachery which cost him his life.

When Joab sounded the retreat, in hot haste he marched night and day till he got back to Hebron. So quick continuous march of a victorious army one can interpret best upon the supposition that Joab felt that he had exceeded the king's order, and was eager, before any other report reached David, to explain in person the origin and issue of the battle. A desultory war, conducted, it would appear with no great eagerness, and attended with no important results on either side, ensued. David continued to act mainly on the defensive, and Abner felt too weak to become again the aggressor.

In this war David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul weaker and weaker. The eleven tribes were losing heart. They could not but contrast the wisdom and strength of David with the imbecility and feebleness of their own king. They could not but lament a division that weakened their nation, and made them a bye-word and reproach to their neighbours. Above all, they could not but feel that, in contending against David, they were opposing the declared will of Him whom they all acknowledged as their Sovereign Head. And none knew all this better, or felt it more keenly, than Abner. He was too shrewd a man not to recognise that it was a hopeless task ever to get such a prince as Ishbosheth recognised as king of all the tribes, and almost as hopeless to support him permanently, even upon the throne of Israel. He may already have made up his mind to make terms with David, and, by some signal service rendered, to purchase safety at least, if not promotion and honour, at his court. An occasion and excuse for his doing so was given, when Ishbosheth ventured to challenge and condemn him for having taken to wife Rizpah, the daughter of Ai, his father's concubine. The jealousy which Ishbosheth cherished and expressed may have even gone the length of attributing to Abner the design of taking his father's crown, as well as concubine. However this was, Abner flew into a towering passion, swore that he would translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and proceeded without delay to make good his oath. A private overture was made to David. Whatever of treachery there may have been in it on Abner's part towards Ishbosheth, David saw no reason why he should not welcome it. A league was struck between them. Abner went himself to Hebron, sounding the different tribes by the way, and preparing them for the revolution he had undertaken to bring about. His reception at Hebron was all that he could have desired; and he was returning, confident of success, when he was followed and brought back by Joab, taken aside by the gate of the city, and basely slain. The treacherous deed put David in a peculiarly difficult position. The old Arab practice, prevalent for centuries in the countries bordering on Palestine, was, that when a man was slain, whether justifiably or not, the nearest of kin had to kill the man-slayer, wherever he could find him. The Mosaic law, so far from setting aside or condemning this practice, virtually legalised it. It made, indeed, a singular provision, in the establishment of the cities of refuge, for reducing it as much as possible to a nullity, by making it so easy for the homicide to escape. It was in exercise of his right as the blood-avenger, that Joab slew Abner.* Had the murder been committed within the gates of Hebron, which was one of the cities of refuge, he would have been amenable to the law; and, high as his position was, near as was his relationship to David, such base deceit, as well as cruelty, had been displayed, that the law would have been carried out against him. But Joab had taken good care to keep within its guardianship, by leading Abner aside before they entered into the city, and slaying him without its gates.

In such circumstances, what was David to do? It was not the mere rank or relationship of Joab that restrained him from punishing him. On the day when they crowned him king at Hebron, he had taken a solemn oath faithfully to administer the law of Moses. By punishing Joab, was he openly to violate it? It only remained, that he should do all, short of punishing the deed as it deserved, to manifest his abhorrence: and could more of this kind have been done? Making no account of what Joab might think or say, he loudly and openly condemned this act, wiping his hands of it, denouncing the heaviest vengeance on its perpetrator (2 Sam. ii. 28, 29). He forced Joab himself to rend his clothes and put on sackcloth,

* This has been doubted and denied (see Keil and Delitzsch), but is supported by the authority of Ewald.

and stand before the lifeless body of Abner, in acknowledgment of his guilt. On the day of the interment, the king himself followed the bier as chief mourner; and, weeping amid the weeping multitude, poured over the tomb the touching elegy he had composed. The whole day of the gloomy funeral he would touch no food till the sun went down, and at its close he turned to his servants and said, "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel? and I am this day weak, though anointed king: and those men, the sons of Zeruiah, be too hard for me. The Lord reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness."

It was no doubt desirable that, before the community at large, and particularly before the trans-Jordanic tribes, David should stand acquitted of all complicity with Joab's crime; and there may have been a touch of wise policy in such prompt and energetic means being taken to effect this; but there was such a transparent honesty, such a pure spontaneous outflow of emotion in all that David said and did, as utterly to preclude all idea of dissimulation. "All the people and all Israel understood that it was not of the king to slay Abner;" and they were pleased with him, and proud of him, as they saw him weeping over the grave.

For a little while after the death of Abner, the tottering throne of Ishbosheth still stood, till two officers of his guard, penetrating his bed-chamber, took him as he lay asleep, slew him, beheaded him, and hurried with the ghastly trophy in their hands to lay it at David's feet, reaping an ignominious death as their immediate and fit reward. Then "came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron." Of their own free motion, it would seem, unprompted, unguided, they came. The tender of allegiance was made and accepted, the league was struck, the oaths were taken; a second time David was anointed, but now as king over all the land, a three days' feast celebrating the great event.

Upon that throne to which he thus was raised David had a great work before him. He had to bind together the scattered and hitherto independent tribes into a compact and coherent community. He had to lay broad and deep the foundations of a monarchy that was to last for nearly 500 years. He had to meet assault after assault, coming from the nations all around, and maintain by arms the integrity and independence of his country. He had not only to roll back the tide of conflict from the borders of Israel, but by many a foreign war, successfully conducted, to add to its boundaries. To that small community of Hebrews he had to give a place and a name among the nations, that has told decidedly and extensively on the character and destinies of the entire race of mankind. He had to revivify and restore the services of the sanctuary, reinstating the priesthood in its proper place of authority and influence, laying the foundations, in fact, of the Temple worship organised and completed by Solomon. And in doing this he had to furnish, in many sacred odes, expressions of penitence, of trust, of hope, of joy, of triumph, such in their compass, beauty, force, and tenderness, that they were destined to survive even the fall of Judaism, outlast all his other works, to be upon the lips of all devout worshippers of the Most High God as long as this globe shall last.

For tasks so singular David was singularly prepared. Let us look back for a moment upon the thirty-seven years that preceded the enthronement at Hebron. A childhood in a dignified home of piety; a shepherd youth, of quiet contemplation, among the hills, the harp a-tuning that was to lead the worship of the world; a glimpse at a monarch's court, a lesson for young ambition to lay to heart, telling how uneasy a seat a throne may be, and how a dark and troubled spirit can strip it of all power to gratify; a sudden elevation to unbounded popularity; proofs given of wisdom in council, courage on the battle-field; the prospect of standing for life next the king; as sudden a change from court residence and high honours to outlawry, exile, and bitter years of merciless persecution; then seven and a half years of restricted command, of patient expectancy of practice in the art of ruling at Hebron—altogether a preparatory discipline such in form and variety as few men in the same length of time have passed through, yet all telling in qualifying him for his life-work. When Heaven has some great work to do it finds the right instrument, and it knows how to fit the instrument for the work.

LEAF-HUES.

WHERE green is all the common hue
Of leaves, there seldom comes to light
A greenness for the blossoms too,
But they are blue, or red, or white.

With my dear child's last dress of green,
Her face of blushing white was seen,
The while her hair hung freely down
In waving locks of golden brown.

The chestnut leaves die off to red,
And maple leaves in yellow die;
The holly leaves in brown lie dead,
And bramble brown and grey will lie.

But she lay dead as white 's a sheet;
She lay as white as flour of wheat;
And she was folded all in white,
To rise an angel ever bright.

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER XLI.

MEANWHILE in Madame Brunot's house the anxious hours were slowly passing, and the poor invalid, worn out by the suspense, had fallen asleep at last, leaving Mrs. Parry free to quit her bed-side and come into the room where Mary Trevelyan still sat at the window. She was looking out at the calm clear sky, which now was bathed in all the glory of a beautiful sunset, and she was thinking of John Pemberton's wistful gaze towards it when he told her how his spirit longed for the presence of his Lord.

"He will always be happy," thought Mary, "whether he lives or dies, for his heart is already in heaven," and then her thoughts turned, as they ever did, to her poor Bertrand, and to mournful speculations as to where, even in that moment, he might be.

Mrs. Parry, meanwhile, was walking restlessly about the room, feeling more and more anxious as to the fate of the missing child.

There had been a succession of sharp quick shots heard not very far from the house a short time before; but cannonading and firing of all kinds was so continually going on around them, that it had scarcely attracted their attention at all. Suddenly, however, the door opened, and Valerie burst in, bareheaded, with her long hair tangled in confusion on her shoulders, her dress stained and torn, and her face convulsed with passionate weeping.

"Oh Mary! oh nurse Parry!" she exclaimed; "my Mr. Pemberton! my poor Mr. Pemberton! What shall I do? oh! what shall I do?" and, sobbing, almost shrieking, she rushed to Mary, who had risen, trembling, and hid her face against her, while she clung to her hands.

"What is it, Valerie? dear child, try and tell us!" said Mary. "Where is Mr. Pemberton?"

"Lying on the pavement. Oh, he cannot speak to me; they shot at him, and he fell! They were trying to kill me, and he came between me and the guns! he did it to save me! Oh my Mr. Pemberton! I want him to get up and speak to me!"

Mrs. Parry uttered a cry of dismay, but Mary, white and calm, laid her hand on her arm.

"Do you not hear Madame Brunot calling? she has been awakened, and is alarmed; go and tell her Valerie is safe."

Mrs. Parry obeyed, and then Mary made the child drink some wine and water, and when her gasping sobs had a little subsided, she said to her, "Now, Valerie, try and describe to me exactly the spot where Mr. Pemberton is lying; I am going to him at once."

"I will go with you and show you: I want to go to him, my dear, dear Mr. Pemberton!"

"But will it be safe for you? who was it hurt Mr. Pemberton and tried to kill you?"

"The soldiers, because I had helped Herr Klein; but they have gone away. Some people came out of their houses when the shots were fired, and they said the men had killed an Englishman, and the English ambassador would be angry, and then the soldiers all ran away, and took no more notice of me; and I want to go to my poor Mr. Pemberton; I am not afraid."

"We will go there at once, dear child," said Mary, hastening to quit the room before Mrs. Parry, whom she had purposely sent away, should come to exclaim against the idea of her going out in her weak state of convalescence. She threw a scarf lightly over her head, took Valerie by the hand, and stole down the stairs and out into the street.

It was a soft lovely evening, calm and peaceful; the western horizon seemed flooded still with liquid gold, while already the shadows were deepening on the earth.

The excited child drew Mary on more quickly almost than her feeble feet could carry her, but they had not far to go.

It had been impossible for John Pemberton to bring Valerie home without passing by the ruined house whence Klein had escaped; and there, it seemed, the vindictive soldiers had actually kept watch to intercept the poor child, whom they chose to believe could reveal to them some Prussian plot of treachery. Possibly they might hardly have meant to compass her death, but, as she afterwards told Mary, the moment she came up to the ruined house half a dozen of them rushed out from behind its broken walls, where they had been in ambush, and pounced upon her with shouts of triumph, but instantly Pemberton's strong hands had torn her out of their grasp, and he held her safe sheltered within his arm while he confronted her foes. Then had ensued a terrible struggle, of which Valerie was never able to give any distinct account. Mary was now about to learn what had been its fatal result. She saw, as they advanced, a group of persons standing in a circle on the pavement, at a short distance from the ruins, among whom she recognised one of the English gentlemen associated with the Society for the Relief of the Sick and Wounded, and several officials from the police-station. They made way for her as she came near, and then she saw that on which they had been gazing. John Pemberton lay stretched out on the



(*Drawn by* WILLIAM SMALL.)

"Valerie burst in, bareheaded."—*p.* 680.

stones, his calm face upturned to the sunset sky, whose glory fell upon it with a soft pure light. His dark eyes were fixed on the blue depths above his head with an intense full-orbed gaze, that seemed pregnant with meaning, and his pale lips were illuminated with a bright and joyful smile, such as they had seldom worn in his days of life and energy; yet, radiant and peaceful as was his countenance, it bore the unmistakable stamp of that great change which gives a solemn grandeur even to the features of the child who has passed through the mystery of death. It was so few hours, however, since Mary had seen him full of animation and spirit, that it seemed almost impossible for her to believe he had already been finally severed from all the conditions of humanity. She stood watching him for a few minutes in silence, and then looked round appealingly to the Englishman.

"Is he really quite gone?" she whispered.

"Quite," he answered, sorrowfully; "he must have died instantaneously; he is shot through the heart. His little messenger Pierron, who was hovering near him, as usual, saw the deed done, and came at once to summon me. I hurried here as fast as a carriage could bring me; but I saw at once that no human aid could avail him. I can do no more now than arrange for his removal, and afterwards for his interment, which, in the present state of the city, cannot be long delayed."

"Let him be brought to our home," said Mary—"to Madame Brunot's—till you are obliged to take him away; we have a right to ask it, for he was our truest friend."

And so it was arranged. In a room on the ground-floor of their house he lay that night and part of the next day, where Mary and Valerie went continually to kiss the kind hands that could labour for his fellow-creatures no more, and to lay bunches of snowdrops and violets on his quiet breast, while the little children played round his bier, fearless of the gentle presence that was only associated in their mind with thoughts of love and tenderness.

At noon on the following day he was borne forth, and taken to a sunny corner of the vast realm of the dead at Père la Chaise.

Mrs. Parry could not leave the invalid, who had been greatly shaken by the terrible events of the previous day; so Mary Trevelyan and Valerie alone stood side by side, and saw the earth heaped over the heart that had been so pure and true. When at last they turned away, leaving no trace of the noble, faithful friend, save one little additional mound among the thousands that are gathered there, little Valerie burst into a fit of uncontrolled weeping, while Mary walked, calm and silent, by her side. After a time the child looked up into the fair tranquil face, and said, half indignantly, "Are you not sorry to leave him all alone in that strange place, Mary?"

"Dear, I cannot grieve for him," she answered, gently; "for I know that he has gained his heart's desire. Though we have laid his body down alone in a foreign country, his happy spirit is safe in his native land of paradise."

"But he will never speak to us again, or help us as he used to do."

"No, Valerie; and I well know what we have all lost in him. I cannot think how we are to go on without his protecting care. But would it not be very selfish to wish him back in this sad world, away from the blessed home where he has found his Lord, because on earth he can labour for us no more?"

"I will try not to fret, if it is selfish," said Valerie; "but I shall miss him, oh so much!"

And poor Mary, glad as she was for his sake that his longing wish was granted, could echo that lament with all her heart. Who, in truth, could miss his generous help as she would, who had depended on him alone for sympathy and succour in that which was the very life of her life?

Since the second disappearance of Bertrand Lisle, which had been followed by the total absence of any tidings of him, every one but Mary herself believed that he must have succumbed to the fever from which he was suffering, especially after his exposure to the cold of that winter's night; but she never faltered in her conviction that, had he died, she would have known it in the innermost depths of her spirit, by the powerful instinct of her own faithful love.

All the time that she lay helpless on her sick-bed she knew that John Pemberton had persistently sought for him, in obedience to her wishes, though without the least hope that any good could result from it; and now she was well aware that there was no one left but herself on earth who either could or would take up the quest.

Yes, she stood alone—alone, with her constancy to that one love; but her heart only grew the stronger on his behalf from the sense that all others had forsaken him; if he were alive at all, it was certain that he must be in Paris; and if in Paris in its present state, it was equally certain that he must be in pain and suffering; therefore, as she passed out from the gate of Père la Chaise, and left her only helper in his quiet grave, she took the solemn resolution that she would devote all the strength and power which yet remained in her weakened frame to ascertain the fate of Bertrand Lisle, and bring him succour, if it could yet avail him.

CHAPTER XLII.

Mary Trevelyan's first step in her difficult undertaking was to visit in succession the various hospitals of Paris, all of which had ambulances attached to them for the succour of the wounded; and one and all were filled to overflowing. It would not be easy to describe how much it cost Mary, with her peculiarly retiring and quiet nature, to go thus alone

from place to place, searching the ranks of the sick for the one face she so pined to see. But, in the disorganised state of the capital, there was nothing remarkable in a young girl presenting herself, either at the barracks or on the ramparts, in search of a missing friend; and thither Mary fully meant to go, at least to make inquiries, if her search through the hospitals proved of no avail.

Nearly a week was thus occupied in going from one scene of suffering to another, and still she found not a trace of her lost love to cheer her in her painful pilgrimage. At last she came, in the course of her search, to the hospital of Notre Dame de Pitié, where she had herself worked so long in the early part of the siege; and here she was brightened by the warm welcome which her little friend Marthe bestowed upon her the moment she saw her.

"Ah, Mademoiselle Marie!" she exclaimed; "I have so often wished for you, and wondered why you did not come back to us. I thought perhaps you had gone home to paradise; for you are a little saint, you know! Where have you been?"

"I have been very ill, dear Marthe, and in great trouble, or I would have come to see you."

"Ah! you do look ill—so thin and pale; but, for that matter, we shall all soon be walking skeletons, if this terrible siege goes on much longer. We live on corn and rice, and have very little else to give even our patients, now we have eaten up all our cats."

"What! even the pretty tabby that you were so fond of?" said Mary, with a sad smile. "Surely, you did not arrive at making her serve for your dinner?"

"Ah, but I did! She was a charming cat, and most caressing in her ways; but I ate her myself, my dear friend. I am stout, and I require nourishment." And, truth to tell, Marthe's appearance strongly conveyed the impression that either the cats or some other condiments had nourished her frame very satisfactorily. "Are you coming to work with us again, my dear?" she continued.

"Some day, perhaps, I may," answered Mary; "but for the present I must devote myself entirely to the search for a friend of mine who has been missing some weeks. I fear he is lying ill somewhere; and I thought he might have been brought to your ambulance."

"Come and see," exclaimed Marthe, catching her by the hand, and drawing her on to the sheds where the sick were lying; and once more she made her sad inspection from bed to bed, but with the usual result: Bertrand Lisle was not amongst the sufferers there. Mary felt more than usually desponding when she found that it was so; for this was the last hospital on her list, and even her strong faith in her own sympathetic instincts could not altogether save her from the terrible misgiving that she should never find her Bertrand, unless she could look through the graves in Père la Chaise or Montmartre. This thought brought silent tears to her eyes, as she sat down to rest for a few minutes on a seat in the courtyard, and her distress was quickly noticed by the shrewd Marthe.

"Tell me all about him, my dear child," she said, taking a seat beside Mary; "and perhaps I shall be able to help you. Who and what was he? and how did he disappear?"

Mary was thankful to catch at any advice or assistance that could be given her; and she at once told the quick-witted little woman all the circumstances of Bertrand's stay in Paris, so far as she knew them, and of his flight, under the pressure of a sudden shock, from the Church of the Trinity.

"You mean that he was quite delirious when he made his way into the streets that night?" asked Marthe.

"Yes, quite; there could be no doubt of it. He was in high fever, and had been light-headed through the day."

"Then, tell me, have you sought him at the Salpetrière?" said the nun.

"No," said Mary, eagerly; "I did not know anything about it. Is it a hospital?"

"At the present moment it is, because they have an ambulance attached to the institution, like the rest of us; but at ordinary times it is simply a refuge for the aged and the poor, and also—mark this—for the insane. It seems to me more than likely that whoever met your poor friend wandering about that night in a state of delirium would conclude he was insane, and consign him at once to the Salpetrière. Probably the police took him there."

"Oh, Marthe, let me go!" exclaimed Mary, starting to her feet; "I feel sure you are right; I believe I shall find him at last. Oh, how can I thank you enough!"

Mary was moved quite out of her usual calmness, and seemed hardly to know what she was saying, as, with trembling hands, she tried to tie on her hat, and hastened to the gate.

"Well, well!" said Marthe, with a comical smile, "it seems these quiet English people can excite themselves sometimes. This monsieur will not come back to life for nothing, if he is found."

But Mary was too much agitated to heed her playful sarcasm. She had quickly embraced the good woman in French fashion, on both cheeks, and was already at the outer entrance, telling Pierron, whom she had enlisted in her service, and who was waiting for her there, to call a cab for her as quickly as possible. She was soon driving away, while Marthe waved her adieux; and Mary went on with a glow of hope at her heart, which she felt had at last a foundation in reason. At length she had reached the outer lodge of the vast building, the Salpetrière, which shelters within its walls hundreds of those who are suffering from almost every form

of earthly misery. The porter admitted her, but she found, as she had expected, that it would be necessary for her to see the director before she could ascertain if any one answering to the description of Bertrand Lisle had been admitted into the institution. She had to wait some time before he was at liberty, and she walked up and down the gravel walk in front of the door, looking up with longing eyes at the stout old walls. At last the tedious delay was over, and she was ushered into the director's room. He soon became interested in her simple quiet account of the long search for Bertrand Lisle; and the hope she now felt that he might have found shelter in the Salpetrière, and the unmistakable emotion and anxiety which showed itself even through her self-controlled manner, touched the business-like official so much that he was ready to spare no pains to ascertain if indeed the friend she sought was numbered among the thousand inmates of this hospitable refuge.

"I am nearly sure that we have had such a case as you describe," he said; "but I can ascertain on referring to our books. I am not certain that he is still with us."

Mary's heart almost ceased to beat. Could it be that she was about to lose the trace of him once again, when she had seemed so near success? She sat white and breathless, but still as ever, while the director ran his finger down column after column of the official book. Suddenly he clapped his hands.

"Ah! here we have him, I do believe." And he read out from the page: "No. 724; officer; brought by the police; supposed to be insane; found to be suffering from brain fever; attended by Dr. Cruvilliers for eight weeks; convalescent; gives his name as Bertrand de L'Isle, but speaks with a British accent, and looks like an Englishman.

"Look at this case, monsieur," said the director to the doctor, pointing to the entry in the book—"what can you tell this lady about it? is the patient still here?"

"Yes; he has quite recovered from his attack of brain fever, but it has left a weakness of the lower limbs which renders him perfectly helpless for the present, though it is a mere temporary result of his illness. I have kept him here because he seemed to have no friends to whom he could go; and in the present miserable state of Paris he is likely to get better nourishment with us than he could elsewhere; but a change would do him good; he is very melancholy."

"Perhaps the visit of this lady will make an improvement in that respect," said the director, glancing with a smile at Mary, who had started to her feet, and was standing with heaving chest and tremulous lips, and eyes full of joyous light. "Will you conduct her to him at once, monsieur?" he added.

"Willingly," said the doctor. "This way, mademoiselle." And with quick, short steps he hastened on down a long passage; while she followed, hardly able to bear the tumultuous throbbing of her heart in its intense thankfulness.

"Monsieur de L'Isle is not able to walk," said the doctor, "but I have had him carried into a small private garden we have for our own use, where he can enjoy the air and sunshine undisturbed by the other patients. It is here you will find him," he continued, opening a door in the corridor, which led out into a small enclosure; "but I will not intrude upon your happy meeting, mademoiselle." And standing aside to let Mary pass out, he made her an elaborate bow, closed the door behind her, and departed. Mary advanced a few steps, and then caught hold of the branch of a tree to support herself, as the strong tide of feeling swept over her, and made her trembling knees bend under her.

Bertrand was reclining in a wheel-chair, with his face turned in the opposite direction from where she stood; he was gazing at the flight of a bird that was winging its way high up over the smoke of the cannonading, as if it sought to leave the beleaguered city far behind it. The wistful sadness of his look seemed to show how gladly he too would have escaped from the spot to which his weakness confined him; but although he was pale and thin, and the sunny brightness of his face seemed dimmed, there was little change in the familiar countenance which had haunted Mary's thoughts by night and day for so many dreary months. She stood there trembling, seized with a sudden timidity. Now that the goal of all her hopes was won, perhaps Bertrand would not wish to see her, she thought; he did not love her; he had left her for Lurline. Though Lurline was false, it did not make herself more dear; might he not mistake her motive in seeking him? The courage failed her altogether to move a step nearer to him. How long she might have stood there it were hard to say; but fortunately the bird which Bertrand was watching soared finally out of sight. He lowered his gaze, and slowly turned his head; then his eyes fell on the slight graceful figure, the sweet fair face, with its tender, touching expression, so wistful and yet so timid, and instantly there flashed into his look a rapture which was unmistakable, even to her trembling heart. He uttered her name with a cry of joy, and, forgetting his helplessness, he made an effort to start from his chair and rush to her, but his limbs failed him, he sunk back into it again, and could only stretch out his arm, exclaiming, "Oh Mary, Mary, my darling! come to me! can it be possible, is it your very self?"

Then she went to his side, and, as he seized her hands, and clasped them in his own, he let his head fall down upon them, and she heard him murmuring words of thanksgiving to the compassionate God, who had let him look upon her face again.

(To be continued.)

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. SECOND SERIES. No. 7. CHRIST WALKING ON THE SEA.

Chapter to be read—Matt. xiv. (part of).

INTRODUCTION. Our last lesson on a miracle saw Christ healing the nobleman's son. Where was it? Christ again in the neighbourhood of Capernaum. Which disciples lived there? What was their occupation? Was now going to show these fishermen His power over the sea, that their faith in Him might be strengthened.

I. CHRIST ON THE MOUNTAIN. (Read 22, 23). What great miracle had Christ just worked? for how many people? After seeing this great miracle they began to think—What a wonderful man this is! He can provide food for a vast number; He will do for our king; so they began to think of keeping Him by force (John vi. 15). How could He escape from them? does not wish to entangle the disciples in a tumult, so sends them to the boat—probably Peter's—while He dismissed the crowd. How had He escaped violence once before at Nazareth (Luke iv. 30)? so now, in some quiet dignified way, parts from them, and ascends the mountain. Why does He go there? Has had a long day with large crowds; has healed a great many sick, fed them, taught them. Surely He will now seek rest! What does He want first? prayer, communion with God, rest and refreshment for the soul before the body. Picture the Saviour amid evening mists slowly climbing the hill, watching disciples in boat in the distance, then kneeling down in some sheltered spot, communing with God. What lessons can we learn? (1) *Thought for others.* The disciples sent out of reach of disturbance. Christ thought of Himself last. How different to many children! but true love "seeketh not her own" (1 Cor. xiii. 5). (2) *The privilege of prayer.* Most children pray as a duty; how many value it, love it? Christ loved prayer because loved God. So with all; if realise God as a Father who delights in His children, will then love Him, and love to pour out hearts in prayer. Remind how often read of prayer in open air—Isaac in the fields (Gen. xxiv. 63), Peter on house-top (Acts x. 9), Paul by river-side (Acts xvi. 13)—so all may commune with God in quiet moments, in walks, intervals of business, &c.

II. CHRIST ON THE SEA. (Read 24—33). Now turn to disciples. Had started late; but skilful fishermen, accustomed to Lake of Galilee, would expect soon to row across to other side; but now wind has changed; no longer favourable; obliged to get out long oars (Mark vi. 48); still make no way; waves high, dashing over sides, boat taking in water; all the while where is Jesus? watching them, never losing sight, waits till have exhausted all efforts, then goes to them; at what o'clock? From Mark xiv. 35 show the four night watches: this then between 3.0 A.M. and 6.0 A.M., same as "the morning." How do they feel? cannot wonder at any person's fear at seeing a disembodied spirit; we should feel same fear; but how was their fear removed? they knew His voice, as Mary at the tomb (John xx. 16). What did He say? They had had too many proofs of His power and love to doubt any more; it was their Lord; they needed no more.

III. CHRIST SAVING PETER. Which disciple wanted to go on the water? Had seen Christ cause the fishes to collect for him on this same sea (Luke v. 8), will He let him now walk on the sea as He does? What was the answer? Picture the fisherman getting over the sides of the deck, holding by the ropes; now starting on his walk over the waves to where Jesus stands; the Saviour calmly watching him; he walks bravely on a few steps, with eye on Saviour; now sees large wave coming; heart shrinks, faith fails; begins to sink; still has faith left to cry for help. Was such a cry ever in vain? How soon does Christ help him? Gives gentle rebuke, but strong help. Now the two together climb over the sides of the boat, and are welcomed by their friends. What happened to the sea at once? and what did all in the ship do? Yes, when He multiplied the loaves they wished to make Him King, now worship Him as God

PRACTICAL LESSONS. Christ's presence inspires (1) *Joy.* As soon as He called to them and they realised His presence, were of "good cheer." So after Resurrection, in the upper room disciples were glad (John xx. 20). So with us all. If know Christ as *our* Saviour, *our* Friend, must fill us with joy—joy of pardon, of quiet conscience, &c. Do we feel this joy? Christ's presence also inspires (2) *Confidence.* Peter safe as long as looked to Jesus. So with all, even children; waves of care and trouble come to all; must not look too much at them—*i.e.*, not be too much troubled by them—must earnestly and steadfastly look to Christ, and then will be safe. His presence also inspires (3) *Worship.* Who worshipped Him as a baby when they saw Him? (Mat. ii. 11). So when we realise His presence shall give Him worship of heart and not merely of lips, and so be prepared for eternal worship of heaven.

Questions to be answered.

1. Why did Christ go on the mountain? Give other instances of open-air prayer.
2. What lessons does His conduct teach us?
3. Describe Christ's walking on the sea.
4. Describe Peter's walking on the sea.
5. Why did Peter fail?
6. What three lessons may we learn?

TWO-EDGED PROVERBS.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A., AUTHOR OF "THE 'I WILLS' OF THE PSALMS," "THE FEET OF JESUS," ETC.

"A STITCH IN TIME SAVES NINE."—II.

LOOK at this mother trying with all her might and main to get this boy to obey her; she scolds him and coaxes him; she gets his father to whack him; and gives him an occasional box on the ears on her own account. On yet a little farther and see the schoolmaster giving him the cane, and everything else that may get some good into him or out of him. Yet farther, see him doing mischief by his insubordination amongst his fellow clerks, until the head of the firm gets rid of him, and he is thrown upon the world afresh. Follow him on, until you see him perhaps a blackleg or something even worse. All the tattered rags of humanity thus out at elbows, with its world-time gone, and probably its other world-eternity gone too, are so many outcomes of this truth, the thousand wanted stitches because a very few were not put in in time. Yes, if that mother had put in her stitch of loving authority when her present disgrace was a sweet curly-headed cherry-lipped infant of three or four, she might have lived to have seen him a man amongst men, a man before God; and she might have pillowed her dying head, as she gave up her last breath, upon his loving heart. You dreaded, poor foolish mother, the few pricks—it may be the one prick of the needle—and now, if you set to work with a crowbar, willing to rend your son in pieces if only you could re-compound him into a "man" again, it is too late; this ruin has been under your hand.

Neat little housewife just started in the suburbs with Alfonso—the dream of your life, just the very man you always hoped might take a fancy to you—there he is; and now that you have him, what are you going to do with him? Stitch him, dear little lady, be always ready to put in the needed stitch at the right time, and in the right place, and you will do well in married life. Never wait to put nine stitches in Alfonso, the dreamed-of one; for Alfonso is not as you saw him once in a dream, an angel with pointed wings, and the feathers all smoothed down with bandoline. No, Alfonso is human! and his flesh and blood will bear one stitch far better than nine; indeed, while you are putting the ninth into him, he may run very rusty, and the bandolined feathers may all stand up straight like those on the poll of a vicious cockatoo with which I was unhappily once acquainted; those erected feathers meant, "make ready, present, fire!" all in one breath; and then, down swooped his head and snap went his jaws, and every finger for itself, for woe betide the one it caught.

Ah yes! one sweet look, dear Madeline, will keep Alfonso all right; but nine sweet ones will not perhaps win him back, if he should unhappily prove himself human by the easy and undeniable process of going into the sulks. One stitch in the collar of the angel's shirt, one in the toe of his socks, one word at the outset of married life, with the cook to tell her that the angel cannot and will not eat his meat underdone, and Alfonso is rescued from ever trying to get into a club, or being extravagant in buying new socks whenever a little hole is seen in one he has. One stitch will keep Alfonso right to-day, nine may be wasted on him to-morrow; you may put him in a sewing machine, either hand or treadle; you may fell, and quilt, and whip, and tuck, and cross-stitch him as you like, Alfonso has become unstitchable, and that for ever.

Madeline give Alfonso the stitch in time, and Alfonso, start married life with a needle too; and should you ever attain to the West End, and drive a pair, and sit down sixteen to dinner three times a week, believe me you will say never were you happier than in the little house in the suburbs, when you each gave the other a timely stitch, so that no rents split up your little home, no leprosy broke out in its walls; no shreds and tatters of old happiness were wind-blown about your house and its back-yard; but by dint of giving each other the needed stitch in time, Alfonso is still as near an angel as any man can be who weighs fourteen stone and has an eight-inch beard, and Madeline, who has not been weighed lately, and now wears a neat little cap, is as near the sylph of former days, and is still as much the dream of Alfonso's life, as any woman under such circumstances can be.

But my proverb is two-edged, and sharp in truth it is on that terrible edge wherewith it cuts into those things which appertain to another life.

Take the highest of all things, the soul's great union with its Lord, the yielding up of ourselves to Him when we hear the tale of His great love, and comprehend in some degree the needs of our own great woe. If we throw ourselves upon Him at once, receiving His offers, and coming out as His disciples, our soul's sufferings will be as nothing, compared to what they must be if we put off this great salvation, and are aroused to our need of it again, and then seek the Lord. Far be it from us to say that He may not then be found,

but the past will have told on us, and we may expect that we shall be encompassed with a host of self-reproaches, and doubts as to whether we shall be received now; and temptations will gather more thickly round us than they did before, and the habit of doing without Christ will have hardened upon us, and more than nine times over will probably be our souls' hard strife.

In education, in acquiring character, in checking the evils of our own hearts, the early effort will save a world of after work.

And why should we not make it? Let not the very smallness of what has to be done in many instances be the fatal hindrance. Let us not have it said to us, "If the prophet had told thee to do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it?" Let us not, as the common saying is, lose the ship for a halfpennyworth of tar.

Let us look at the long "nine" of endeavouring to bring back a child from the way of evil.

Let as look at the long "nine" of our own after conflict with evil, to conquer the rooted habit of wrong-doing.

Let us ponder the hard discipline which may lie before us, brought upon ourselves, if we will not do at once what must be done, unless things are to go from bad to worse.

Let us ponder, too, how cause and effect are linking themselves together for a long long future.

Let us remember, too, that God himself points out to us the one in order that we may escape the nine; and then let us look all things straight in the face, and do at once whatever has to be done, believing and acting in the belief of the good old proverb that, "a stitch in time saves nine."

SURLY BOB.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER VI.—A CASE FOR THE HOSPITAL.

AND as, all through the night, Johnnie lay awake, unable to sleep for the pain, which seemed to grow worse and worse, so that he could scarcely help moaning at times, Bob alternately murmured words of encouragement, such as, "Cheer up, old fellow, it'll be better presently!" or hissed out between his teeth threatening speeches, such as, "Won't I just pay him out, and thrash him so as he'll learn to take care what he's about next time! Won't I teach him as I've got a pair of fists, and know how to use 'em, too!"

"Oh, don't Bob!" pleaded Johnnie, "don't be angry!"

"Can't help it," muttered Bob.

"But teacher says we can ask Jesus, and He'll help us to do what's right. Oh, Bob, do let us ask Him to help us to forgive Tom Lane and everybody! Will you promise, Bob, as you won't do him any harm—not fight him, or anything?"

Johnnie's tones were so earnest and entreating, that Bob at length yielded so far as to say "he'd see about it."

"But won't you promise, Bob?"

"No; 'cause I mightn't be able to help laying hands on him," returned the other shortly, and Johnnie was forced to be content.

It seemed a long night to the poor little fellow, who was wakeful and restless, whilst, as usual, he shivered from cold, which, severe everywhere, was doubly felt in the comfortless quarters which the two boys inhabited. Bob put his coat over him, and, as he had done the night before, wrapped the slight coverings as much as possible about him, and then lay with his arm around him. But when morning came Johnnie seemed so worn out, and looked so ill, that Bob formed a sudden resolve, which was nothing less than to go for the doctor.

His aunt's indifference to Johnnie's hurts on the previous day had deeply offended him, for he did not stay to reflect that his short answers had led her to suppose it was nothing more than an ordinary tumble, such as boys are daily meeting with.

Therefore, after telling Johnnie that he should soon be back, he went out, shutting the door, as usual, carefully behind him.

He intended to "bolt"—to use his own expression—through the kitchen, so that no one might question or detain him; but unfortunately, in pushing open the back door in his usual rough manner, he upset a pail of water standing near. Mrs. Saunders, mop in hand, was engaged in washing the brick floor—for whatever her faults might be she certainly possessed the virtue of cleanliness—and as her temper was not of the sweetest, and, moreover as the noise and clatter of the falling pail awoke the baby, who instantly began to cry and yell lustily, this accident of Bob's aroused her anger.

In no gentle tones she exclaimed, "Now, then, you young good-for-nothing, what are you going to do next, I'd like to know! You're always after something or other you oughtn't to; I never saw a lad like you! There just you go and pick up that pail, and fill it again with water," she continued, at the same time closing and setting her back against the door leading to the street, through which she perceived Bob meant to make a dart.

Thus baffled he sullenly obeyed her order, thinking that afterwards he should be at liberty to depart,

but Mrs. Saunders still kept her position before the door.

"Let me pass, will you!" he said gruffly and abruptly.

"Not I, for I know you're up to no good!" returned Mrs. Saunders; "what do you want to go out for?"

Bob declined answering her question; only repeated his former demand to be allowed to pass.

"Not till I know what you're a-going to do. You're after some piece of mischief or other, I'll be bound; for you ain't generally in such a hurry to be running out. It's work enough most mornings to get you lazy fellows up at all, as I know to my cost. So tell me what you are a-going to do."

But Bob remained silent. He could not tell his aunt his errand, as she would, he thought, be certain to forbid it, and say Johnnie wasn't ill, or, at least, that she could doctor him well enough herself. And to give some false reason, or say anything not true, was a thing which Bob, with all his faults, would not stoop to do. So he maintained a dogged silence.

How long the contest would have lasted it is impossible to say, for certainly Bob's obstinacy was sufficient to tire out the most patient and determined of natures, had not the baby, whose cries had been increasing in violence all this time, been suddenly seized with such a fit of coughing, that Mrs. Saunders was forced to quit her post to go and take up her child. Whereupon Bob, availing himself of the opportunity, opened the door, and rushed out of the cottage.

Mr. Hill, the parish doctor, was a kind-hearted man, who made it a point of conscience not to neglect any of his poor patients; and as, when Bob reached his door, he was just on the point of starting to pay an early visit to some one in that neighbourhood, he said he would accompany the lad, and look in upon his little brother in passing.

Most fortunately for him, at the moment when they reached the cottage, Mrs. Saunders had gone up-stairs with the baby in her arms, to call Sam and Bill, who had a habit of sleeping so long and so soundly in the mornings, that nothing but repeated calls and shakes and even scoldings could arouse them.

So, meantime, Bob, after giving a cautious peep around to make sure all was safe, slipped through the house, and, followed by the doctor, made his way out to little Johnnie. Then he breathed more freely. He had gained his object: and if his aunt did meet Mr. Hill on his way out he should not mind then, for the doctor would have seen Johnnie, and would be sure to tell her that he was really ill, and must be kindly treated.

Mr. Hill made a careful examination of the little fellow, and then sat down on the one chair the room boasted, whilst he asked several questions of the lads

"I must see your aunt," said Mr. Hill, rising and turning to Bob;" for I think this will be a case for the hospital, and it might be better to move him there at once. For he will require long and careful nursing; and that he could have better there than here. But you needn't look so dismayed, my little fellow," he added, noticing the blank expression of Johnnie's face; "they'll be very kind to you there."

"Oh, sir, don't take me away from Bob! Oh, please don't! I couldn't go and leave him."

And the tears streamed down the child's cheeks; whilst Bob, whose face had melted into tenderness for the moment, abruptly turned his back upon them, and stood looking out through the little window. But Mr. Hill had seen that sudden change of expression, and glanced at him with curiosity, as if he had found an interesting study in the lad.

Then turning to the younger boy, he spoke a few cheering words to him in a reassuring tone; after which he prepared to take his leave.

(*To be continued.*)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

268. What peculiar ceremony was performed by Moses in the consecration of Aaron and his sons to the office of the priesthood?

269. Quote a passage in which the angels are said to be "*fellow servants*" with mankind.

270. Which of St. Paul's fellow-workers does he say "was sick nigh unto death?"

271. Quote a passage which shows that certain exceptions were made in the ceremonial law of Moses, connected with the keeping of the Feast of the Passover.

272. What was the object of St. Paul in starting on his second missionary tour?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 656.

257. "As the appearance of the *bow* that is in the cloud in the day of rain" (Ezekiel i. 28). "And there was a *rainbow* round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald" (Rev. iv. 3). "And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven clothed with a cloud and a *rainbow* was upon his head" (Rev. x. 1).

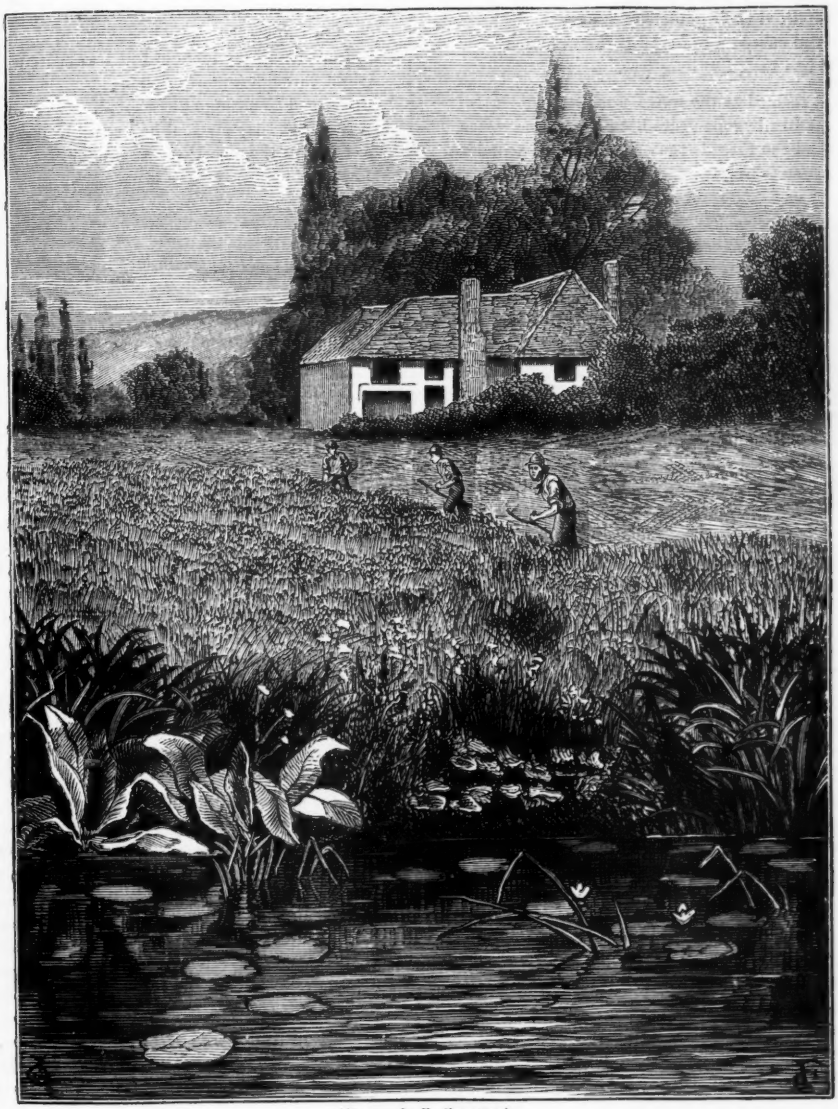
258. "For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them" (Acts vii. 25).

259. The Emims (Deut. ii. 11).

260. Forty years; and it ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the Land of Canaan (Exodus xvi. 35, and Joshua v. 12).

261. When he took upon himself the vow of a Nazarite, and went into the Temple to fulfil the same, according to the law (Numbers vi. 2—21, and Acts xxi. 23—27).

262. To show where Nebuchadnezzar would set up his throne in his conquest of Egypt, which the prophet then foretold (Jeremiah xliii. 9, 10).



(*Drawn by* F. CARLESS.)

WEAVING.

I STROLLED by a deep flowing river
On a golden-flushed August day,
And a web I began a-weaving
From the glory that round me lay;
The sun was shining above me,
The river sparkled below,
And the song it sang I remembered
As one I had heard long ago.

The reapers were busy a-reaping;
The corn fell in hillocks of gold;
Forth sounded a long silent music
In the chant that the reapers trolled:
The water-lilies a-floating,
Uplifted their goblets of snow,
And offered a draught of the nectar
I had tasted so long ago.

It seemed as the web I was weaving
Had in bygone years been begun,
And the threads that then snapped asunder
I was taking up one by one.
I could not tell where was the joining,
There seemed neither break nor seam;
The pattern was just as I planned it
In the days of my early dream.

'Twas as if the life I had dreamed of,
Though I knew it not, had been mine,
And unwitting my footsteps had wandered
Aright through a power divine;
All seemed so strange yet so real,
In the light that my soul had caught,
As I saw in the web I was weaving
How woof and warp were inwrought.

JULIA GODDARD.

THE TRIPLETS OF THE BIBLE.

BY THE REV. J. HILES HITCHENS, AUTHOR OF "THE FURNACE," "THE FACE OF THE KING," ETC.

VII.—THE THREE BURDENS.

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord."—PSALM lv. 22.
"Bear ye one another's burdens."—GAL. vi. 2.
"For every man shall bear his own burden."—GAL. vi. 5.

THE three passages now under consideration have been regarded as contradictory. Man is called on to cast his burden on God, and yet is told he must bear his own burden. Man is directed to bear his brother's burden, whilst he is informed that each must carry his own. On looking carefully at these texts, we shall, however, find no contradiction whatever. The words refer each to a different burden, as the study of the contexts will prove. In the first passage there is the burden of conscious need; in the second, the burden of human sympathy; and in the third, the burden of personal responsibility.

The words "Cast thy burden upon the Lord" were addressed by David to his own soul. He was accustomed frequently to preach to himself, and hence his Psalms are such powerful homilies to others. When he employed these words he was depressed by the prevalence of wickedness around him, and was overwhelmed by the hypocrisy, treachery, and rebellion to which he was subjected. His heart was sorely troubled, and his own inability to deliver him from his anxieties became painfully manifest. Under such circumstances of sorrow it was that he rebuked and encouraged his own heart by saying, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord." On other occasions the royal bard thus addressed his soul, and the language he then employed will serve to throw a light upon the text before us. In the 37th Psalm his utterances are most suggestive. He there counsels, "Trust in the Lord," "Rest in the Lord," and patient waiting for the Lord, whilst he adds, "Commit thy way unto the Lord." Very clearly, then, the burden which the shepherd-king would have cast upon the Lord is the burden of anxious care, the burden of crushing sorrow, the burden of conscious need.

Now, every man has a burden. They whose circumstances appear so prosperous, and whose characters appear so sunny, are not strangers to some care, that, acid-like, eats into the very life. Every heart knoweth its own bitterness, and not infrequently there is a bitterness in the heart with which no stranger and scarcely any friend can intermeddle. With some the burden may take the form of physical weakness or disease, and, consistently with God's present dealings, they cannot reasonably expect exemption whilst life on earth may last. With others the burden may be one of disappointment—the intentions which have been cherished for years have been frustrated in a day, and the hopes that promised so fairly have vanished like a dream. With others the burden is one of reverse and loss—the speculation which was deemed so safe and honest has proved an utter failure, impoverishing the family, and plunging them into distress. With others, again, the burden is one of domestic solicitude—the son who left the parental roof, with excellent advice and earnest benedictions, has proved a fruitful source of pain and anxiety; or the dear daughter, whose presence is a light in the home circle, is smitten with a fatal disease, her rosy cheek is blanched, her bright eye is dimmed, and her familiar voice is hushed. With others, again, the burden is one of bereavement—death has entered the home so full of merriment and mutual love; the mother's lips are sealed, the father's forehead is bedewed for the grave, the babe snatched from the warm caresses of the parent, the fluttering of some fond heart is stopped, and all the happiness of the home is eclipsed. Where none of these burdens press

upon the spirits, then regrets in relation to the past, and fears pertaining to the future, with numerous daily worries incident on the callings of life, beget swarms of cares which scare the midnight pillow, and turn the melodies of day into wearisome discord.

But whatever may be the nature of the burden, it is the privilege and duty of the Christian man to cast it entirely upon God. *He* is able to bear it, and has promised either to remove it or sustain us under it. This, alas! we too frequently forget. We act as men enamoured of our sorrows and anxieties, as men who are never happier than when surrounded by a legion of threatening foes, or as men left orphan-like in the world to struggle and endure unaided. Many a time we might have shaken ourselves from the dust of the earth, and soared with light heart into the region of peace and freedom when we have been cleaving to the earth which hinders us. It has been well said, "Men do not avail themselves of the riches of God's grace; they love to nurse their cares, and seem as uneasy without some fret as an old friar would be without his hair girdle. They are commanded to cast their cares upon the Lord, but even when they attempt it, they do not fail to catch them up again, and think it meritorious to walk burdened. They take God's ticket to heaven, and then put their baggage on their shoulders and tramp—tramp the whole way there afoot." Oh, why should it be so with us! Why should we deny ourselves the strength that is so freely laid at our disposal by our Heavenly Father? Why should we remain in a state of hesitation, a state of intermittent rest, a state of partial bondage, when all the while we have the promises of God that He will sustain us? We want to realise more fully that there is a loving, wise, powerful, and present Friend, who knows all our circumstances and who wants to do all for us if we but commit all into His hands. He does not ask us to struggle with and stagger under the burden as long as we can, and then, when we are prostrate with exhaustion, leave it with Him. No; He begs us put the load at His feet at once—lay it upon Him entirely, and trust ourselves to His infinite and unerring grace.

The *second* passage—"Bear ye one another's burdens"—is a call to mutual sympathy. It embraces, we believe, three aspects of Christian duty, namely, patience with a brother's infirmities, relief of a brother's necessities, and interest in a brother's spiritual prosperity.

To exercise patience towards our fellow-creature in his infirmity, though often difficult, is nevertheless a duty. There are few of us who do not occasionally, if not frequently, meet with those whose advanced years or nervous physical and mental debility render them unfit for the eager race of life. Their presence indeed may sometimes be a hindrance to us, and their peculiarities a source of irritation; but we should remember that the hoary head, or the enfeebled powers, plead irresistibly for our sympathy. By the memory of the days when the stricken one was an active and able-bodied servant of his generation, by the recollection of the fact that the days are coming when we shall be as he is or worse, by the thought that no man, be he ever so weak and dependent, fails to be a teacher, and above all, by the knowledge of the forbearance of the Infinite Mind with all our frailties, we are called upon to "bear one another's burdens." Let not the irritable disposition be permitted to assert itself. Let not a hasty or harsh word soil the lip. Let not anger distort the countenance. Let not murmuring disturb our peace. But let us rather feel God has laid his burden upon our friend, and *we* must help to bear it.

To relieve a brother's necessities is unquestionably a Christian obligation. While nothing is more offensive than cold insensibility to a brother's care, nothing is more captivating than the compassion which brings a man with reverend mien to the home of sorrow, and keeps him bravely at his brother's side in every hour of distress. Such tender interest conforms us to the likeness of Him who is portrayed as the "Father of Mercies and the God of all comfort." Such compassion was inculcated by Him who went about doing good, and healing all manner of diseases. Such mercy was taught by the apostles, who urge us to "weep with those who weep," and who represent the human family as one body, asserting that "the members should have the same care one of another; and whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it." We look to the religion of Jesus to foster this compassionate regard. We expect that He who came to beget "good-will among men" will have followers who shall be moved with quick-thoughted sympathy. We feel scandalised, misrepresented, injured, whenever we see a man called by the most blessed of all names looking on a brother's woe, walking through a fellow-man's Gethsemane with a cold eye, a callous heart, and a clenched fist. Following Him whose tender compassion embraced all classes and conditions of men the world over, it surely becomes our duty and privilege to burst the barriers to our heart's charity, and embrace all the brotherhood of humanity in the arms of our sympathy. We shall understand that the apostle draws no limitations when he says, "Bear ye *one another's* burdens." Thoughts of country, class, creed, or connections, are not to circumscribe our kindly efforts. Sorrow and compassion are to kiss each other, wherever in the world's highway they meet. Blessed is the man who obeys this inspired counsel! Content-

ment and profound gratitude are begotten in his breast. The blessing of him who is ready to perish is his portion. The smile of the God of all consolation lights up his surroundings. Thus his tribulations become dwarfed—

> "For he who meditates on other's woe,
> Shall in that meditation lose his own."

And then closely allied to these obligations is another, that of seeking the spiritual well-being of those about us. Whilst true religion is pre-eminently a personal thing, it was never designed to shut up its possessor in the isolated region of selfishness. Whilst it teaches us to say, "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?" it never directs us to ask, "Am I my brother's keeper?" In the days of Christ's earthly ministrations there were very many who were wholly unable of themselves to go to Jesus and obtain cure. Some were paralysed, others were stricken with diseases which confined them to their chambers, whilst others were beyond the reach of human aid—dead. Notwithstanding these disadvantages and disasters, the friends or relatives went to Jesus on their behalf. A father interceded for his daughter, a centurion for his slave, and sisters for their brother. They all were rewarded by glorious and gladdening success. Health and life and happiness resulted. The affectionate interest we feel in the spiritual weal of those known to us should certainly not be less. Whilst it is true that every man may and can seek and find Christ, yet the supplications of others may aid him in his search.

But there is a third burden referred to in the last passage—"For every man must bear his own burden"—the burden of *individual responsibility*. This is by no means an optional burden: it is not one we can take up or put down at our pleasure; it is not one that any friend can help us carry; it is not one we can roll upon God and thus feel quit of it; it is a life-long and an abiding burden. From the moment our moral sense is capable of detecting the difference between good and evil, from that moment are we individually responsible to the great Heart-Searcher. This idea of personal accountability lies at the very basis of society. Let the fatalist say what he may, the consciousness of transgression and the apprehension of retribution lie too deep in the heart of each man to be removed by disputation. In *this* life man is made to feel his responsibility. Here an injudicious or sinful act brings in its train painful consequences, whilst noble, pure, and honest conduct, as a rule, is productive of precious fruits. But there is another state of being—a state in which every man must give an account of his stewardship; a state in which the master and the servant, the sovereign and the subject, must come face to face with the unerring Judge; a state in which there must be a personal examination and a personal award. "We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ." Then every man must bear his own burden. There can be no escape for any. *Now*, you may quit a position among men where the light of criticism beats too fiercely upon you. *Now*, you may leave a home, or a situation, or a neighbourhood, where your conduct and character are too well known for your present comfort. You may go elsewhere, and live for a time among strangers, who do not every day bring you to account for the past. But *then*, when the judgment-seat is occupied by Him of Nazareth, and the books are opened, there can be no escape. Excuse will not be admitted, and proxy will nowhere be found. You may imagine that because the sin which lies at your door was committed in conjunction with others, that hence your burden of responsibility is lightened. Be not deceived. The crime *was* committed, and you aided or connived at its committal. You must bear your burden as if you *alone* committed it, just as when a commercial firm now fails, *each* partner can be held responsible for the entire loss. That the burdens men shall bear at the last will vary cannot, I think, be doubted. "The servant who knew his Lord's will and prepared not himself, neither did according to His will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." Here, in our courts of judicature, there is often but one law, which is applied to a large number of varying offences. But at the final judgment the law will suit the crime, and the punishment will be measured out in accurate proportion to the position, powers, and guilt. There will be no partialities, no mistakes. The man who has not believed in Jesus, let his virtues be what they may, will be condemned as a castaway for that final impenitence. I have seen in the royal mint a curiously-constructed machine for determining whether the sovereigns are of full weight. As one by one the coin passes into the balance, the machine, with quick but unerring precision, casts all those that are light on one side, and all that are standard weight upon the other. So with unquestionable certainty and justice will all who fulfil not the Lord's demands be driven from His presence. The workmanship in the sovereign may be exquisitely accomplished, but its condemnation is secured by its want of weight. So the culture of the mental and moral faculties in a man may be most admirable, but his doom is sealed by his coming short of this heaven-appointed standard. "He that believeth on the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved: he that believeth not shall be condemned.

This last burden of personal accountability is afforded by the apostle as a reason why we should now bear the burden of mutual sympathy. He exhorts us to fulfil the law of Christ, that law of love which Jesus propounded as one of the two upon which hang all the law and prophets, that law of Christ which teaches us to love our neighbours as ourselves. He counsels us to cultivate obedience to the law of Christian charity and mutual sympathy, because by so doing as Christians we shall prepare ourselves for the hour coming when every man shall bear his own burden, and receive according to the deeds done in the body. Then, in that solemn hour, mutual sympathy shall be so regarded that the cup of cold water given to a disciple for Christ's sake shall enhance our reward. As, then, you desire elevated honours and increased joys in the world to come, as you wish to be signally accepted before the assembled multitude, as you would desire to have your name proclaimed with credit before the angelic throng, *now* cast the burden of your sin, sorrow, and infirmity upon the Lord, sympathisingly bear the burden of your brother's sorrow and need, and live in the anticipation of the time when every man shall bear his own burden.

"ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."

BY THOMAS ARCHER.

HEALING THE SICK—(*concluded*).

KING WILLIAM IV. succeeded George IV. as the patron of this free hospital, and one of the earliest manifestations of the interest of our Queen in public charitable institutions was the expressed desire of her Majesty to maintain the support which it had hitherto received, and to confer upon it the name of the *Royal* Free Hospital.

It need scarcely be said that the late Duke of Sussex took a very strong interest in this charity, and at his death it was determined to erect a new wing, to be called "the Sussex" wing. This work was completed in 1856; and in 1863, by the aid of a zealous and indefatigable chairman of the committee, above £5,000 was raised by special appeal for the purpose of buying the freehold of the entire building, so that it is now, in every sense, a free hospital, with a noble history of suffering relieved, of the sick healed, the deserted reclaimed, the sinful succoured, and those that were ready to perish snatched from the jaws of death. Since the foundation of the modest house in Hatton Garden in 1828 above a million and a half of poor sick and destitute patients have obtained relief, and the average of poor patients received within its wards is now 1,500 annually, while 45,000 out-patients resort thither from all parts of London. The relief thus afforded costs some £8,000 a year, and this large sum has to be provided by appeals to the public for those contributions by which alone the continued effort can be sustained. Standing here within the "Moore" ward, so called after the energetic chairman before referred to, I cannot think of any appeal that should be more successful in securing public sympathy than these two statements:—First, that many of the inmates have been immediately received on their own application; and secondly, that bearing in mind the sad story which is, as it were, the story of the foundation of the hospital, this ward is occupied by women, many of them are persons of education and refinement, who yet would have no asylum if they had not been received within these sheltering walls, others may be poor, ignorant, and perhaps even degraded, but divine charity is large enough to recognise in these the very need which such an effort is intended to alleviate. Here at least is a peaceful retreat, where in quiet reflection, in grateful recognition of mercies yet within reach, in the sound of pitying voices, and the touch of sympathetic hands, the weary may find rest, the throes of pain may be alleviated.

Here are the two fundamental rules of the hospital, and they form what one might call a double-barrelled appeal not to be easily turned aside:—

IN-DOOR PATIENTS.	OUT-DOOR PATIENTS.
Foreigners, strangers, and others, in sickness or disease, having neither friends nor homes, are admitted to the Wards of this Hospital on their own application, so far as the means of the charity will permit.	All sick and diseased persons, having no other means of obtaining relief, may attend at this Hospital every day at Two o'clock, when they will receive Medical and Surgical Advice and Medicine free.

Even while I read the latter announcement the out-patients are assembling in the waiting-room, on the right of the quadrangle; the dispenser, in his repository of drugs, surrounded by bottles, jars, drawers, and all the appliances for making up medicines, has set his assistants to work, and is himself ready to begin the afternoon's duty; the consulting-physician of the day has just taken his seat in one plain barely-furnished apartment, the consulting-surgeon in another, while the resident house-surgeon has completed his first inspection of in-patients, and is ready with particulars of new cases. These rooms, where patients assemble, and

doctors consult, are on the right of the pleasant quadrangle, with its large centre oval garden plot, containing a double ring of trees; and here also is the reception room for "accidents" and urgent cases—a very suggestive room, with styptics, immediate remedies, and prompt appliances ready to hand, but like all the rest of the official portion of the building, very plain and practical, with evidence of there being little time to regard mere ease or ornament, and of a disregard of anything which is not associated with the work that has to be done. It is the same with other apartments, where it is obvious that no unnecessary expenditure is incurred for mere official show. The business of the place is to heal by means of food, of rest, and of medicine, and there, on the left of the quadrangle, a flight of steps leads downwards to a wide area, where, in the kitchens, the domestic servants are busy clearing up, after serving the eighty-eight rations which have been issued for dinner—rations of fish, flesh, and fowl, or those "special diets" which are taken under medical direction. There is something about this kitchen, the store-rooms, and offices, with the steps leading thereto; and the cat sitting blinking in the sun, which irresistibly reminds me of the heights of Dover and some portion of the barrack building there; the old military look of the place clings to this Gray's Inn Road establishment still, and the visitor misses the wonderful appliances and mechanical adaptations of some more modern institutions, not even lifts to convey the dinners to the wards being possible in such an edifice. There is some compensating comfort in noting, however, that the nursing staff is so organised as to secure personal attention to the patients, and that the arrangements are touchingly homely, not only in regard to the simple furniture, the few pictures and engravings, and the little collection of books that are to be found in the wards, but also in the matter of sympathetic, motherly, and sisterly help, which is less ceremonious, but not less truly loving, than is to be found in some places of higher pretensions.

Here, on the ground floor, the twenty-two beds of the men's severe accident ward are always full, and some of the cases are pitiable, including maiming by machinery, railway accidents, or injury in the streets. The "Marsden Ward," adjoining, is devoted to injuries of a less serious kind, so that there many of the patients can help themselves. In the women's accident ward there are three or four children, one of whom, a pretty chubby-faced little girl of five years old, has not yet got over her astonishment at having been run over by a cab the day before yesterday, picked up and brought into this great room where most of the people are in bed, only to hear that she is more frightened than hurt, and is to go home to-morrow. There are some other little creatures, however, suffering from very awkward accidents, and they seem to be petted and made much of, just as they are in the women's sick ward above, where a delicate-faced intelligent girl, herself improving greatly under prompt treatment for an early stage of phthisis, is delighted to have a little companion to tea with her at her bed-side, the child being allowed to sit up in a chair, and the pair of invalids being evidently on delightfully friendly terms. There is a lower ward, with half a dozen little beds devoted solely to children, who are, I think, all suffering from some form of disease of the joints. Alas! this class of disease comes of foul dwellings, of impure or stinted food, of want of fresh air and water; and it brings a pang to one's heart to note the smiling little faces, the bright beaming eyes, the pretty engaging grateful ways of some of these little ones, and yet to know how long a time it must be before the results of the evil conditions of their lives will be remedied at the present rate of procedure; how difficult a problem it is to provide decent dwellings for the poor, in a city where neighbourhoods like that which we have just traversed have grown like fungi, and cannot be uprooted without pain and loss, which social reformers shrink from inflicting. Thinking of this, and of all that I have seen in this Royal Free Hospital, I am glad to carry away from it the picture of this child's ward and its two young nurses, though I could wish that the walls of that and all the other wards were a little brighter with more pictures, that a fresh supply of books might soon be sent to replenish the library, and that the flowers, that are so eagerly accepted to deck the tables of those poor sick rooms, and carry thither a sense of freshness, colour, and beauty, may come from the gardens and greenhouses of those who can spare of their abundance. To keep the eighty-eight beds full requires constant dependence on public contributions, and yet when we think of the work that is going on here, not the eighty-eight only, but the whole number of 102 should be ready for applicants, who would, even then, be far too numerous to be received at once in a hospital, which, with a royal freedom of well-doing, sets an example that might be hopefully followed by other and wealthier charities for healing the sick.

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER XLIII.

"I DO wish so much Mary had not gone back to the hospital; I miss her every moment!"

The speaker was Valerie Brunot, who was seated on a stool by the side of Bertrand Lisle, as he reclined in an easy-chair in her mother's house. It was the second day after his joyful meeting with Mary Trevelyan at the Salpetrière.

When his first agitation and delight at her unexpected appearance had subsided, and she had briefly explained to him how it was that she, whom he believed to be safe in England, had passed the whole time of the siege in Paris, she at once proposed that he should leave the refuge, which was associated in his mind with so much suffering, and take up his abode at Madame Brunot's, where Mrs. Parry would, she hoped, soon be able to nurse him into health. The doctor entirely approved of this plan. He had felt for some time past that his patient was not likely to get well unless he were roused out of the state of morbid melancholy into which he had fallen; and Bertrand caught at the idea most joyfully, and showed such feverish impatience to carry it out at once, that it was at last arranged he should accompany Mary home that same day.

To him it was like a return to life and home and happiness to find himself once more under the same roof with Mary Trevelyan; and as he lay that first night on the sofa, resting from the fatigue of the transit, and watched her gentle movements while she ministered to his comfort, the whole circumstances of his severance from her seemed to him like a bad dream, from which he had awakened to find himself once more in the pure light of day. The discovery of Laura Wyndham's falsehood and treachery had produced in him a revulsion of feeling towards her which did not fall short of absolute loathing and contempt. He was a just and honourable man, and the selfish intrigues and systematic deceit with which she had won her ends in his own case, completely revolted him. Her letter had suddenly revealed her character to him in its true light, as clearly as if he had been able to read into her soul; for although his fancy had been caught by her peculiar charm of manner and appearance, he would neither have felt, or imagined that he felt, anything like real love for her, had she not so thoroughly persuaded him of her own attachment and uncontrolled devotion to himself. The idea that she had abandoned to him her whole heart, with such an unreserved surrender that she could not even try to hide it, drew out all the tenderness of his nature, and made him, half unwillingly, return her an answering affection. And now he saw the truth. Not only had she never loved him, and been basely false in all her dealings with him, solely for her own selfish interests, but she was so incapable of a high and pure affection that she had not shrunk from entering into the most holy of bonds with a man of whose character and antecedents she knew nothing, simply because a marriage with him would gratify her worldly ambition.

When Bertrand Lisle, after thinking over Laura Brant's letter again, during his convalescence at the Salpetrière, thoroughly realised that she, who had solemnly engaged herself to him, was already, even then, the wife of another man, he was conscious, first of intense thankfulness that he had been saved the misery of an alliance with such a woman, and next, of the clear conviction that, however completely Laura had deceived him into the belief that she loved him, he had no less effectually deceived himself on the score of his supposed attachment to her; for the plain fact was, that after the first indignant sense of wrong and betrayal which the knowledge of her faithlessness had produced—and which was sufficient, in his weak state, to overthrow the balance of his mind—had passed away, the truth dawned upon him that, so far from being distressed at her loss, he was immensely relieved to find himself suddenly freed from all entanglement with her. The spell of her false fascination was broken; and he knew that his enthralment had never been love, even when he believed her worthy of it. He shook himself free of all thought of her now, with a hearty good will, a strong sense of compassion for Mr. Brant, and a great deal of vexation with himself for having been so easily taken in.

Gradually, as the weeks of his tedious recovery passed on in loneliness and weakness, an inexpressible longing rose within him to see once more the sweet face that had awakened the first pure affection of his youth, to hear again the low soft voice that had never spoken to him but in words of truth and tenderness; and the love, never wholly destroyed, even in the days of his greatest delusion, which he had always felt for Mary Trevelyan, revived with a force and intensity such as it had never known before; perhaps it took possession of him all the more powerfully now because it had so little hope to sustain it.

There was one respect in which the poisonous influence of Laura's falsehoods still worked with baneful effect in Bertrand's mind; not only had she to some extent persuaded him that the peculiar quiet-

ness of Mary's manner was caused by her cold apathetic nature, but she had deeply impressed him with the fear that if ever Mary consented to marry him, it would be from no affection to himself, but solely from the desire to carry out his father's wishes.

From the first moment when he saw her again at the Salpetrière he laboured anxiously to discover what her real feelings were towards himself; but as yet her extreme reserve had quite baffled him. He spoke to her of Lurline's treachery and of his own thankfulness at having been awakened from his delusions respecting her in no measured terms on the first night of his arrival at Madame Brunot's, but Mary had listened in silence, and when his vehement expressions of disgust at Laura's selfishness and deceit almost compelled her to speak, she merely said, gently, "Laura's conduct is quite incomprehensible to me."

He had little opportunity of speaking to her after that first evening, for so soon as it was settled that he was to take up his abode in Madame Brunot's house, Mary Trevelyan determined that she would not herself remain in it. She had the greatest dread of his imagining, now that he was once more free, that she herself laid any claim to his affection, either in consequence of his father's wish, or from the fact of that unhappy avowal of her love to him, which it was possible he might have known through Mr. Lisle; and it seemed to her best, both for herself and him, that she should quietly withdraw from his society, and leave him to the very efficient care of Nurse Parry.

She had told Bertrand of John Pemberton's long search for him, which had been terminated by so glorious a death; but she gave him no hint that it had been undertaken at her request; and when on the following day she went back to the hospital as volunteer nurse, she said not a word to him of her long absence from it, for which he was in fact responsible. Bertrand concluded, therefore, that she was only resuming her ordinary course of life, which his arrival had interrupted for a single day; and so it was that Valerie's remark considerably surprised him.

"You cannot have learnt to miss her so very much, when she has only been with you one day," he said to the child, in answer.

"One day!" said Valerie, looking up surprised; "I do not understand you, Monsieur Lisle; Mary has been with us eight weeks—ever since that terrible night when she went out to look for you in the snow."

"Went out to look for me in the snow!" exclaimed Bertrand, starting from his pillows. "Child, what do you mean? what are you talking about?"

"Don't you remember the night you were in the ambulance at the church of the Trinity?"

"I remember being there a great many nights, and a miserable time it was."

"Yes; but do you not recollect that night when you ran away?" persisted the child.

"When I ran away!" repeated Bertrand, in utter surprise, but unable to help laughing; "that is a strange accusation to bring against a soldier of France, Valerie. Who do you suppose I ran away from?"

"Why, from Mary, to be sure."

Bertrand fell back on his cushions, completely mystified. "You must be pleased to explain yourself, Miss Valerie, for I do not understand a single word you are saying."

"I think you are very stupid," said Valerie; "or perhaps being ill has put it all out of your head. Well, I will try and teach you. You know that my dear Mr. Pemberton found you in the church, do you not?"

"Yes, that I do remember; and he told me there was a letter from England for me; I got it somehow—I cannot tell in what way—and when I had read it, it made me bitterly angry, so that I believe I went into a violent rage—which no doubt you think was very wrong, little Valerie—and after that I remember nothing more till I found myself in the Salpetrière. I seemed to be for a long time in the midst of all sorts of horrible dreams, and then I woke up, and there I was among all the poor mad people. That is all I can remember; now tell me what you know."

"I understand it all quite well," said Valerie, composedly. "Mr. Pemberton told Mary you were there, and she went to nurse you; then she left you to read your letter, and went to say her prayers for you in a corner, and when she came back to take care of you she found you gone away quite; then Pierron——"

"Who is Pierron?" interrupted Bertrand.

"Pierron is an extremely naughty boy, whom I love very much, because he loved my dear Mr. Pemberton. He had been eating your cake and chocolate, so he knew what had happened; and he told Mary that when you had read your letter you got very wild, and did not know what you were saying, and then you ran right away from her out of the church."

"And then what did Mary do?" said Bertrand, eagerly.

"She did what nearly killed her," said Valerie, gravely; "she went away out into the snow, to try to find you; and all night long she wandered about in the terrible cold, and never found you, for the police people had taken you to the Salpetrière, though she did not know it. So then in the morning she came back to the church, to see if you had returned, and she met Mr. Pemberton, and when he told her you were not to be found, she fell down at his feet like a dead person; then he brought her home to us, and she was, oh! so ill for a long time after."

Bertrand shaded his eyes with his hand; he was deeply moved.

"Surely this was love," he said to himself—"true, devoted love!"



"All needful things are by God's word secure,
The bread is promised and the water sure."—*p.* 704.

Yet when he remembered how Mary had toiled at the hospital for the wounded, as Mrs. Parry had described to him, he thought, with a heavy sigh, that she would perhaps have done as much for any strange soldier whom it had been her lot to tend.

CHAPTER XLIV.

For many minutes Bertrand pondered over the child's words before he spoke again. At last he looked up.

"Tell me more about Mary," he said to Valerie—"everything you can think of."

"Well, she was ill a long time, and when she was feverish she used to call out your name, and cry bitterly—so that Nurse Parry said it broke her heart to hear her; and before she was nearly well again she began once more to look for you, because my dear Mr. Pemberton had been killed." And Valerie began to sob as she thought of him.

But Bertrand's impatience made him somewhat unfeeling. "I know about Mr. Pemberton, my dear child, and I am very sorry; but I want to hear how Mary looked for me. Are you sure it was me she wanted to find?"

"Of course it was!" said Valerie, looking surprised; "she has been very unhappy indeed about you ever since she has been in Paris. We all saw she was dreadfully miserable, but we could not find out the reason, for Mary does not speak much, you know; so then I got my poor Mr. Pemberton to ask her, and he found it was because she thought you were lying ill or wounded somewhere, with no one to take care of you, and she begged him to look for you, because he was a man, and could go to places where she could not; and to please her he did, but he thought you were dead himself, only Mary said she was certain you were not, or she should have known it."

"How could she have known it?" asked Bertrand.

"That I do not know," said Valerie; "she seemed to think something in her own spirit would tell her. Mr. Pemberton tried hard to find you, but he never did, till that dreadful day when he was shot."

"Yes—do not speak of him," said Bertrand, hastily, as Valerie's lips again began to quiver. "After that, what did Mary do?"

"She went out every day, so weak and ill, to look for you: and in such horrible places too—in the Morgue, and the hospitals, and the Hall of the Dead at the Hôtel Dieu. She used to come back half dead herself night after night."

"Oh, Valerie! is it possible?" said Bertrand; and, brave soldier as he was, the child saw tears glistening in his eyes.

"Yes; and now that she has found you I thought she was to be so happy, and always to be sitting beside you, looking at you, and taking care of you. Instead of that, the very first thing she does is to go right away from you, and go back to live at the hospital, when we are all so fond of her here; and I think it is very provoking of her."

Bertrand was inclined to think so too. "But tell me, Valerie," he said, "do you think Mary has gone back to the hospital because I have come to live here?"

"I am quite sure of it," said the child.

"How do you know?" he asked.

"Because she said so. I went to her yesterday, and held her tight, and said I would not let her go, and begged and prayed of her to stay; and I asked her what we had done that she should desert us, and she said she should never desert us, and that she should come and see us, but that now Mr. Lisle was come to live with us she could not possibly stay."

"It looks as if she did not like me very much, does it not, Valerie?" said Bertrand, with an uneasy laugh, but watching the child's face keenly as he spoke.

"I think it does," said Valerie; "I used to think that she liked you dreadfully, more than any one else in the world; but, of course, since she told me she could not bear to stay in the house with you I have changed my mind."

Bertrand turned himself round in the chair, and buried his face in the cushions. Not another word did he speak that evening, good or bad, to any one. Valerie Brunot had certainly given him food for reflection. For many days to come that conversation filled all his heart and mind.

Little Valerie was perhaps not far wrong when she said she thought Mr. Lisle was very stupid; for, although he kept his meditations to himself, so that neither she nor any one knew the course his thoughts were taking, he was making himself very unhappy indeed under the impression that he had lost all chance of ever winning Mary Trevelyan to be his wife. It might have been expected that all he had heard of her anxiety respecting him, and the devotion and utter disregard of self, even to the jeopardy of her own life, with which she had sought him, would have sufficed to prove to him that he and none other had her whole true love; but, unfortunately, he attributed all this to her large-hearted charity, which, he knew, stopped short of no self-denial where she could benefit her fellow-creatures; while the fact that she had left Madame Brunot's house with the deliberate purpose of avoiding him appeared to him to point unmistakably to the conclusion that she wished to have nothing more to do with him. It did not surprise him that this should be the case, even if she was too truthful to have said that she loved him formerly only to please his father; for since all this unhappy episode with Laura Wyndham had taken place, he felt so utterly humiliated at having even imagined he could care for such a character as she had proved to be, that he could not

wonder if it had wholly altered Mary's opinion of him, and caused her to feel for him only as much contempt and dislike as the gentleness of her nature would allow. He could not help being aware, too, that he had not acted fairly by Mary in turning from her to another woman, when he had most distinctly led her to believe that he wished to win her to himself. Knowing, as he now did, how thoroughly false Laura had been, he thought it more than likely, as was indeed the case, that she had so misrepresented him to Mary as to cause her to set him free on the occasion when they met in the garden at Chiverley, with that generous delicacy which he now remembered in shame and regret. But even if she had in part misjudged him then, his subsequent conduct must surely have alienated her from him altogether, for it seemed but too evident that the man who could be content to ally himself for life to one so false and frivolous as Laura Wyndham must be wholly unsuited to come in contact with the pure true nature of Mary Trevelyan.

These painful thoughts rendered poor Bertrand sufficiently desponding; but there still remained to him one ground of hope, on which he was resolved to found a course of ceaseless and untiring efforts to gain even yet the priceless gift of her affection. He felt perfectly certain that whatever might be the present state of her feelings towards himself, at least she loved no one else, for he had been dear to her once. She had owned it to his father in those never-forgotten words, and he was thoroughly convinced that her steadfast unchanging character was quite incapable of turning to any new affection, even if that to which her heart had first been given had both betrayed and estranged her. He had therefore no dread of an earthly rival, but he did fear that, like John Pemberton, having proved the weakness and insufficiency of human love, she might resolve to give herself up wholly to that which, in its heavenly and eternal strength and purity, alone could certainly never fail her. If it were so, Bertrand felt it would be but a just punishment for his folly and blindness in having yielded to Laura's fascinations. But at least he was most deeply determined that it should not be his own fault if Mary were now finally lost to him; he would make it the one object of his life, at present, to draw back her pure heart to himself, and he would never consent to be separated from her any more in this world, unless her own fiat most absolutely forbade him to hope that she would ever link her fate with his.

As the days wore on, and Bertrand's health rapidly improved under the favourable influences which now surrounded him, he was thankful to find that no call of duty was likely to interfere with his purpose as regarded Mary; for the terrible siege was already at an end, and the Prussians were preparing for their triumphal entry into Paris. There was no longer any call to fight for France, so far as the foreign foe was concerned; and when, a few weeks later, the appalling reign of the Commune was brought to a close, after a dreadful and prolonged struggle, by the troops of Versailles, Bertrand was only most thankful that his physical weakness was still too great to admit of his taking any part in a conflict which compelled the soldiers of France to fight one with another, and to shed the blood of those whose nationality made them brethren.

A duty of a very different description did seem to lie before Bertrand Lisle, but it was one in which Mary's assistance would be most valuable, if only he could induce her to share his responsibilities with him—he had promised his old uncle, the Comte de L'Isle, when he left him, after the night he spent at the château, that if he survived the war he would, so soon as it was over, return to the old home of his forefathers, and take up his abode there in anticipation of its passing altogether into his own possession on the old man's death. Fain would Armand have kept him with him even then; but that was, of course, impossible, as he was on duty under the orders of the commanding officer of his regiment; and he gave his uncle an address in Paris to which he might send any communication for him; while he pledged himself to obtain his discharge from the army so soon as the establishment of peace would enable him to do so with honour. When the conclusion of the siege opened Paris once more to intercourse with the outside world, Bertrand sent to the address he had indicated to know whether any letter had arrived for him there from the Comte de L'Isle.

He was sitting alone when his messenger returned, bringing with him a letter with a deep black border, directed to the "Comte Bertrand de L'Isle." It proved to be from the notary before whom his uncle had identified him as his rightful heir, on the occasion of his visit to the château, and it contained the intelligence that the Comte Armand de L'Isle had died somewhat suddenly about a month after Bertrand had taken leave of him. He had had another stroke of paralysis, and had lingered only a few hours after it; but apparently he had experienced some sensation previously which had warned him of approaching illness, for on the morning of the day which proved to be his last, though he had risen to all appearance in his usual health, he had sent for the notary, and had charged him so soon as his death should take place to see that all the directions contained in the will he had entrusted to him were carefully executed; for which purpose he was to communicate with Bertrand de L'Isle at the address given, in Paris, and to make all arrangements for placing him at once in possession of the castle and estates.

The notary explained to Bertrand that, in the impossibility at that time of having letters conveyed into Paris, he had, with the help of the curé and one or two of the county magistrates, gone through all

the legal formalities necessary for establishing him as lord of his ancestral home and all that belonged to it, and nothing was now required but that he should come and take final possession of his fair inheritance. In conclusion, the notary briefly detailed the extent and value of the property, and the amount of the yearly rent-roll. At these last figures Bertrand looked with very great astonishment; for he had asked his uncle no questions whatever as to the revenues of the estate, and he now found that it amounted to many thousands a year more than he had imagined, and that he was about to take rank amongst the wealthiest land-owners of France.

(*To be continued.*)

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. SECOND SERIES. NO. 8. THE SABBATH.

Chapter to be read—Matthew xii. (part of)

INTRODUCTION. As this lesson is intended to teach the right observance of the Sabbath, it may be as well to commence by a few questions on the appointment of the day of rest. When was it instituted? for whom? (Gen. ii. 2, 3). How is it mentioned in the fourth commandment? The word "remember" shows it must have been observed. Remind of manna given on six days with double quantity on the sixth (Ex. xvi. 15—26), of the strict observance by the Jews, no fire to be lighted (Num. xxxv. 3), the gatherer of sticks stoned to death (Num. xv. 36), the special blessings promised to those who observe the Sabbath (Is. lvi. 6.) From all this draw the object of the Jewish observance of the Sabbath—namely (1) as a day of rest from work; (2) as a day for holy worship. Shall now see how Christ shows the true principle of the law as a rule to guide us, who are Christians.

I. THE WALK IN THE CORN-FIELDS. (Read Matt. xii. 1—9.) Picture the Saviour and the apostles on the Sabbath, in the early morning, walking through the fields, talking together of the things of the Kingdom, a party of the Pharisees near, always on the watch to catch Christ in something wrong. What do the disciples do? Perhaps been out all night fishing, and had little time for food. Were they stealing the corn? (see Deut. xxiii. 24, 25.) Just as now handfuls of corn may be gathered and eaten in passing. What did the Pharisees say? With whom did they find fault? How did Christ answer them? Read 1 Sam. xxi. 1—6 for an account of David's eating the shewbread. Explain that he and his party were fleeing for their lives from Saul, and having nothing else to eat, the priest at Nob gave them the shewbread, *i.e.*, hallowed bread set apart for the priests. And, as regards the Sabbath, what had the priests to offer up every Sabbath day in the synagogue? Killing beasts required a good deal of servile work: was this breaking the commandment? No; because Temple service required it: therefore *works of necessity* may be done. Now see the reasons given by Christ: (1) *He is greater than the Temple.* For what service were the sacrifices offered? Remind of the great veneration the Jews had for the Temple; how the charge against Christ was of saying He would destroy the Temple; against Stephen, was of blasphemy against the Temple. But who was greater than the Temple? Therefore disciples in neglecting food to attend on Christ were not wrong to gather the corn. (2) *God will have mercy* before sacrifice. Satisfying hunger is obeying a law of Nature, the strict observance of the Sabbath being a ceremonial law. For whose good was Sabbath ordained? Would starving be for man's good? Therefore, in certain cases, the strict letter of a law need not be observed. (3) *Son of Man Lord of Sabbath.* Who appointed the keeping of the day? Therefore may make alteration of the law; Sabbath made for a blessing, not a burden.

PRACTICAL. Ask what day we keep: what do we call it? Why the Lord's Day? Resurrection of Christ and Descent of Holy Ghost two reasons for observing first day, but the principle of day of rest unchanged by change of day; therefore must be kept holy; no works to be done save those of necessity.

II. THE MAN WITH WITHERED HAND. (Read 9—13.) The walk over, where did Christ and disciples go. For what purpose? What an example to us! Christ, Himself God, full of wisdom and knowledge, goes to synagogue for worship and hearing of law. Who accompanied Him? Probably whole party of disciples and Pharisees went in together. Whom did they find there? Now they begin to watch Him. So far have been silenced by Christ as to observance of Sabbath, but this another case, not a work of necessity. Is it, then, lawful to heal? How did Christ answer? See his great wisdom. He makes them answer themselves. What would they do? One sheep would not be of much consequence; surely better lose one than break a commandment; but would they leave it to die? How much is a man better than a sheep! So it *is* lawful to heal. Now notice the miracle. Christ had many ways of healing. What was the man told to do? How could he stretch it out if it was withered? In making the attempt found he had the power: but where did the power come from? Therefore shows he had faith to believe he was going to be healed, which showed itself in the act of stretching out his hand. What sort of an act was this of Christ? Therefore *works of mercy* may be done on the Sunday. How can we copy Christ's

example. Visiting sick friends, relieving others poorer than ourselves, helping those in distress, &c. Even children may do something. If done for Christ's sake, such service of love shall be accepted.

PRACTICAL LESSONS. Have now found out four principles to guide us in observing the Sabbath: (1) *A quiet walk* with good companions—only be careful does not become a merry-making. What an opportunity for speaking a few words for God. (2) *Worship in God's house.* This everywhere spoken of in Bible. (Ps. lxcv. 5, Acts xvi. 13, &c.) No Sunday complete without this. (3) *Works of necessity* may be done. Still, as far as possible, preparation of food, &c., should be done previously. (4) *Works of mercy* are lawful and proper. How thankful we should be for the day! how careful not to abuse it. How many wasted Sabbaths have we to give account for! All may be and should be earnests of eternal rest in heaven.

Questions to be answered.

1. What is the origin of the Sabbath?
2. Why was the day changed?
3. What may be learned from the walk through the corn-fields?
4. What arguments did Christ use?
5. Describe healing of man with withered hand.
6. Draw practical lessons as to the observance of the Sabbath.

SURLY BOB.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER VII.—"WILL HE FORGIVE?"

THE astonishment of Mrs. Saunders was extreme when Bob ushered the strange gentleman into the kitchen; and so soon as she understood the state of the case she cast angry threatening glances at the lad. He heeded them not, however, but leaving Mr. Hill to finish his talk with his aunt, he returned to Johnnie.

"Oh, Bob, don't let 'em take me away," cried the little fellow, as soon as he entered, "I want to 'bide here with you; and I won't grumble any more about the cold or anything else; only don't let 'em take me away!"

"But perhaps they'd make you well again ever so much quicker at the hospital," answered the other.

"But I don't want to go; they'd be all strangers there, and I shouldn't have you, Bob."

"But you'd soon make friends of 'em," returned Bob. "You ain't like me; you'd soon make 'em love you."

"Why, Bob, d' you want me to go?" asked Johnnie, in surprise. "I should have thought you'd have been lonely here, left all by yourself.

A dull aching pain in Bob's heart bore witness to the truth of Johnnie's remark; but he did not stay to dwell upon his own feelings, for he had heard the doctor saying to his aunt that the child's only chance of recovery was the care and good nursing he would receive at the hospital, and Johnnie's well-being, still more Johnnie's life, were far more precious to Bob than his own present comfort and happiness. So he stifled all longings to keep him beside him, and tried to reconcile the little brother's mind to what lay before him.

But all that day he watched over him like some one guarding a most precious treasure, and even seemed jealous of admitting his aunt when she came out to see the boy. And he would scarcely suffer her to do anything for his brother, showing plainly, in his dogged, determined manner, that he considered Johnnie as his own special property, and wished that every service rendered him should be rendered by himself.

And a very gentle nurse he proved himself to be, which seemed wonderful in one so rough and uncouth, though it showed how great is the constraining power of love—how it can master the most rugged nature, and mould it into softness and tenderness.

When the doctor came the second time he was still more decided in his opinion that the little patient must go to the hospital, and accordingly he gave an order for his admittance the following day.

"How long d'you think he'll have to bide there, sir?" Bob summoned up courage to ask.

"I can't say, my lad; but I'm afraid it may be rather a tedious affair. However, you may be sure we shall do all we can for the little fellow."

And then he went away.

The short winter's day was already fast closing in, and darkness soon stole into the small room. It seemed to Bob to creep into his heart as well, for his one little sunbeam was about to be taken away from him, and he knew not when he would return, even if he ever did, for Johnnie looked so white and ill that perhaps he was going to die instead of getting well. But that last thought was too dreadful to be pursued for a moment, and it brought such a lump in Bob's throat that he almost felt he should choke.

Johnnie had been lying silent, too tired for much talking; but now, when Bob gave a deep sigh, he seemed to guess something of what the other was feeling, and, as if wishing to comfort him, he put out his little hand, and taking Bob's, drew it to his lips, and printed a kiss upon it. This was too much for Bob; his self-command gave way, and sinking

down on his knees beside the little bed, he buried his face from sight, and gave way to a burst of tears.

This was perhaps the first time in his life that he had been so overcome; at least Johnnie could not remember ever having seen Bob cry before; but now deep sobs for the moment shook the lad's strong frame. He soon recovered himself, however, and forced down all signs of grief, whilst Johnnie contented himself with again taking Bob's hand in his.

The darkness grew deeper and deeper, but still the two remained in the same attitude—the elder one fancying, from his silence, that the younger was falling off to sleep, and so fearing to disturb him by any movement.

After a quarter of an hour or more had passed by thus, Bob was almost startled when Johnnie's voice broke the silence, saying, in a low tone,

"You'll forgive him, Bob, won't you?"

"Who?" asked Bob, his thoughts having been wandering so far that for the moment he forgot to whom Johnnie was referring.

"You know, Bob—Tom Lane. You'll do it, won't you?"

"I'll try, for your sake, as you seem to have set your heart so on it," answered the lad, after a moment's hesitation.

"Not for my sake only, Bob."

"Whose then?" asked the other, in apparent surprise.

"Jesus Christ's," replied Johnnie, in a low voice. "He's told us to forgive everybody, and you know He's looking down to see whether we do it or not, and 'twould make Him so sorry if He saw we weren't trying to please Him. 'Cause He loves us so, Bob—doesn't He? A deal better even than we love one another. So 'twould be so bad of us—wouldn't it?—to show as we did'nt care for him."

Bob did not answer; and after a pause Johnnie began again.

"I thought at first, Bob, 'twould be so dreadful to go to the hospital all alone, with nobody as I knew or loved anywhere nigh me; but just now I seemed to remember all of a sudden as I shouldn't be alone after all, 'cause Jesus would be there. So I don't seem to mind going now, except for leaving you, Bob. But I'll ask Jesus to 'bide with you too. Isn't it nice to think as He can be in every place at the same time? with you here, and with me at the hospital. Doesn't it make you happy, Bob, to think how He's always taking care of us and loving us?"

Still no answer from Bob; only a husky sound in his throat. Certainly the two brothers were very unlike each other: Bob so silent and reserved, and Johnnie seeming to find it a relief to tell out his little feelings of love or sorrow. But it was only to his brother that he thus opened his mind: to all others he perhaps was almost as shy as the elder one about revealing the secrets of his heart.

Once more silence fell upon the brothers; during which Bob sat still and motionless. What was going on in his mind meanwhile no one could say; but possibly in that silence his little brother's simple words were echoing in his heart and speaking loudly there. Possibly, at that moment, if never before, he was feeling it to be a reality that the eye of God was upon him, searching out all his thoughts and feelings. And what did he see in him! What was Johnnie's little fit of passion, which was over in a minute and so mourned for afterwards, compared to the anger and longing for revenge which had stirred within him, not only lately, but countless times before? Possibly some such thoughts as these passed through Bob's mind; but as he did not tell his feelings, it is by his actions we must judge him; and therefore we must wait and see what those were before we can know whether he ever did learn that lesson of love and forgiveness—so hard to most of us—or whether it proved too difficult for him.

CHAPTER VIII.—LESSONS LEARNT IN LONELINESS.

"You'll be able to come and see me at the hospital, won't you, Bob? The doctor said so, didn't he?"

"Aye, aye," responded Bob.

"And when you come you'll tell me what they said at Sunday school, won't you, Bob?"

"I never knows anything as they say there," answered the other.

Johnnie's face fell a little. "I should so like to know if teacher tells anything more about the Good Shepherd. And I shan't be able to go."

"Well, I'll try and listen, but I ain't like to remember much, 'cause you know I'm a stupid, that's what I am."

This little conversation was held between the brothers the next morning, before the hour of parting had arrived. One more request Johnnie had to make; and that was that Bob would take special care of his little dove, and never forget to feed or look after it. But he need scarcely have asked that; for Johnnie's little favourite already held a place in Bob's heart, partly on its own account, but chiefly because the little brother loved it so much.

At length came the separation, and Bob found himself left alone. The place had never looked so dull and cheerless, so bare and comfortless before; and as he thought of Johnnie's wan pale face, the terrible fear came back again upon him that "may-be he was a-going to die!"

He sat down on his low stool, his elbows resting on his knees, and his face buried in his hands; and thus he remained for a considerable time, whilst every now and then a sob escaped him. At length—as if he found his burden of trouble and anxiety too great to bear alone, he sank down on his knees beside the bed where Johnnie had lain, and sent up a prayer—perhaps his first real earnest one—to that heavenly Friend, whom his little brother had already learned

so to love and trust, that He would take care of him and make him well again. And as he thought of the child's words, "that Jesus would be with him in the hospital, and therefore he didn't so much mind going there," Bob's heart seemed to soften and go out in feelings of gratitude towards that unseen Friend, on Johnnie's account.

But he felt very lonely when he lay down that evening, for the first time, without his little brother beside him; and all night his dreams were of Johnnie, whilst his first waking thoughts turned to him. There was no one now to give him a kind word or look; and all day long Bob, who had always seemed to do his best, by his rough, sullen, surly ways, to make himself disliked, went about with a dull aching pain at his heart, which made him more than ever inclined to be cross and quarrelsome. Though he could not have told what he wanted, he was longing for sympathy, for a friendly glance or a soothing word; but as, instead of trying to win, he had rather seemed to repel all love save Johnnie's, so now, in his hour of need and loneliness, none came forward to show him affection or take any interest in him.

On coming out of afternoon school Bob caught sight of Tom Lane, whom he looked upon as the cause of all his trouble; and, accordingly, his first impulse was to rush after him, and give him a "regular licking," as he would have expressed it. But the next instant came the remembrance of Johnnie's words, pleading with him, and trying to make him promise to forgive Tom. And the thought that Jesus was looking down upon him at that moment, to see whether he did what was right or not, came into his mind. He had a fierce struggle with himself; his angry passions were so strong, and he was so little accustomed to do anything but yield to them, that it seemed as if they must have the mastery, and, in spite of his promise to Johnnie, he must take some revenge upon his enemy. For revenge seemed so sweet; to forego it so hard and bitter!

But just as he seemed on the point of giving way, all that his little brother had said about the Good Shepherd, and his longing that they should both belong to His fold, came back to him. "And if I don't forgive, I can't get taken in there: Johnnie 'll be inside and I left outside."

That thought decided him. He would try to forgive, whatever it cost him, and so he would let Tom Lane depart without that thrashing he had so longed to give him. Not in his own strength could he do even thus much: but when we earnestly wish to do what is right, that wish is like a prayer, and cries to God for help. And help and strength are promised to those who seek them.

Therefore Bob was enabled to come off conqueror. He turned away, and walked off homewards, having gained his first victory over his angry passions; and new, strange feelings of joy and happiness seemed to steal into his heart, and warm and comfort it.

And when he lay down to rest that night, still sorely missing his little bed-fellow, the thought of Johnnie brought back the recollection of his words, that Jesus would not only be with him at the hospital, but with Bob at home as well; and the idea of having a Friend always with him, watching over and loving him, was very sweet to poor friendless unloved Bob.

The next Sunday he went to school as usual; but when there—for the first time in the remembrance of his class—he sat quietly, read his verse properly, and listened attentively. For he had not forgotten his promise to little Johnnie, whom he hoped to see that afternoon; and he was trying hard to be able to take away something that he might tell him.

The other boys, astonished at this unwonted behaviour, tried to provoke him in various ways, but he heeded them not, his mind being too full of one subject to have room for any other. His determined nature showed itself in a new light now, for having made up his mind that he would listen and try to remember what was said, all the devices of the other lads to draw off his attention were quite in vain. He was like some rock standing firm in the midst of the waters, which dash themselves against it, but then glide off, powerless to harm or make any impression.

The lesson that day seemed as if it had been chosen on purpose for Bob, for it was all about forgiveness. And now he heard how the Lord Jesus had taught that those who would be His friends and followers must imitate His example in being loving and forgiving; and, moreover, the teacher went on to say, real forgiveness was not simply to refrain from taking revenge and seeking to do harm to those who had injured us, but meant much more than this, even that we must be ready to do kind actions and speak kind words to those very people who had so hurt and vexed us:—"But I say unto you, love your enemies; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you."

This was to go a step farther than Bob had yet gone. He had refrained from taking revenge—that had been very hard work—but now he must do more still, or, according to what his teacher said, and the words of the text he had quoted taught, he could not say he had forgiven. And if he could not forgive the little offences done against himself, how could he expect the Lord Jesus to forgive him all his great offences.

When Bob, having obtained admittance to the hospital, drew near Johnnie's bed, the latter looked up with a smile of such unmistakable pleasure at seeing him, that the nurse, who was standing near, could not help noticing it, and mentally wondered what there could be in that clumsy "lout of a fellow," as she called Bob in her own mind, to call forth such a welcome from the gentle little lad, who had

already won her heart by his patience and engaging ways.

But Bob and Johnnie knew each other better than others knew them, and they were happy in each other's company. The time went much too fast, as they talked of many things; whilst Bob, in his blundering way, tried to repeat something of what he had heard at the Sunday-school.

Johnnie, however, looked so thin and ill and wasted, that Bob, after he had left the hospital, walked along with slow steps and bent head, full of anxious doubts and fears, whilst once or twice he put up the the back of his hand to brush away some mist which had gathered before his eyes. And when he reached home, and took his place at tea among the band of noisy quarrelsome cousins, he remained, unlike his wont, subdued and silent, taking little notice of what went on around.

But when the baby from his cradle set up a lusty cry, signifying his desire of having some attention paid to him, Bob took him on his knee, and gently rocked him to and fro in an absent manner, whilst still seeming to be occupied with his own musings. The refining touch of sorrow was upon him, and beneath it the rugged nature seemed to be softening and melting. And when the baby, clasping its tiny fingers around Bob's rough ones, laughed and crowed in his face, his lips parted into a half smile, which made him look altogether different from "Surly Bob."

And when bed-time came, as he crossed the yard on his way to his lonely room, he murmured to himself in a low voice more than once, the word "forgive." *(To be continued.)*

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

273. From what passage do we learn how long St Paul lived at Ephesus?

274. Why was Joab made the captain of David's army?

275. What man in the days of the apostles tried to usurp such pre-eminence in the Church as to cast out those with whom he disagreed?

276. What two cities are mentioned as having been destroyed with Sodom and Gomorrah?

277. Mention any passage in the New Testament where reference is made to these cities.

278. By whom is Noah mentioned as a *preacher of righteousness?* Quote passage.

279. Why did not Ezra have a band of soldiers to protect him and the Jews on their journey from Babylon to Jerusalem?

280. Where in the Old Testament is mention made of an iron bedstead being used, and by whom?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 672.

263. A hundred talents of silver (2 Chron. xxv. 6).

264. "For this cause therefore have I called for you to see and speak with you, because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this *chain*" (Acts xxviii. 20).

265. When God ordered Samuel to go to Bethlehem and anoint David as king (1 Sam. xvi. 1, 2).

266. "Circumcised the eighth day of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of *Benjamin*, an Hebrew of the Hebrews" (Philipp. iii. 5.)

267. In 2 Cor. viii. 15.

"I WILL NOT FEAR."

IN my desponding eyes an endless train
Of cares and labours thickened on the plain;
Cradled in ease, unused to loom or plough,
Rough yoke of servitude, and sweating brow,
My nurslings pined and withered in my sight,
Or needy, walked the crooked paths of night.

But in the deeps a voice of sweetness said,
The saints of God look but for daily bread;
Cares on my shoulder cast, from doubt be free,
And let thy children learn to wait on me.
I listened, and a staff was in my hands,
Like his which blossomed into two great bands.*

In that sweet time, when every thorn is white,
And cuckoos sing, and hearts expect delight,
We sleep, on tiptoe for the morn, and low
The clouds hang weeping, and the north winds blow,
The bees are hived, the leaves and flowers are torn;
And the great tossing branches bend and mourn.

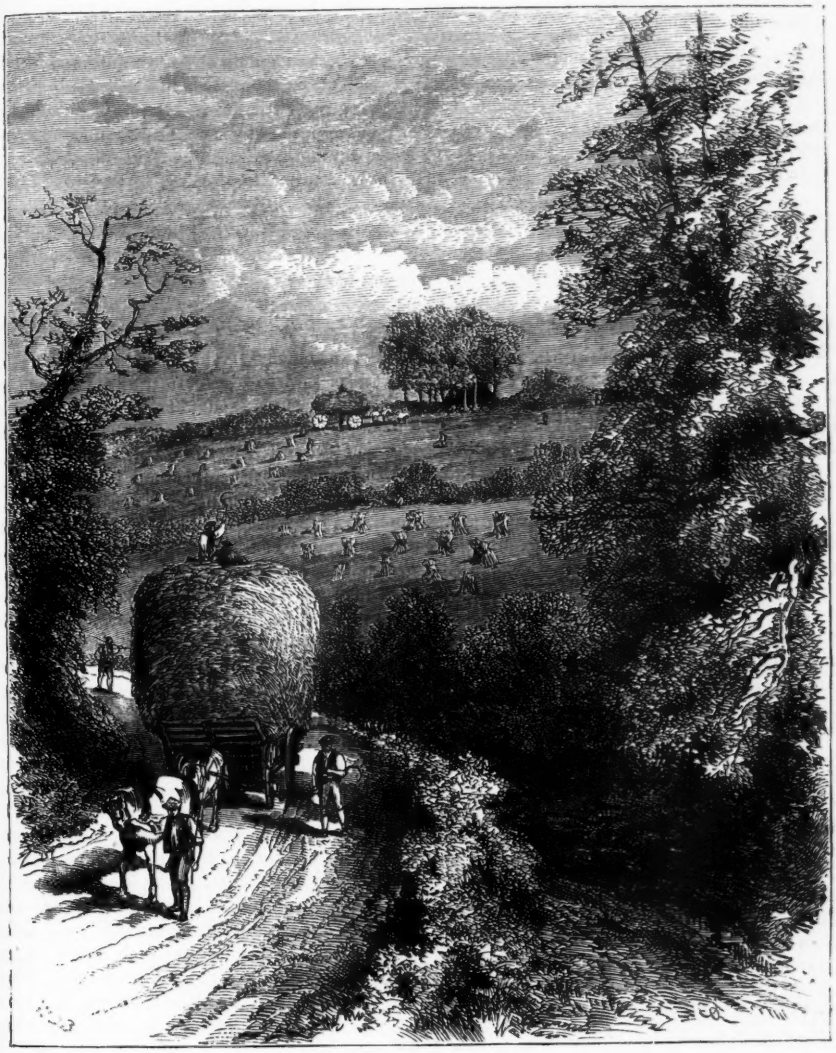
Hapless the insect who must wake and find
His one day dark with crosses so unkind;
Yet happy too, he knows no better lot,
No sunnier weather, so he murmurs not,
Spite of the dreary hours without a sun,
His life is lived, his mystic dance is done.

Some days must gloomy be, some lives o'ercast,
But murmur not, the rain will soon be past;
Let nothing move to envy or complaint,
Shake off unmanly fears, and play the saint;
All needful things are by God's word secure,
The bread is promised, and the water sure.

There is no war's alarum on the hill,
Calm are the water-floods, the land is still;
Thy sins are pardoned, Christ hath made thee whole,
Oh, where is he that can condemn thy soul!
Safe in His arms there is no evil thing,
Life has no misery, and death no sting!

G. S. OUTRAM.

* "With my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands."—GEN. xxxii. 10.



(*Drawn by* W. D. Blatchley.)

MOUNTAIN AIR.

BY ANNE BEALE.

SWEET autumn air, fresh mountain air!
Say whence thy power to banish care,
Thy gift of healing?
The heart seems bounding from its seat.
With quickened life the pulses beat,
Like joy-bells pealing.

The reaper's voice breaks forth in song,
The team draw friskily along
  The golden treasure;
Through the clear ether trills the lark,
The streamlet in its leafy dark
  Takes up the measure.

Why dwellest thou in realms unseen,
When thus thy spirit pure and keen,
  All earth embraces?
Outsearching every stagnant spring
Of sluggish life, long slumbering
  In hidden places.

Above, around us, one with thee
In universal harmony,
  Sound's waves are flowing;
The hum of insects, songs of birds,
The distant bleat of pastured herds,
  And breezes blowing.

Fresh mountain air, sweet autumn air!
Waft on thy pinions this our prayer,
  Thy virtues to inherit;
Thy rare refinement, healthy tone,
Strength, softness, buoyancy in one,
  And purity of spirit.

DAVID IN JERUSALEM.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM HANNA, D.D., LL.D.

IF the numbers given in the Book of Chronicles have been accurately recorded and transmitted, upwards of 300,000 "men of war that could keep rank came with a perfect heart to Hebron to make David king over all Israel." In this great host all the tribes were represented; the remoter (as was perhaps natural) more largely than the nearer; the tribe of Levi sending its contingent with the rest. "And they were with David three days eating and drinking." For so large a feast, so long continued, David had at hand no sufficient supply of viands. But these were amply furnished by the feasters themselves. Asses and camels, and mules and oxen, brought in from the neighbouring and fruitful districts of Issachar, and Zebulon, and Naphthali, "meat, meal, cakes of figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly." And "there was great joy in Israel," for not only were all those 300,000 one in spirit and in purpose, but "all the rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David king." Seldom has any monarch had a crown so spontaneously, unanimously, enthusiastically presented to him by the people over whom he was invited to reign. And as there were men among the offerers "that had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do" (1 Chron. xii. 32), who, we may well imagine, acted as spokesmen of the multitude upon this great occasion, it is instructive to notice upon what grounds the tender of the crown was made. (1) "Behold," said they to David, "we are thy bone and thy flesh." One can't help thinking that a distinct allusion was made and intended here to the edict issued by Moses in anticipation of a monarchy being set up: "One from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother" (Deut. xvii. 15). This requirement David fully met. (2) "Also," the tribes said to him, "In time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel." No untried man this into whose hands they would put the sceptre, no bold adventurer who, in some sudden crisis, by fortune or some brilliant deed, had been raised for the time to foremost rank among them, but one of wisdom and of courage, well tried under their late king. They pass by the period of David's persecution by that king, teeming though it did with like evidences of qualification, as one which they desire not to remember upon an occasion so auspicious. But (3) chiefly they ground their offer on David having been chosen by the Lord. "And the Lord said to thee, thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be captain over Israel."

Here, too, the Mosaic ordinance was referred to and respected: "Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose." David might well have asked the men who spake to him so, why, if they knew so well, and had known so long that the Lord had anointed him to be their king, they had for those seven years by-gone withheld from him their allegiance; but this was no time for such recrimination. David is as ready to bury in oblivion this interlude of their opposition to his claims as they are to overlook that of his persecution by Saul. At once and gratefully accepting the sacred trust, "he made a covenant with them in Hebron before the Lord; and they anointed David king over Israel, according to the word of the Lord by Samuel" (1 Chron. xi. 3). They remembered what Samuel had said and done at Saul's inauguration as their first king, and as nearly as they could they followed the precedent he had given. One striking part of this was that, "when all the people shouted and said, God save the king, then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in

a book, and laid it up before the Lord." In this we cannot doubt that Samuel had in his eye the original injunction of Moses, as to the king that the tribes in after ages might set over them. "And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests, the Levites: and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes to do them" (Deut. xvii. 18, 19). A separate copy of the law, with an appendix, drawn up by Samuel himself, embodying what he had told the people as "to the manner of the kingdom," was prepared and deposited in the hands of the Levites. This book still existed, and was now, we presume, produced, whilst Gad or Nathan acted over again the part of Samuel, and read aloud the sacred writing which defined the rights and duties of both parties in that covenant which David made with Israel.

The Hebrew monarchy was thus from the beginning grounded upon a compact between the rulers and the ruled, not simply tacit or implied, but public and formal, written and read, ratified by oath taken before the Lord. It was not an absolute but a limited and constitutional monarchy. Such kind of government has been very rare, and, save in the single instance of Israel, has always been the fruit of long and painful strugglings between those who have finally entered into such a social compact. So far, indeed, as we know, the instance now before us is not only the first, but the only one in the history of the world, in which a publicly made and publicly ratified compact between king and people, with express and articulate conditions agreed to on either part, formed at the very first the basis of the throne. In all other countries, in every age, laws and forms of government have been things of slow growth, their history ever one of progressive advance, from the confused to the orderly, from the rude to the more perfect. The history of Israel, both as to its civil code and its kingly government, exhibits a singular and solitary contrast to this. Here you have a community of untutored slaves, plunging into a wilderness without laws or government of any kind, emerging a few years afterwards with a statute-book in their hands, civil, juridical, economical, ecclesiastical, perfect in all its parts, which needed no additions or amendments, which after-dealings with it only mutilated and impaired. And here, too, you have a throne and kingdom starting up in a state so far of maturity, that the people had never afterwards to ask or exact anything of their sovereign which had not been embraced in the original covenant, nor had the king ever any duty to discharge beyond that which this covenant imposed. If the divine origin of the Jewish law and government be denied, it remains for the denier to explain the difference in this respect between the Jews and all other nations of the earth.

David's first act, as king of the combined tribes, was to shift the seat of government from Hebron to one at once more secure and more central. On the very summit of that mountain range which runs north and south through the country which lies between the Jordan and the Mediterranean, and at the distance of about a third of its whole length from its southern extremity, there is a promontory or tongue of land, separated on three sides from the neighbouring hills by deep precipitous valleys, and on the fourth connected with the general table-land of which it formed a part by a narrow neck of land. Here the Canaanites had erected the strongest of their fortresses, securely defended by nature on all sides but one, and upon that fortified so as to be apparently impregnable. Joshua had conquered and ravaged all the neighbouring country up to its very gates, but could make no impression on this stronghold. In the time of the Judges all effort of this kind was given up, and the Jebusites, its occupants, had not to dread any assault. Not even Saul, when at the head of all the combined forces of Israel, had ventured to attack it. There, for 300 years, it had stood, with its Canaanitish garrison, a virgin fortress; and it now remained the sole stronghold of that people whom the Israelities had been commissioned to eject—its very presence a reproach.

But at last it was doomed to fall. David and his troops came up from Hebron, and sat down before it. The Jebusites looked down contemptuously upon them. So secure did they feel, that they brought out their lame and their blind, and set them upon the walls, as if even such defenders were enough against any such assault as David and his men could make. To encourage his men, David held out the tempting bribe, that whosoever should be the first to climb the height and enter the fortress, should be commander-in-chief of all the forces. Hitherto this post had been held by Joab. In putting it thus into commission, and offering it to the boldest and most successful adventurer, had David a secret hope that he might be relieved from the necessity of continuing him in the office? If so, he was disappointed. Joab performed the feat, and secured the prize. The Jebusite fortress was taken. David occupied and strengthened the defence of the castle, and Joab repaired and fortified the rest of the city.

Fixed on now as the royal residence, the metropolis of the kingdom, there was yet lacking one thing to make it like other capitals. There was no house or palace for the king. Here,

however, a difficulty interposed. The Israelites were altogether deficient in the constructive arts. For forty years their forefathers had dwelt in tents. When their children invaded and conquered Palestine they found houses and walled cities and castles built, and ready to hand. Their own private dwellings coming to them in this way, they would have to keep them up, so far, at least, as to prevent them falling into decay; but among a people of such simple habits, of such purely agricultural occupations, there was little temptation to do more. They had no public buildings, no temples in towns or villages, to erect and maintain. Up to this time they had no princes or kings for whom any special residences were required. Saul never seems to have entertained the idea of having such a residence. The project comes now into David's head, when he has found so fit a place for a palace as a gentle slope within the lines of his new metropolis. But how can it be executed? Hiram, King of Tyre, relieves him of the difficulty, by sending "cedar trees and carpenters and masons, and they built David a house." The stones were at hand. The choice wood came from Lebanon, and with it those Phœnician artisans, whose mason-marks upon the stones of the still greater buildings raised upon this same height in the days of Solomon, have so recently, and in such singular manner, been brought to light. And, by this kindly intervention of a neighbouring sovereign, and this opportune providing both of workmen and of material for his house, "David perceived that the Lord had established him king over Israel," and he thanked Him, and took courage.

This courage was soon severely tried. So long as their neighbours of the hill-country were divided, and fought only with one another, the Philistines looked on unconcerned, or with a malicious gratification; but those recent events—in the great gathering at Hebron, the enthusiastic union of all the tribes, the anointing of David as king over them all, the conquest and fortification of Jerusalem, its occupation as the centre and citadel of strength for the new kingdom—at once awoke all their old jealousies, and filled them with a natural alarm. They knew with what intensity the Israelities had resented the victory over them at Gilboa: how they burned to wipe off its disgrace: how eager they would be to seize the first opportunity for doing so which this happy combination of all their strength afforded. Upon whom but upon them would the first bolt of war be hurled? In haste to anticipate it, and be themselves the first to strike the blow, they gathered their strength and rushed up along one of the valleys to Jerusalem. David was taken by surprise; unprepared to meet such an onset in the open field, he shut himself up in that stronghold which the Philistines shrank from assaulting. Here he consulted the divine oracle, which told him to go forth, and which promised him victory. The Philistines, meanwhile, exulting and incautious, had spread themselves over the fertile valley of Rephaim, and were already gathering the spoils of a fancied success. Upon them David and his men broke forth, as dammed waters do when they burst through the barrier that had been restraining them, and even as such a mass of rolling waters carries all before it in its course, so were the scattered hosts of the Philistines driven back into their own land, leaving their idols behind them. The Israelites remembered how their own ark, which they had in like manner carried into the battle-field, had been treated by these Philistines, and took now their revenge by burning the captive idols of their enemy.

This defeat was too hasty and too incomplete for the Philistines to accept it. Again they gathered up their strength, and now, in larger numbers, and with more measured steps, the invasion of the Israelitish territory was made. Again David consulted the oracle, but was warned now to avoid an instant and open attack on front, and was directed, instead, to hang upon the flank and rear of the foe, to wait behind a grove till he heard "a sound of going on the tops of the mulberry trees," and then to go out to battle. He did so, and the hosts of the Philistines were smitten from Geba to Gazer, down through the mountain passes far on into the plain; the rout so utter and complete that for years in this quarter the Israelites were at rest.

So ended the first war in which David was engaged, its result strengthening the confidence which the people had in him as their warrior-king, and directing the trust, both of king and people, to Him whose supreme rule over the nations this kingdom of Israel was intended to exhibit and extend. His higher rule David was prompt to acknowledge. "God," said he, on occasion of his first repulse of the foe, "hath broken in upon mine enemies by mine hand like the breaking forth of waters." "Go out," he was told in the second instance, "for God is gone forth before thee." He "did as God commanded him." "And the fame of David went out into all lands; and the Lord brought the fear of him upon all nations."

HOSPITAL STORIES.

IT is some time since the kind friends of the *Quiver* Cot heard anything of little Willie C., who was for so long the favoured patient. I think that what I can now tell of Willie's condition will be read with interest, though I cannot still call him a proper subject for a *Quiver* paper. I cannot write anything interesting concern-the present cot inmate, but it is by our old friend Willie's special request that I "tell all those kind people how he has been a-getting on." I will therefore simply tell how wonderfully the efforts made in the little fellow's behalf at Great Ormond Street have been (with the aid of good air, good diet, and kindness) crowned with success.

Some time ago I went into North Wales, to stay at the Rhyl Children's Convalescent Home. I had been ill and in trouble, and had been obliged to lose sight of dear Willie. To my astonishment I met him in one of the corridors, shouting in a strong voice to another boy, and stumping along bravely. I said, "Willie C., how *did* you get here?" Willie's face—still thin and with the marks of the past four or five years upon it, but with a healthy brown tinge and brightness that I had never seen before—was turned up to me, and a very merry laugh rang out as he said, "Ah, *you* didn't know I was here, but I knew *you* were coming; ain't it jolly! See me walk about! Miss —— brought me here, it's better than Brighton. Let me show you my bed; we do have larks; that's Jem, that boy. Are you going to stay here a good while? *I* am. Miss —— says I shall get quite strong some day." And then, having exhausted his breath entirely, he waited for my congratulations. I went to see his bed, and other delights—the sand-hills and holes outside the house, where he and other happy and lucky little lads could kick up their heels, and sand their clothes and hair to their heart's content, getting the most outrageous appetites ever known. The next morning I went into the children's dining-room, and from behind a huge basin of bread-and-milk I saw Willie's smiling friendly little phiz nodding away. I walked up the room. Such rows of happy faces! Small fat bundles of children, of whom it was hard to believe what nurse Lizzie said, that just so long ago he or she had been unable to sit up or walk; long slips of girls, rosy, laughing, and brown; jolly-looking boys, full of mischief, chattering of what they were going to do after breakfast; nurses hopping about blithe and busy, spoons and cups jingling, huge plates of bread, with lots of butter on it, disappearing like magic, the sweet autumn sunshine lighting up the whole scene, whiffs of fresh sea air mingling with the scent of coffee, and a running accompaniment of plashing waves. What more pleasant scene can be imagined! A far more clever pen than mine would fail to do justice to those happy breakfasts. Children of all ages go to make a family, and there they are—maidens of various ages up to twenty, merry boys, and tiny children, presided over by sweet motherly ladies, who seem to get happier as the noise increases.

A few hours after we meet again. As I wandered on the sands, with my book and stool, I was attracted by a tremendous shouting and splashing followed by much hearty laughing. I could only see a number of heads bobbing about, and the amused faces of the on-lookers. I asked a fat old lady what the excitement was, and she said, "Oh, it's the convalesing children a-bathing, bless their 'arts; it does me more good than all the sea air to see them getting stronger every day; that's the sort of 'orspital *I* approves of," and the old dame wiped her eyes, and, bestowing a blessing on "them as works it," waddled away. I often saw her afterwards peeping about the Home to get a look at the "cons" during their meals, and she never failed to be down at the bathing time; and many a fine shell box has found its way into a dirty dingy little Sheffield or Leeds back lane home through her kind little tips to the poor patients. Good old body! I wish her a happy and peaceful old age, and kind hands to help her whenever she needs help. I found that Willie wore his irons, and I suggested to him that if he continued to improve, he would perhaps be able to leave them off. He looked a little sentimental, and said nothing. The next morning early I was going up a staircase, and came upon a queer-looking group of small boys, very lightly attired, hobbling down to the "salt bath-room," singing "Old Aunt Sally" at the top of their voices. I recognised our friend as one of these oddities, and found he was carrying his irons *in his hand!* Said I, "This beats Great Ormond Street, Willie, doesn't it? "*No*," said he, "nothing can't never do that; I likes being here, and I loves Miss —— but I shouldn't love her so much if she hadn't been the Lady Superintendent at Great Ormond Street. I should like to go back there, I think; the doctors here are very kind, but they ain't like *our* doctors, of course," and then Willie went off to his salt bath. I took an early opportunity of having a regular confidential conversation with him. I explained how grateful Willie ought to have been that he could be taken in at the happy Rhyl Home, and to have got so strong. I also showed him that he could not expect to stay at Great Ormond Street always, as he would be keeping some other child from being helped. At the same time, I could but feel glad that the child should feel such love and gratitude for all his friends had done for him. He told me that two boys had been *Quiver* Cot patients, and that both had recovered and gone to Highgate, while *he* kept ill and weak, but that "he didn't mind, God knew best, and he was glad that all the *Quivers*

hadn't been so slow in getting well as he had." I also heard some amusing stories about the much-loved doctor, who had taken his case from the very first; I think Willie had treasured them for my sake, feeling sure of my enjoying them. One was, that at one time, the *Quiver* Cot patient lost appetite, and this good man tried to tempt the child to take a meal by suggesting various dainties usually irresistible among the little creatures. However, everything was rejected—eggs, watercresses, herring, all had lost their charm, even "srimps." As a last attempt the doctor suggested, "winkles!" That was the magic word! A smile and a nod came at last, and then, as Willie said with his eyes twinkling, "Mr. —— was *so* serious, he took up the diet card and wrote on it 'winkles and a pin;' wasn't it fun? Ah, he always done us good, when he came round, 'cos he made us laugh so. When I was in the Cot, a lot of the doctors got cross because I kept on stopping so long in the hospital, and one day, Mr. —— came to me, and he says, "I say, what do you think I'm going to do with you, you tiresome young monkey? You can't stop here for ever you know." And I says, "No, sir, I have been here a very long time," and so I had too. And then he says, all of a sudden, "I know, you shall go on the Christmas tree, and then the best boy can have you." Whether this solved the difficulty or not, the laugh relieved Willie's mind, and soon after his kind friend, the lady at Rhyl, visited Great Ormond Street, and carried him off to that joyful abode of fresh air, wonderful appetites, endless meals, and treats of all sorts.

I saw many amusing sights there. One great source of fun to the boys *outside* the house is a large tank, in which they fish continually. The game usually is for one boy to slip out and drop various catchable articles into the tank, unknown to the rest, and then commences the exciting sport. I watched them out of a pantry window, and the roars of laughter over each "take" were quite irresistible, and I betrayed myself by my own share of cackle. One great joy to all the children, both in the sick wards and in the "con." room, is the covered balcony that surrounds three sides of the house, a large and most commodious one. Up and down this place the tiny ones trot, while their elders sit and read, or work, and listen to one of Nurse Jane's stories. On a wet day there are games to play at, a yacht that holds three, rocks without intermission on the floor of the day-room, and noise of all sorts goes on joyfully. Bells ring unexpectedly for meals—always welcome though—and bed-time comes only too early. There is a pretty little chapel, full of low benches, where twice a day all assemble to thank and praise the good God for His kindness to His children who have passed through their suffering, and again enjoy the blessings of comparative health and strength, with no care or sorrow around them. The window of this dear little chapel is full of painted glass faces of the children of Scripture; and bright memories must remain to the patients when they go back to their poor homes and in many cases hard work, of the nice quiet prayer-time; and the hymns they learn at the Home are never forgotten. Imagine the joy of a month at Rhyl to those who never saw the sea in their lives. Down on the sands, with nothing to do but enjoy the novelty, the fresh air, and the feeling of renewed health creeping through the frame that has so lately been a sort of suffering machine only. I have watched both boys and girls pick up shells as if for their living, and then for very wantonness of enjoyment fling them away, and throw up their thin arms and shriek aloud from sheer happiness.

Once a week there is a service in the chapel, when the rector goes and questions the children, and teaches them so kindly, while the windows of the sick ward are all opened, that those in bed should also share in the pleasant and comforting service. Willie had been so well taught at Great Ormond Street, that he often was able to give an answer when all the rest were puzzled. He and many others could only sit at that time, but *now* Willie is quite a useful member of the Institution, and is actually able to be the errand-boy; and I think the doctor at Great Ormond Street would be puzzled to recognise pale Willie in that sunburnt and by no means thin boy who can now scamper about very quickly, although he is still a little lame. There is usually a good deal of fun going on among the boys—small practical jokes played off. One of the ladies, who generally went into their sleeping-room while they said their prayers, was one evening a little late, and when she went in, found the whole party sitting up solemnly in bed with paper cocked hats on. Willie was one of the ringleaders in most of the mischief. One night they all pretended to be asleep soundly when the lady went in, and she was just going to creep quietly out, thinking they were over-tired perhaps, when Willie said, "We aint really asleep;" then all the rest burst out into a laugh, not of rudeness, but downright fun, showing how different a state of mind and body they were in from what they had been but a few weeks before. I certainly never thought to see Willie C. chasing the hens about, and beaming with mischief, sending his voice on before him, and making up for the past quiet years. He is a great favourite with all the other children, as he knows many stories and hymns, and is good-natured, though quite a *boy*, up to all sorts of frolic, and as fond of getting dirty as any boy can be. Nevertheless, Willie often declared that he wanted to go back to Great Ormond Street, and belong to the "Quiver" again, and I fancy that he had been so long an invalid that he hardly liked returning to ordinary life, and being nobody in particular, merely one among the rest, although I am sure he was most thankful to be comparatively well and strong again.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. SECOND SERIES. No. 9. THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

Chapter to be read—Luke xvi. 19—31.

INTRODUCTION. What was the last lesson about? what rules did we find for the observance of Sabbath? So Christ was always trying to teach people their duty. Amongst others a good many rich people heard Him; very fond of money. Was Christ rich or poor? How was he born? Also had often nowhere to lay his head; often tried to teach people true value of money (see Luke xvi. 13, 14); cannot serve, *i.e.*, be slave of, both God and Mammon—one will be the master, both cannot be. Now speaks to Pharisees a parable to show folly of thinking only of this life, forgetting the next—called Dives (a rich man), and Lazarus.

I. THE TWO IN LIFE. (Read xvi. 19—21.) (1) *The rich man.* How is he described? Well-fed, well-dressed: no harm in these things in themselves; quite right to live according to position in society. Abraham was rich. God gave Solomon riches. Christ himself often went to feasts in rich men's houses, which he would not have done had it been wrong. What then was wrong with the rich man? Not so much what he did as what he did not do. What opportunity had the rich man of doing good? Just before his eyes every day lay the beggar; he did *not* recognise his duty; did not see in the poor man one of God's poor; but used his riches only for himself. By whom are riches given? Are they absolutely for any man's own use? Christ just before been teaching parable of Unjust Steward, to show that all must give account of stewardship. So this rich man would soon be called to account. Whom else did he forget besides the poor man? To forget God far worse: for this would have to give account. (2) *The beggar.* Describe his situation—daily carried to gate of rich man's house, laid there to enlist his sympathy, hoping if only for crumbs from his table; his wounds unwashed, licked by the dogs. What possible comfort had he in this life? But had evidently put his trust in God; cried to him (Ps. xxxiv. 6). though poor, was rich in faith (James ii. 5), and therefore an heir of glory.

II. THE TWO IN DEATH. (1) *The rich man* at last fell ill. What good would his rich food do him now, could not eat it; or his fine clothes, could not wear them? What an awful scene! A death-bed without God; can carry nothing of this world away; has no hope in the future. Picture the grand room—rich curtains, mirrors draped, hushed footsteps, doctors whispering, nurses watching; cannot keep out death, who comes to all. Then the grand funeral—carriages, nodding plumes (in our day), undertakers' men; all possible pomp to show rich a man is dead; What a mockery all seems! (2) *The beggar.* Perhaps died in street; have read of such in London; want of food, of proper clothing, necessaries of life. But who is with him in death? Angels attending near to deliver him (Ps. xxxiv. 7); carry his soul to Paradise.

III. THE TWO IN ETERNITY. (1) *The rich man.* (Read 23—31). What is his condition of body? Fearful suffering. Whom does he see afar off? What does he want to be done? for how long? Glad of only a moment's cessation of pain? Can it be done? Why not? What is between the two? Who fixed the gulf? Not God, because will have all to be saved; not the devil, who would like some to cross from Paradise to torment; who, then, fixed it? the man himself. What is it separates between man and God? Yes, sin unforgiven, makes eternal barrier. What kind of God is God? A holy God cannot look on sin; therefore no sin can enter heaven (Rev. xxi. 27); man shuts himself out. What else does the rich man suffer? What agony of mind! Cannot forget. Where does he want Lazarus to be sent? Who are to be warned? But what warning have they already got? Do they hear them? Is it likely that they will listen to any one else? But who did rise from the dead? Did the Jews hear Him? did they hear apostles who testified of Him? Remind of lessons in Acts, how the preaching of the Resurrection was greatest offence (Acts iv. 2). If will not hear God's word will not hear God's messenger. (2) *The beggar.* In rest and happiness; no more told; this quite enough; earth's pains over, heaven's glory begun; trusted in God on earth, not disappointed now.

IV. PRACTICAL LESSONS: (1) *Life the time to serve God.* Many keep putting off; plenty of time in future. How do they know? have life now, perhaps, death at hand; therefore don't delay, repent at once while is time. (2) *No pardon in the grave.* This world the only preparation; at death lot is sealed; as die, so will eternity be. (3) *The blessedness of heaven.* Let teacher dwell on this rather than on torment of hell. Lazarus, no pain, no remorse, no sorrow, nothing but eternal rest, happiness, and peace. This the lot of all God's children, whether rich as Abraham; as poor as the beggar, heaven's joys for all who love God. Is this lot ours? Make it sure now.

Questions to be answered.

1. Compare the two in life.
2. Compare the two in death.
3. Compare the two in eternity.
4. What is the great lesson of the Parable?
5. For what was the rich man condemned?
6. Draw three practical lessons.

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER XLV.

BERTRAND sat for a long time with the letter from the notary open in his hand, thinking over all that it involved for his future life. The glow of delight with which he felt that it restored him completely to his native land, showed him, better than he had ever understood it in himself before, how entirely his heart had really always been with France, even while he loved England as a second home.

Henceforth all his interests and duties would lie in the country for which he had been willing even to shed his blood; and he saw that the position he was about to assume was one which would give him great importance in the counsels of the nation, while it would afford him ample employment in the care of his tenantry and the improvements of his vast estates. If he could but get sweet Mary Trevelyan to share with him alike his burdens and his dignities, thought he, how happy he should be, making his home in the beautiful old Château de L'Isle, varied by occasional visits to Paris and to England! how well Mary would suit the position of Comtesse de L'Isle! She was such a perfect lady, and her manners were so quiet and dignified, that she would know well how to keep up the traditions of the stately courtesy which had always characterised the heads of his house; and, as he pictured her to himself receiving his guests in the grand old hall, a somewhat mischievous smile curled his lips, for it suddenly flashed upon him how completely Laura Wyndham had overreached herself when she threw him over for Mr. Brant, the wealthy merchant.

As regarded Mary, however, the state of matters was very different. He had a great suspicion that the acquisition of his new possession and dignities would tell very strongly against him in her estimation. He felt certain that he stood a much better chance of winning her if she believed him to be poor and forsaken, than if he came before her endowed with honours and riches, which were sure to bring him many friends.

Bertrand still saw her occasionally, although she was now labouring with even more than her former zeal among the sick at the hospital, for she was often sorely wanted at Madame Brunot's house as well. No news had reached them yet of the fate of the unfortunate *colporteur*; and his wife's health failed more and more, while several of the children were ailing from their insufficient nourishment: so that poor Mrs. Parry had her hands more than full, and she often sent to ask Mary to come for an hour or two to help and cheer them.

On these occasions her manner to Bertrand was always sweet and gentle, but so reserved and still that he was unable to draw any conclusion from it.

One evening, shortly after the entry of the Prussian troops into Paris Bertrand Lisle came into the little *salon* of Madame Brunot's house from his own bedroom, which was on the same floor. He had by this time so far regained the use of his limbs that he could move about from room to room, and his arm was also quite restored.

As he opened the door, and went in, he saw a sight which made him close it very gently, after he had entered the *salon*, and stand motionless, contemplating the group before him. Mary Trevelyan was seated in an easy-chair near the window, with her head laid back against the cushion, and he saw at a glance that she had fallen into the deep sleep of utter exhaustion. It was no matter of surprise, as he well knew, for she had been up the whole of the previous night, taking her turn in tending the sick, and then, instead of using the hours when Marthe took her place in seeking the rest she so much needed, she had hurried away to Madame Brunot's, to do what she could for the invalids there; but it so happened that she had not been specially required, and so she had sat down, and dropped instantly into a quiet slumber.

But she was not quite alone: little Jacques Brunot, a curly-headed boy of four years old, was seated on the arm of her chair, with his feet firmly planted on her knee. He was amusing himself by twining his fingers in the long soft curls of her dark hair, which he had drawn down from its fastenings.

The mischievous little fellow, having sufficiently entangled her hair to satisfy his fancy, began to seek for some other source of amusement; and Mary, whose little hands lay loosely on her lap, was too fast asleep to be aware of anything he did. He proceeded, therefore, to twist her watch-chain round his hands in various ways, and finally drew out the watch itself with a violent jerk. It had been slipped within her dress between two of the fastenings; and as it was thus roughly pulled from its hiding-place, it brought along with it what appeared to be a small piece of white silk, folded into a little square parcel, and secured by a ribbon. This fell out on Mary's lap, and Jacques at once pounced upon it, and before Bertrand could stop him, he had opened it and disclosed to the young man's look, irresistibly cast upon it, the carefully preserved remains of a withered white rose, with one little violet laid by its side. At that sight, significant of a love and constancy which had never



(*Drawn by* WILLIAM SMALL.)

"She often sent to ask Mary to come for an hour or two to help and cheer them."—*p.* 712.

known decay or change, the heart of him who was in truth its object leaped up in a rapture such as life had never brought to it before. Involuntarily he bowed his face on his hands, murmuring, "Oh my Mary! my Mary! she is mine indeed!" but a movement on the part of Jacques recalled him to himself; as he looked up he saw that the precious rose would suffer utter destruction if left another moment in those rough little hands, so he strode quickly and quietly up to the child, and desired him in a low stern voice to fold up the flowers again in their silken case, and replace it where he had found it. The boy looked up at the bearded man who towered over him with such authoritative looks, and felt that prompt obedience was decidedly his wisest course, however unpleasant, just when it would have been so amusing to scatter those withered leaves all about the room; so he deftly replaced the fragile rose and violets within the folds of the silk, and tied the ribbon round them; then he thrust the little packet back into its resting-place over Mary's heart, and pushed the watch between the fastenings whence he had taken it. This done, he looked up for approbation from the gentleman who was evidently so resolved to be obliged, and was going to propose to him that they should amuse themselves by raising Mary's eyelids to see how she looked while she was asleep, when he suddenly found himself, to his dismay, lifted down to the floor, and then a strong hand, that looked as if it could administer a box on the ear with singular efficacy, pointed determinately to the door, and a stern whisper ordered him to leave the room at once; so Jacques discreetly trotted away, and was by no means sorry when the formidable hand had opened the door for him and closed it behind him, leaving him standing safe, though somewhat bewildered, on the other side.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Bertrand and Mary were alone, and he stole softly back into the room, and sat down by her chair, bending his loving happy eyes on the fair spiritual face, that looked so innocent and sweet in its perfect repose; all his doubts of her perfect constancy had vanished, and he wondered how he had ever for a moment imagined her capable of change; the white rose he had given her, worn by her through all this weary time, despite his own faithlessness towards her, was a sufficient proof that she still held to the words she had spoken to his father on that memorable night, and that he was in truth her one and only love for ever. Now, then, at last he would claim her for his own.

He would wait till she awoke, so tired as she was, poor child! he must have that much patience, but not an instant longer; she should not leave the room till he had won her promise to be his wife. It was not long before Bertrand's persistent gaze began to make itself felt in some mysterious way by the sleeper. Mary moved a little uneasily, gave a gentle sigh, and finally opened wide her dark soft eyes, to meet those of him whose image had been mingling, as ever, with her dreams, bent tenderly upon her. She started up from her recumbent posture, and a sudden blush crimsoned her fair cheek for a moment, as she turned to him.

"Have I been asleep?" she said, passing her hands over her eyes; "how very tiresome of me!"

"Not at all tiresome," said Bertrand, smiling; "you never pleased me better than by taking that long sleep just now. But tell me, Mary dear, are you quite awake at last?"

"I think so," she said, with her soft pretty smile, "unless I ought to take it as a proof that I am still dreaming, that you seem to me to look so much better and brighter than you have done for this long time past."

"It is true that I feel just at this moment as if I had been suddenly inspired with new life," he answered; "and no doubt such a renovation must have its effect on my appearance, so it is plain that you have all your powers of observation alive again, and therefore you can undertake the discussion of a very important subject with me, for which purpose I have been waiting your return to the waking world."

He spoke playfully, but there was an earnest thrill of emotion in his voice which made Mary's sensitive heart throb, she knew not why.

"I am quite rested now," she said, "if I can do anything for you."

"You can do a very great deal for me—more than any one in the world," he answered; and then, suddenly possessing himself of both her little hands, he looked her full in the face with his sunny blue eyes, and said, "Tell me, first, Mary, do you not think you have punished me long enough now, and that the time is come when I may ask you to forget and forgive?"

She looked up at him with an expression of the most innocent surprise.

"Punished you, Bertrand!" she said; "what can you mean?—how could I do so, and why should you suppose I had ever any such wish?"

"Have you not been punishing me for my blind and insensate infatuation as regarded Laura Wyndham ever since that day and hour when you drew yourself away from me in the garden at Chiverley, and I knew, even in the midst of my miserable folly, that my good angel had finally deserted me?"

Mary bent down her head, so that he could not see her face, and said, in an almost inaudible voice, "I had no thought but for your happiness then, as now."

"I know it, my darling," he answered, in a tone of deep feeling, "and well is it for me if you do indeed still wish my happiness, for it is in your hands, and in yours alone; but, Mary, the moment is come when all reserves and concealments must be at an end

between us, and I am going to open my whole heart to you, in the hope that you will do the same by me. My dearest," he went on, bending to kiss the trembling hands he held, "I have loved you all my life; and long before my father's death I had felt that I could never go through any part of my existence on this earth without you. When I found, therefore, that he too wished our union, I was most thankful to have his blessing on my one great hope, and my only doubt or anxiety was as to the nature of your feelings towards me; you were always so still and quiet, little Mary, that it was very hard to tell what you felt."

As he spoke a great tremor seemed to seize her frame; involuntarily her grasp tightened almost convulsively on his hand, and, while she bent her head still lower, her voice came, earnest and imploring, to his ear. "Bertrand, I beseech you to tell me the truth on one point, which has been to me a terror and an anguish ever since the day of your father's death, influencing me in all my conduct towards you from first to last—did he—did your father repeat——"

She could not go on, but Bertrand understood her.

"I will tell you all," he answered, gently; "you shall know the exact truth. My father said not one single word to me respecting your state of feeling, till after I had told him that I loved you with all my heart, and that it was my most cherished hope to win you for my wife. But when I went on to tell him that your great reserve of manner made me fear that you had no affection for me, then and then only, he bade me hope, in consequence of words which he said he had wrung from you as a dying man, with the assurance that they would be buried with him in the grave."

Mary's hand relaxed its grasp, and she gave a long sigh of relief.

"Then is it true and certain," she said, "that you never were influenced by the wish to make me happy, or to gratify your father?"

"It is quite true and quite certain," he said, smiling; "but, Mary, I might ask you the same question, for Lurline assured me that you did not care for me, in the very least, and that if ever you married me it would be only in order to carry out the wishes of the friend and benefactor you had lost."

Mary raised her eyes and looked at him, for the first time, as she quietly answered, "And to me Laura said that you felt bound to make me your wife, even while your heart was altogether hers, because your father had unwillingly caused the death of mine."

"The traitress!" exclaimed Bertrand, clenching his fist. "What a tissue of falsehoods she managed to weave around us! Mary, though I hate myself for having even for one moment admired the fair face that masked her hideous deceit and treachery, I think there was just this much of an excuse for me—that I was no match for the consummate subtlety with which she poisoned my mind respecting you; but, oh, my darling," he added, throwing his arms round her, "you understand me well now, do you not? I would have asked you to be my wife that last evening when we stood together by my father's grave, if the solemn sacredness of the spot had not deterred me; but I gave you the white rose I asked you to keep, and preserved its twin blossom for myself, in token that I should claim you before the roses bloomed again to be the sweet white flower of my life. I came to Chiverley for that one purpose only, and, even through all the senseless madness of the engagement into which Laura Wyndham drew me, I loved you still, my Mary, and dared scarce think of you, lest I should lament you too bitterly. Then when the mask dropped from Lurline, and I saw what she was, and ascertained the terrible extent of my delusion, you can never know with what wild longing my heart rebounded to its one and only true love, its hope, and rest, and life! Oh, my darling Mary, if you could only know how I pined and prayed for you during the long sad weeks at the Salpetrière! and when you came it was like the light of dawn shining in upon the gloom of night, and I thought that earth had changed to Paradise. Can I ever, ever forget that moment!"

"Or I," said Mary. "Ah, Bertrand! think what it must have been to me to see you then in living presence, with the blessed sunshine and the free air round you, when only a few hours before I had been seeking for you in the Hall of the Dead!" and she bowed her face on her hands as the remembrance of that past misery swept over her.

"The Hall of the Dead! where is that, my Mary? it is a mournful sounding name indeed."

"It is a vast underground room at the Hôtel Dieu where they place all those who fall each day in the battle of life. I shall never forget my visit to it at that dreadful time, when I was seeking you vainly every day; the hall was lighted only by tapers, which glimmered feebly amid the shadows; and there they have service once only in the year, on the day they call the Festival of the Dead, which is a superstition of their own. There were two rows of trestles down either side of the room, where the quiet forms were laid that would know neither healing nor suffering any more; and each calm face was uncovered for me, Bertrand, as I walked past them, looking——" She could not go on, but shuddered, while a low sob broke from her lips.

"My own darling, that is all over now, thank God, and we need never speak of it again; but, oh, how little I dreamt of all your priceless devotion! Yet when you did find me, Mary, your very first act was to separate yourself from me again. Tell me now, why it was that you left this house so soon as I entered it? You dashed all my hopes to the ground

by doing so, and flung me almost to despair—why was it? Be frank with me, as I have been with you."

He bent down for her answer, and it came very low and hesitating, "Because of those words I had spoken to your father."

"Darling!" he exclaimed, "I understand it all; it was like your delicate sensitiveness; but now—now, that you know I desire nothing on earth so much as to have you for my own dear wife—now that I beseech you to come to me as my one choice blessing—you will tell me, will you not, whether you can still repeat those words to me with the lips that never knew deceit? Are they true now, Mary, as they were before I lost you through a false woman's witchery?"

And she answered, softly, "True now, and for evermore." *(To be continued.)*

LIVING BY FAITH.

"The just shall live by his faith."

I SELECT the words printed at the head of this paper from the Old Testament on which to found some remarks on the nature and office of faith, in preference to any allusion to it in the New Testament, because in the latter faith is generally connected with the person and work of our blessed Lord, and therefore to be regarded in a particular aspect, whereas, these words comprehend the great moral principle of faith generally.

We are repeatedly told in the Bible, even if we did not know it from our own experience, that religion is a matter of faith, and not of sight or sense. "The just man shall live by his faith," says the prophet, in the twilight of revealed religion. "We walk by faith, not by sight," answers the apostle, in the full blaze of Christianity. It is well, before entering upon any important discussion, that we should clearly understand in what sense every word is used. I do not in this paper use the word faith in the particular signification of "*trust*," which is attached to it sometimes in the New Testament, I use it in its larger and more comprehensive meaning, as that part of our nature by which we recognise the remote and the unseen; which enables us to understand and realise those things which are neither the objects of our senses nor the infallible deductions of our reason. In this sense, religion altogether is a matter of faith and not of sight. In this many persons see a difficulty. When we ask those who object to revelation altogether to accept it, or when we ask those who do admit its truth to be more clear in their practical recognition of its importance, we constantly hear it said that its acceptance would be more possible, and compliance with its precepts easier, if religion were a matter of sight and sense, and not of faith. This world in all its business and pleasure offers us the evidence of sense — the gratification of our animal propensities, the opportunities of indulgence, the array in which fashion clothes its votaries, the splendour of pomp and rank, broad lands and accumulating wealth, and care, and toil, and suffering, and the daily struggle for bread—of all these things we have the positive evidence of sense; there is no doubt about their reality; we are forced to recognise it every day, when we indulge in pleasure, or go forth to toil. If, then, for such matters—matters which you tell us are of comparatively little moment, which, when compared with religion, are worse than worthless—we have the positive, unmistakable evidence of sense, should we not fairly have expected, and may we not reasonably ask the same, if not still clearer, evidence, in proof of those matters which are of vastly greater importance, and the rejection or neglect of which would be so fatal a catastrophe? Why have we, for the minor matters of this life, the evidence of our senses, while all the domain of religion is wrapt in the dense cloud of mystery, through which with difficulty the eye of faith alone can pierce?

Now, in reply to such an inquiry and argument, let us first inquire what other condition of religion could there be. What kind of evidence of the reality of God, and Christ, and revelation, and the other truths of religion, does the objector require? Religion being in essence the conditions of our relation to God, the only way in which it could be made a matter of sense and not of faith, would be by the continued perpetuation of miracles. For if God were by any means to manifest Himself to our senses, the only way to prove that it was really a manifestation of God would be by the performance of miracles. Supposing that religion did thus appeal to the senses of one generation after another, is it probable that its acceptance would be more general, or obedience to its principles more implicit? People are often inclined to think they would believe if religion now offered miracles apparent to our senses, and did not command our adhesion simply as a matter of faith. The history of miraculous periods seems to prove precisely the opposite. Since miraculous performance has ceased in the Church, thousands more have been added to the faith of Christ than ever joined it during the time of the apostles. But suppose

miracles were continued perpetually, so as to offer evidence to the senses of each succeeding generation, would not such a proposal involve an absurdity? The only way in which miracles are a proof of a Divine mission is that they are exceptional, that they are occurrences contrary to the known law of Nature—either interruption of it by Divine power, or results produced by a Divine power bringing into operation here other laws of which we have not and cannot have any knowledge. But if they were repeated incessantly from age to age, they would cease to be such, they would no longer be miracles; no one would regard them as evidences of a Divine mission. Thus, the only way in which religion could be made a matter of sense and not of faith is shown to be absurd and impossible.

Still, it may be said, with God all things are possible, and He might have revealed religion so, or in some way we know not of, to make it irresistibly acceptable and incapable of rejection by any. But then we find that such is not God's mode of dealing with mankind in other matters. If we believe in a God at all, and find that He treats man according to a certain plan or principle in the world of Nature, it is certainly no argument against a revelation which we say comes from the same God to say in it we find the same mode of treatment. If I discern certain peculiarities in a painting done by a particular artist, is it an argument against the supposition that another picture is from the same brush that we find in it precisely similar peculiarities? Is it not, on the contrary, a strong presumption in favour of the identity of authorship? So when it is said that revealed religion, being a matter of importance, if it really come from God, He would not have made it a matter of faith, requiring effort to believe it, but would have given it some power of forcing all to accept it, we answer, this is no presumption against its Divine authorship at all, for we find God does deal so with the affairs of life. The discoveries of science, for example, which have been attended with such grand results for man, which have conferred so many blessings and saved so many lives, are good things, but they were only discovered gradually, even at present have not been universally accepted, and by most of us have to be believed as matters of faith. It is no argument, therefore, against revelation to say that its importance would have caused God, if it came from Him, to give us the evidence of sense and not mere faith in its support, for we find that in Nature (which we cannot deny) the same God has made those things which are of most human importance to be by no means the most intimately connected with our senses. But I think, beyond all this, we can see positive reason why God should have made us live the higher religious life by faith, and not by sense. If religion were a matter of sense, to be necessarily believed by every one, just as we believe that one and one make two, where would there have been any room for that exercise of moral discipline and probation which is now found in studying the evidences and records of revelation? We take a small and narrow view of revealed religion if we think (as some seem practically to do) that the only end and object of revealed religion is to get man saved by his acceptance of particular truths. The ultimate end of religion is to bring man nearer to God—to train up in him those capacities which will make him enjoy the presence of God for ever. When, therefore, we find that there are other ends in giving a revelation than merely the discovery of religious truths, as such, we must feel that those other ends must have some share in determining the manner in which such truths are to be stated, and the extent to which they are to be sustained, explained, and enforced. Therefore, as one of the ends of religion is our moral training and culture, is it surprising, it has been well asked, that not only religion, but the mode in which it has been revealed to us, is calculated to afford us ample opportunity for such? If religion were a matter of sense and not of faith it could not be so. But as it is, in God's wisdom, we find, says a learned writer, "The exercise of our intellectual faculties in the search for truth as much a part of our moral probation as our behaviour in daily life." It seems, also, that the very fact of all human affairs and interests being matters of sense is a reason in itself why religion should be a matter of faith. There is in us a higher capacity than that which simply recognises the objects of sense; on what, then, is it to be exercised if not on matters of religion? Thus far I have endeavoured to show that religion, being a matter of faith and not of sense, is no objection to religion, inasmuch as it could scarcely be otherwise, and we can see how its being so serves to afford us opportunities for moral probation and exercise which otherwise we should not have. The great lesson to be deduced from such a consideration is this, that we are really living—*living* such a life as God would have us live, living such a life as Christ Himself lived, such a life as the thought and realisation of what He by His death has done for us should inspire us to live when we are living by faith and not by sight. This is the whole secret of religion. In God's sight none other are really living save those who live by faith. This is the interpretation of our Master's condemnation of men, as blind, and diseased, and dead in sins; for to give up the cultivation of the soul for the sake of gratifying sense, to neglect the heart for the outward condition, to allow outward things of life to overrule the inward power of our moral nature, to forget God and forsake God amidst His very works and mercies, this is, indeed, a mournful blindness, a sad disorder, and when the evil is

consummated, it is moral death. I am not asking you to believe anything strange or fanciful; even on earth good and splendid deeds have been done only by those who have risen above the evidence of sense, and allowed faith—faith in humanity, faith in the power of truth, faith in the progress of thought—to guide and direct them. What was it which enabled the astronomer, despite the persecutions of religious bigotry, to maintain at all costs the truth which he had discovered? Was it not that he had faith in truth, that though for a while the side of truth was not that of gain, yet in the end it must succeed? Or, again, look at the brave adventurer who opened up to the astonishment of Europe a new continent of vast extent and teeming with a population of millions. Ploughing for months through a toilsome sea, why was it that his brave heart never quailed when the storm threatened destruction from without, and the whisper of mutiny was ominously heard within? How was it that while other hearts around him quivered like dried leaves upon the withered stem, his alone knew no fear? Was it not that he had faith in the mission that he had undertaken to perform, and the good it would accomplish for the human race? Was it not that while others were content with sensuous vision to contemplate the surrounding clouds of difficulty and doubt, he, with the eye of faith, saw "the Future's gleaming peaks rising across the waves of thankless years?" Need I remind you how splendidly the superiority of faith, as compared with sense, has been illustrated in the history of the Church herself? Recall but one, that perhaps the most memorable triumph of all.

Having passed the various vicissitudes of suffering and of success, the Church of Christ had nearly altogether lost sight of her high mission—the exalted principles of her life. She aimed at temporal and visible, rather than spiritual and invisible triumphs. Her ceremonial appealed to the senses, and not to the higher faculties of man's nature. Sense occupied every throne from which faith had been expelled. The popery of Hildebrand superseded the Christianity of Paul. Then, from the valleys of Spain, from the forests of Germany, from the plains of Italy, the cry of thousands of spiritual bondsmen arose to heaven—the shackles of a sensuous religion had become intolerable. Who should be able to strike them off, and bid a liberated Christendom go free? What an unequal contest had to be commenced! On the one side was the Pope, with all the Catholic powers of Europe to support him, with the prestige of his high position, with the traditional honours of the Papacy, with all the influence of a gorgeous ritual to which the genius of Raphael and Michael Angelo had lent the lustre of art, with all this adventitious aid the Pope hurled at his opponent the thunders of the Vatican, and against him the solitary monk of Wittemberg waged the fierce unequal contest alone. With an eloquence that has rarely been equalled, with an energy that never has been surpassed, the monk fought the battle, and at last came forth victorious from the fight. His only ally had been faith in God and truth.

I wish I could persuade you that this same principle which has won every great triumph in the onward march of civilisation and religion is the only sound principle of human life, is the very essence and basis of religion.

If you will practically believe nothing which is not a matter of sense, the thousand enigmas of life must remain unsolved, a pall of atheism envelope the world's history, the generations that have come and gone be so as but "dead waves of an endless ocean," or dead leaves of a deathless tree; human life but "a rudderless barque bearing a funeral sail, and leaving a pale track behind."

Over all this faith flings a gentle radiance caught from the face of Christ. Each wave has for us an eternal flow—each leaf a lifetime after winter. The pale track of life's barque is but the shadow cast by the dawning of a deathless day.

SURLY BOB.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER IX.—VICTORIOUS.

THE week slipped away much as usual with Bob until Friday afternoon came round. It was already growing dusk, as, in returning from an errand on which his aunt had sent him, he found himself sauntering along an unfrequented road which led past the west front of the church.

Suddenly he was startled by hearing a crash as of broken glass falling from one of the windows in the tower. A disused churchyard surrounded the church, the whole being enclosed by a wall; but on this west side, on which was the tower, the building stood only a few paces back from the road, and therefore Bob could not help noticing the sound, and being attracted by it.

He stood still for a moment, glancing upwards, and then he fancied he heard his name called. The sound seemed to proceed from that same part of the tower; but the next minute he said to himself that

it could only be his fancy, for it was impossible that any one could be in the church, which was always kept closely shut and locked.

At this instant, however, another crash of broken glass arrested him, whilst this time he distinctly heard his own name called, and he recognised the voice as Tom Lane's. He looked up in astonishment, but it was growing too dark to make out anything.

"I say, Bob Saunders, help a fellow, will you?"

"Where in the world are you?" exclaimed Bob, forgetting, in his surprise, the fact that he and Tom were sworn enemies.

"I'm shut up here in the tower; and I can't get out, for they've locked all the doors. And here I shall be left all night, unless you'll go and get some one to come with the key. Do, Bob, be a good fellow for once: for I've been here ever so long already, and master 'll be so dreadful angry at my not coming back all this time, that like enough he'll turn me off outright. Run and fetch the sexton, Bob; and then I'll do you a good turn some day!"

The last words were uttered in imploring, half despairing tones, for Bob had already turned away, as if refusing to heed the entreaties of the other. He walked on a few paces, whilst a fierce struggle went on in his mind; Tom's reference to his master having recalled a new grievance. For Bob also had applied for this same situation as errand-boy to Mr. Cross, the chemist; and the latter having preferred the sharp-looking Tom Lane to the dull heavy-looking clumsy Bob Saunders, the former had exulted over the defeated candidate, who had retired from the contest much disappointed.

And now here was a chance for Bob of getting the place after all: for if Tom never went back that night, it was not likely Mr. Cross would put up with such behaviour. He would be sure to dismiss him, and might then, perhaps, give Bob a trial. So he seemed to have Tom quite in his power; for if *he* did not release him, it was more than probable that no one else would be passing along that lonely lane that evening; and thus Tom would be left to his imprisonment all night.

But still all this time it was as if a voice were sounding in his ear, "Forgive—forgive. Be kind one to another, forgiving one another." And yet another voice was urging, "Take your revenge: don't be such a simpleton as to lose this chance of getting into Tom's place; for he is sure to forfeit it unless you are so foolish as to let him out."

But the tumult in his heart was stilled, as he sent up an earnest cry for help; and, turning back with a resolute air, he only paused underneath the tower to cry out, "I'm going for the keys, Tom, and I'll be back in no time," and then ran off as fast as he could go, to the sexton's house.

He found him in, and explained his errand; but it was a good while before the old man could at all understand the case.

"A boy in the church tower d' you say! No, no; you're a-making game of me! No boys couldn't get into the church tower. It must ha' been the owls you heard."

"I tell you, master, 'twas Tom Lane. I know his voice well enough: he don't hoot like an owl."

"It must be Tom Lane's ghost then," returned the old man; "for fifty Tom Lanes couldn't ha' got into the church with all the doors safe locked, and they haven't been opened since Sunday, 'cause there ain't no week service now the vicar's away; and they won't be opened neither till to-morrow, the day for cleaning, when my missus 'll take the keys and let herself in. And if Tom Lane's been in the church all this time since Sunday, why he must have been starved to death long ago, I should say."

"I don't know how he got there; but come along and make haste and let him out, master, or else let me take the keys."

"Oh, that's what you're up to, is it? and so you come making up this fine story about Tom Lane! No, no, I'm a match for you! and I ain't a-going to trust any boy as I know in all the place with them 'ere keys. Fine tricks you lads 'ud be after playing in the church, if I let a whole tribe of you get in there! no, no; I ain't a-going to trust my keys to the likes of you."

"Then come along and see for yourself if 'tisn't true what I've been a-telling of you."

Still it was a long time before old Simon, who proved to be most unbelieving, could be prevailed upon to leave his warm fireside and turn out in the cold; but at length he unwillingly yielded to Bob's representations, and as his cottage was at no great distance from the church, they soon arrived there.

The old man had taken the precaution of bringing his lantern with him, so that on entering the building they were not in total darkness; but all was still and silent within.

"There ain't nobody here," muttered Simon, whose temper was none of the best. "I guessed you were up to some of your tricks, Bob Saunders, you always were a bad 'un; and now you're come to play off your pranks on an old man, making him turn out this bitter night on a fool's errand, and then you'll go and set all the place a-laughing at him!"

"I ain't going to do no such thing," retorted Bob. "I told you 'twas in the *tower* I heard Tom, so come and look there first, master, afore you begin a-scolding of me."

But by this time Tom's attentive ear had caught the sound of their voices; and, descending the staircase, he suddenly commenced such a vigorous thumping and kicking at the door at the foot of the stairs, by way of attracting their attention, that old Simon was so startled by the unexpected noise that he almost dropped the lantern he held in his hands. At length, however, he produced the key, and cautiously opened the door, when he found it was

indeed Tom Lane who was standing there, and no ghost.

"How on earth did you get into the church?" was his first exclamation.

"Through the door, of course," rejoined Tom.

"Now, none of your gammon for me. Don't tell me you got in through the door, for we ain't like to leave 'em open all week for you good-for-nothing young rascals to come in and play your tricks in the church."

"It was though; or how else could I have got in?"

"Then if the door was wide open, why didn't you go out again same way as you came in, instead of staying boxed up here, and fetching of me out in the cold to come and open it for you?" demanded the old man.

"I didn't say as they were *wide* open; but as I was passing along I saw one of 'em ajar, and so I thought I'd slip in and have a look round about. And then I spied this tower door open, and says I to myself, 'Here's fun! I've always wanted dreadful bad to go up that 'ere tower, but I've never had a chance: now I'll see for myself what it's like up there,' and so up I cut. But just as I was thinking of coming down again, somebody come and turned the key in the door; and, though I rushed down as quick as ever I could, and hollered, and kicked, and banged at the door, I couldn't make nobody hear. And there I've been ever since, till I saw Bob Saunders coming along, and managed to make him hear me; but 'twas precious hard work."

Tom did not go on to relate *how* he had made his presence in the tower known to Bob; but, picking up his basket of bottles, he rushed off to deliver his medicines, and then try to excuse his delay to his master as best he could. But before he went, he turned to Bob, saying, "'Twas real good of you, Bob, to help me out of this scrape; and I shan't forget it. I'll do you a good turn if ever I have a chance."

The old man, meantime, on his return to his house, received from his wife, who had come in during his absence, an explanation which enabled him to understand the circumstance which had seemed so mysterious.

Simon, directly after their early dinner, had gone out on an errand which had detained him the whole afternoon, so that he had only been in about ten minutes when Bob came to fetch him. As he found his wife out on his return, he had heard nothing of what had taken place during his absence; but now she explained that a lady, for whom she worked as charwoman, had come, soon after he went out, wishing to secure her services for the morrow, and as she did not like to refuse, having an eye always to making a little money whenever a chance of doing so presented itself, she had come to the conclusion that it would not matter for once if she went and cleaned the church that afternoon instead of the next morning; and this she accordingly did.

Having finished her work, she had come home and put the keys back in their usual place; so that Simon, finding them there, had naturally imagined they had never been moved since Sunday, and thus had been at such a loss to account for Tom's having been able to find his way into the church.

But he told his wife that for the future she must never leave the door even ajar; "for them young rascals had such sharp eyes;" but she had better always lock it after her when she went in.

And as it was very rarely that any one went up the tower, or round that part of the churchyard which lay beneath it, the broken window was not discovered until so long a time had elapsed that Tom's adventure had been forgotten even by old Simon, and no one thought of inquiring who had been the author of the mischief. (*To be continued.*)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

281. Mention some passage which shows the intense dislike the Greeks had to the Jews in connection with religious matters.

282. Where have we mention made of land producing a hundredfold in one year?

283. In Isaiah xl. 6—8 it says, "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field." What apostle quotes these words in his writings?

284. Quote a passage which shows the age of Caleb when he went with Joshua to espy out the land of Canaan.

285. Quote a passage which speaks of the swiftness of the ostrich.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 688.

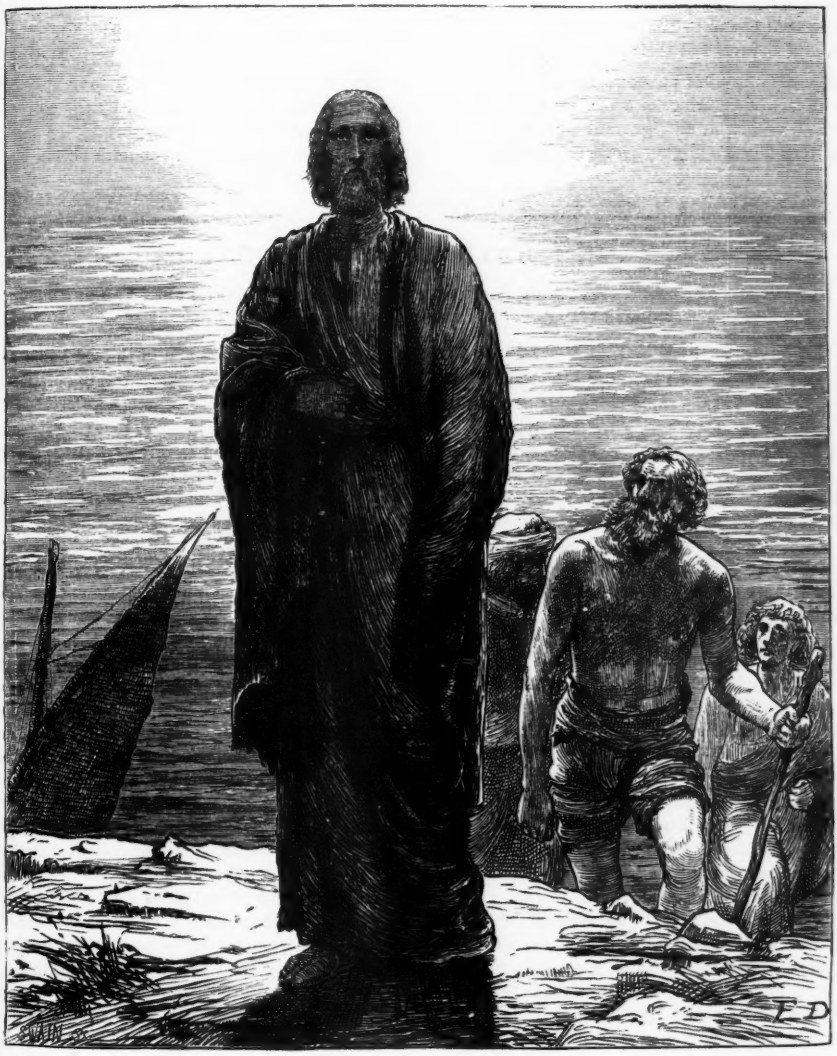
268. "Moses took of the blood of a ram, which had been offered up, and put it upon the tip of their right ear, and upon the thumbs of their right hands, and upon the great toes of their right feet" (Leviticus viii. 23, 24).

269. "I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel; then saith he to me, See thou do it not, for I am thy *fellow-servant*, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God" (Rev. xxii. 9).

270. Epaphroditus, whom St. Paul sent as a messenger from Rome to the Philippians (Phil. ii. 25—27).

271. "Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, if any man of you or your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or be in a journey afar off, yet he shall keep the Passover to the Lord" (Numbers ix. 10).

272. "Paul said to Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do" (Acts xv. 36).



(*Drawn by* FRANK DICKSEE.)

CHRIST AND HIS TEACHING.

SPOTLESS and pure, simple and unadorned,
The life and teachings of our blessed Lord;
The vanities of human life He scorned,
Affected speech His truthful lips ignored.

The words He spake, wafted on arrows swift,
Pierced deep into the wondering listener's heart;
And wisdom, in its highest sense, the gift
He sought with love untiring to impart.

With weary step around a narrow sea,
  His pilgrimage was marked by troubles sore;
Hostile thy villages, O Galilee,
  Stern unbelief was rampant on thy shore,
And yet stupendous marvels shook thy land—
  Nature her laws suspended at His will,
Spirits of evil bowed to His command,
  And foul diseases lost their power to kill.

His followers a band of unknown men,
  Drawn from the surface of a tideless sea,
Unlearned, unsought, and ignorant till then,
  That they Truth's mighty pioneers should be;
Whose words, on waves of passionless renown,
  Borne onward by some strange mysterious power,
Should crush the daring sophistries that crown
  Man's highest efforts from his Babel tower.

Yet man still struggles in this later age
  The infidel's dark mantle to unfold,
Or mars the teachings of the sacred page
  With ceremonies, pomps, and cloths of gold;
Forgets the manger and the lonely inn,
  Forgets the homeless wanderer by the sea,
Forgets the fisher's humble origin;
  Yet all are types of what our faith should be.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAP. XXXVII.—"THE SAME, YET NOT THE SAME."

THEY stood round her—the same group and in the same room, just as they had done long ago, when she appeared before them in her ball-dress. There was a silence for a minute, in which each thought, and knew that the others thought, of that evening. Then Sally, who had entered unnoticed during the conversation, looked up at Will and whispered, "She is'nt the same now, Will." No one heard the remark but Dorothy, and the old refrain came ringing through her head again:—

"The same, the same, yet not the same,
Oh never, never more."

For the Beauty had changed, and the bloom would never come to her face again. She looked tired and careworn, and thin and faded, and on her cheeks there was a flush, and in her eyes a brightness, that made those who clustered round her look and wonder, and feel a sadness choke the tones in which they would have welcomed her home, and the salt tears slowly blinded Mrs. Woodward's eyes, till she could not even see her daughter's faded face. Her spirits were unchanged, however.

"How you all stare at me!" she laughed; "I know I don't look well; that is why we have come to England. Sir George has thrown up his appointment to bring me; and, tiresome enough, no sooner did we arrive than we were met by a messenger to say his mother was very ill"—she stopped to give a wheezing little cough—"and he has gone off to Lancaster. I could not endure another journey, so I have come for a few days, till his return, to see you all."

"My dear, you are very ill!" Mrs. Woodward almost sobbed.

"Oh no," she laughed, looking up with a thin tired face, that made Adrian Fuller, leaning against the mantelpiece, turn away, it was so different from the old beautiful one, "only the climate has tried me. I am so glad to see you in the old house again; only this ugly furniture makes me think of Dorothy's valiant George Blakesley. How is he, Dorothy?" she asked, in the old teasing manner, that almost made the old angry feeling rise in Dorothy's heart. To speak so of George Blakesley! He whom she loved with all her heart and soul, and felt she should never see again!

"He is going to America," she answered; "you will never see him again!"

"And have you put up a tombstone over Venus's grave?" she asked. "And here is the old piano; do you remember the musical parties, Dorothy?" She sat down before the instrument, and then wearily turned away. "I am so tired," she said, pleadingly, "and would give all the world for some sleep: I never get any rest now," she added, in an inexpressibly sad tone. So they went to make ready some refreshment for her, and a room in which she could sleep, while Mr. Woodward asked her questions about India and his eldest son, and a hundred things to which she would have answered impatiently enough in former days, but now there was a tenderness in her manner, added to the old dash and bravado, that seemed the strangest thing about her. She turned to the piano again, evidently because she was so utterly weary, and did not want to talk; and presently Adrian Fuller came to her to say good-night. He was going. She did not take her fingers off the notes, but she looked up and asked, "What have you done since I have been away? Have you anything to show for all this time?"

"No, nothing," he answered.

"I thought not," she said, bending over the keys.

"I had nothing to induce me, no one to help me or encourage me forward."

"You never will have," she answered; "if the love of your art and the wish to achieve something will not help you. But you love your ease better than all



(*Drawn by* J. M'L. RALSTON.)

"You will dream through your life, and die, and be forgotten."

"*BRIDGE BETWEEN.*"—*p.* 723.

else; I knew that long ago. You will dream through your life, and die, and be forgotten, as I shall soon," she added, with a sigh; "and you will leave nothing by which to be remembered."

"Lady Finch!" he said, almost angrily.

"Yes;" and she looked up at him with the weary blue eyes. "You know I am right," she went on, "You never loved anything so much as your own ease—you never will. Are you engaged to Dorothy?" she asked, suddenly.

"No," he answered.

"I am glad of that; don't be angry, Adrian;" and she put a hand on his, and stroked it gently. "I am a little bitter, I know; but I am very ill, and I have often thought how much there is sometimes within the reach of us all to do and to be, and yet we do not care even to stretch a hand forward. We love ourselves so well; not merely you and I, but all of us."

"I thought you left this sort of thing to Dorothy—she is always preaching." He stopped, and there was a silence for a minute or two, and Will and Sally crept out of the room. They soon tired of the Beauty, and Sally had a new picture to draw, and wanted Will to look on while she did it. Mr. Woodward sat for a minute watching his daughter, and the man who had been his friend once, and of whom he had hoped such good things to come. He had been disappointed in Fuller, he thought. He was one of those young men who flash in their youth, and promise a great deal, but who actually do no good work afterwards, either because the flash exhausts them, or because, having shown that they possess a certain amount of power, they are content to dawdle on through the rest of their days. "He seems to like talking to Netta or Dorothy better than anything else," Mr. Woodward said to himself; "and we never have long talks now as we used to have. He has quite gone over to the women."

And then he went to see what his wife was doing, and found that she was busy, and did not require either his help or his company, so, forgetting his newly-arrived daughter, he betook himself to the study, and seated himself before his papers, and proceeded to arrange them.

"It is scarcely fair of me to speak thus of your sister, Lady Finch," Adrian Fuller said, when the pause came to an end.

There was a sudden change in his manner and tone that almost made her start; but she gave no sign of her surprise, only let her fingers stray on indolently over the wiry uncertain keys of the old piano.

"Why?" she asked.

He looked awkwardly down upon her, on the poor faded yet still beautiful face, and the blue eyes that were so dim and weary, or else flashed in a hard and almost painful manner. He thought of the summer, with the history of which she was so closely entwined, and of the evening on which he first saw her, and of all her beauty and fascination, and of how his heart had thrilled once at the sound of her voice or the sight of her face, and of all her little coquettish ways, and her sweet voice, and the quaint old songs she used to sing in the twilight. And then he thought of Dorothy. It seemed like turning to the memory of some quaint picture, or listening to music that gave one vague yearnings and longings towards better things that were far away or far beyond one; then he answered the Beauty, gravely and calmly: "Because I think she is far better than any of us. I have learnt to think this since you have been away."

"Well, what then?" she asked, coldly.

The memory of all the protestations he had made in former days to the woman before him flashed back, and he had not courage to avow the truth and the state of his feelings now, as he had for the moment intended.

"Nothing," he said; and another awkward silence came. And then Mrs. Woodward came back, and he said good-night, and went; and Netta was left once more with her family.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—NETTA AND DOROTHY.

Dorothy was alone in her own room at last, and sat down by the window to think over the events of the evening. She felt almost dazed, so much had happened in the few hours. Adrian Fuller had proposed, and she had refused him; and George Blakesley, whom she had been longing to see again, had been, and gone, and she knew that he cared for her no longer, and thought it probable that she might never see him again; and Netta had come back, and was sleeping in the next room. She could scarcely believe it all, it seemed as if the world had come to an end that night, or at least, as if she had come within sight of her end of it, for she knew now that she had lost for ever the love of the man to whom, when she was no longer bound, she had gradually given her heart, and whom she had learned not only to love (for love by itself is a thing that must sooner or later burn out), but to respect and esteem above all others. She sat and wondered blankly, as when a trouble too great to realise has fallen on us we often sit and blankly wonder, how she could have cared for Adrian Fuller in the old days. "I *did* care for him *very* much," she said to herself; "I can remember when the sound of his voice made my heart feel perfectly wild, and as it has never felt for George Blakesley; and yet, oh! what shall I do?" and she broke down and hiding her face, sobbed bitterly. And so it was; for the one man she had had a feverish infatuation, to the other she gave the best love of her life; the one had blazed out, and the other felt shipwrecked. "He seems to have taken my life away with him," she said. And this was the secret of her love, or of much of her love for him, that he made those around him better, and he had led her into the

right pathway, and she felt as if she were too weak to walk along it alone. While she knew him and saw him, in the mere effort to follow him she left much of the old world behind, and though she had learned to love that which she had learned through him to consider beautiful, and to know her duty, and to long to do it, yet still with all her yearnings, all her longings, she felt too weak to stand alone. The love she had thrown away and found so terrible a burden once would have been all the world to her now, and she broke down, and sobbed again to herself in the darkness.

"Dorothy," said a voice, and the Beauty came softly into the room, and up to where her sister was sitting, "I heard you moving about a few minutes ago, and I wanted to come and talk to you, though I am so tired," she added, wearily. Dorothy did not move from her seat, only stared through the darkness at the dim white figure of her sister. "Now, tell me —what is the matter with you, dear?" she asked in the low, clear, sweet voice whose charm there was no withstanding. It brought the tears into Dorothy's eyes again, but she stood uncertain and doubtful, as she always had been of the Beauty, though she longed for the sympathy for which she felt afraid to ask.

"Nothing," she answered.

"Yes there is, dear," Netta said. "Dorothy," she said suddenly, putting up her arm and twining them round her sister's neck; "I want you to forgive me for all I did to you in the past days. You will—will you not, darling? I have so often thought of you, and of how patient you were, but I am glad you did not marry Adrian."

"Yes, so am I," Dorothy said, softly, leaning her head down on her sister's shoulder with a sigh of relief.

"I am so glad to hear you say that," Netta answered, "Do you know, Dorothy, I am different from what I used to be. You have had a great deal to do with it, I think, and I am not well; I fancy sometimes I shall not live very long——"

"Oh, Netta!" Dorothy began, but she could see her sister's blue eyes, which used to be so soft, looking at her with that unnatural brightness in them which she had noticed immediately on her arrival, and she stopped.

"Well, we do not know how that may be," Netta went on, "but I want us to be sisters in reality as well as in name—shall we?" she asked, humbly and entreatingly, "I will be good to you in future, and if you would only love me a little, Dorothy——." There was something the girl who listened never forgot in those last words, they seemed to tell of a whole life of smothered feelings. "If you only would——" and she waited, half afraid of what the sister she had once so slighted would reply. But for answer Dorothy only put her cheek against Netta's thin face, and, kissing her passionately, burst into tears. (*To be continued.*)

THE TRIPLETS OF THE BIBLE.

BY THE REV. J. HILES HITCHENS, AUTHOR OF "THE FURNACE," "THE FACE OF THE KING," ETC.

IX.—THE THREEFOLD BENEDICTION.

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen."—2 Cor. xiii. 14.



S attentive students of the Scriptures, we must have observed that the epistles from the pen of the apostle Paul conclude with the devout breathing of a pious heart, the earnest expressions of the noblest wishes for those whom he has addressed, the loving commendation of his friends to the care and comfort and instruction of Heaven. These utterances are very varied, some only commending the reader to the grace of the Lord Jesus. None of them is so comprehensive and full as that at the heading of this paper. Here the apostle commends the Christians at Corinth to the sympathy and sanctifying work of the three persons in the glorious trinity in unity.

It is worthy of note that this, the fullest expression of goodwill, is made to the very Church that caused Paul so much anxiety. The Church at Corinth had permitted sad irregularities to creep into its midst. Gross disorders existed there. Some set themselves against the apostle, slandered him, sowed the seeds of dissatisfaction among the members, and aimed to foster a feeling of suspicion towards the great and good man who took the oversight of them. Hence Paul saw it to be necessary to send them a letter of stern rebuke and reproof. He was, however, still anxious for their spiritual good, and so, in closing his epistle to them, he pens this beautiful and bountiful benediction. For the very men who had used him badly he expresses the best of wishes; on the Church that had given him most anxiety he bestows his sweetest smile; into the hands that had been uplifted to injure him he would place the richest treasures. Truly this was in imitation of his Master. This was the exercise of that Christian love which he had commended to the Corinthians as the fairest of the graces! This was doing good to those who despitefully used

him! Herein the apostle teaches us that the sweetest revenge is that of offering the most earnest and comprehensive supplication for our antagonists. Thereby we heap coals of fire on *their* heads, and fan to a brighter flame the fire of divine love in our hearts.

Because so very full and complete, the passage above has been selected as the favourite utterance of God's servants when closing their public services for Christ, and as the form for dismissing religious assemblies. The custom of pronouncing benedictions is not new, it is one of the most ancient and time-honoured parts of religious engagements. In the early ages of the world it was customary on the occasion of important changes in life, and on separation of friends, to utter words expressive of devout wishes. The form of blessing which God himself instituted, and which Aaron and his sons employed, is most strikingly in accord with the apostolic benediction. Listen to the words:—"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee. The Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace." We seem to hear the Christian and not the Mosaic teacher. So marked is the likeness between the Aaronic and apostolic benedictions that we could almost affirm one was formed upon the model of the other. Knowing the reverence of Paul for the Old Testament Scriptures, and above all believing in his inspiration, we are assured that the two benedictions come from the same source—the Spirit of Truth—and are designed to convey similar thoughts. Both have a threefold aspect; both represent the persons of the Godhead as engaged in a threefold work; whilst the apostolic benediction is more adapted to the Christian economy, inasmuch as the distinctive titles of the three persons in the Godhead are employed, and their special work recognised. This will be more apparent by examining the three clauses.

"*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.*" The word "grace" has a variety of meanings in the New Testament. Into these it is not necessary now to enter. It will be sufficient to fix the meaning of the word here. We regard it as signifying that love and favour, that blessed help, and sanctifying presence of Jesus, which the believer can claim as his portion in Christ. And surely there is something eminently suggestive in the wording of the clause—"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ." We are accustomed to run the words together as pointing to one person, and conveying but one idea. But each word descriptive of the second person in the Trinity reminds us of a distinct aspect of the "grace" which is desired.

It is *authoritative* grace—"the grace of *the Lord.*" Though Jesus took upon Him the form of a servant, and became of no reputation, He was nevertheless "Lord." Combining in Himself two natures, He was, and still is, "King of kings and Lord of lords." All power is His; and the lordly manifestations of His grace, love, favour, sympathy, have been again and again enjoyed. In the early Church especially was this so. *He* worked the miracles of healing in testimony of His Apostles' preaching. *He* revealed Himself to the dying proto-martyr. *He* commissioned His angel to speak to Philip. *He* appeared to Saul of Tarsus. *He* directed the angel to deliver Peter from incarceration. *He* directed the angelic messenger to strike the arrogant and vain Herod. *He* opened the heart of Lydia. *He* comforted Paul in prison, and inspired him to write in strains so lofty. *He* protected John, and made such mysterious disclosures to him. In these and many other similar instances we have "the *grace of the Lord*" exhibited to the early Christians as the grace of a royal, valorous, masterly, and omnipotent friend. He is the same "Lord over all" now. He is still the "Head of the Church." To realise, therefore, "the grace of the *Lord*" is to realise a favourable extension of the governing, directing, all-controlling power of the Saviour.

It is *saving* grace—"the grace of the *Lord Jesus.*" He was called Jesus, Saviour, because He should save His people from their sins. The grace of Jesus saves not from the merely *temporal* calamities of life, but specially from *spiritual* wickedness, weakness, and woe. His grace saves from spiritual darkness by a word; from the bondage of Satan by His energy; from the power and pollution of sin by His strength. As *saving* grace it abounds to the utmost. There is no depth in the dead sea of human iniquity that the grace of Jesus cannot and will not fathom. Aye, often from the deepest depths of sin the grace has brought up the brightest jewels. Down through the fathoms of human abominations that grace has dived until it has raised to the pure atmosphere of holiness a persecutor like Paul, a blasphemer like Bunyan, and an outcast like John Newton.

It is *anointing* grace—"the grace of the Lord Jesus *Christ.*" In olden times anointing was similar to coronation or robing in these days. It was indicative of the honourable and rightful reception to official dignity and power. Christ was "anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows." No material oil, such as that which was poured upon the heads of Aaron, David, Saul, and others, was ever poured on the head of our Redeemer and High Priest. He was anointed with the Holy Ghost, when at His baptism a stream of Holy unction was seen coming down from the heaven of heavens and overflowing Him. It is thegrace of *Christ*—the anointing grace—that has led forth the ambassadors of the Cross; and for every struggle against evil, for every attempt to

develop and diffuse the good, the grace of Christ has been given us.

How full, then, are these words, "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ." They embrace the authoritative, saving, anointing presence, love, sympathy, and favour of the Son of God and Son of man; grace to overrule, grace to save from sin and danger, and grace to stimulate and qualify for service.

"*The love of God.*" Though placed second, this in order of time and prerogative comes first. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is the channel; the love of God is the fountain. There could be no grace displayed by the second person, but for the affection of the first person. There would be no redeemer, no sanctifier, and, therefore no salvation for man, but for the Father's love. St. Paul does not say the love of the Father, though, beyond all question, it is the Father to whom he alludes. He says "the love of *God*," the highest, holiest, best, and first of beings. Now, *as God*, the Father loves all His created works. God's essence is love. There is no creature *God* does not love. "If," as one writer says, "God should not love His creatures, it would reflect some disparagement upon His workmanship, that He should make anything He could not own and love. God's power never produces what His goodness cannot embrace." The apostle is referring to the love of God in its special and endearing aspects. In thinking of man and his relationship to God, we must observe a distinction between man as a *creature* and as a *sinner*. The Infinite One loves every man as a creature; but He is angry every day with the wicked. It is the love to man as a pardoned sinner, as the recipient of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, that the apostle alludes to. It is the love of a Father for His child, the love which gives peace, confidence, boldness in expression of our desires, and reciprocal affection.

"*The Communion of the Holy Ghost*," "the fellowship," or participation in common with us. This is as though the apostle desired that the eternal Spirit may possess the hearts of the believers of Corinth; that He may dwell as a permanent resident within them, sharing life with them, sympathising in their sorrows, rejoicing in their joys, counselling them in their extremities, encouraging them in their hours of despondency, enlightening them in their darkness, inspiring them in their supplications, and always supplying their necessities.

It is to this communion the Holy Scriptures repeatedly point in such passages as the following: "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." "And hereby we know that He abideth in us by the Spirit, which He hath given us." "The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." And it was with a view to this "communion" that Jesus promised the Holy Ghost should come to the Church, and dwell in it as a "Comforter" and a "Spirit of Truth."

Happy, thrice happy, the man who has this Divine Spirit in his heart. "So much as we have of the Spirit, so much have we of heaven in present enjoyment, and so much evidence of its future fulness. He is in all respects completely an earnest." The glorious work He is effecting within us warrants us to rise in confident hope towards glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life. There is not a healing leaf of the Tree of Life which this Heavenly Dove would not willingly bring to us, as the dove of the Deluge brought the olive leaf to Noah. But it must be "*communion*," if the blessedness of the Spirit's indwelling is to be realised. There must be an effort made on our part to please Him. We must open our minds to Him. We must guard against vexing the Holy Presence. We must do our very utmost to preserve His favour and enjoy His impartations.

Thus, then, we can see how the three persons in the Godhead are devoted to our salvation. The love of God contrives the plan of our recovery, the Lord Jesus Christ accomplishes the purposes of God, and the Holy Ghost gives efficiency to the Saviour's work. The work of the second and third persons are necessary to bring rebellious man to the embrace of the first person. Christ is the way to the Father, and the Holy Spirit is the guide to the way. The love of God is the fountain, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is the channel, and the communion of the Holy Ghost is the individual connection between the heart of man and the channel. "It is the very glory of the Saviour's redeeming love, that it depended as much on the sanctifying love of the Spirit as the paternal love of God did on the Blood of the Lamb. Without the work of the Son as a Mediator, the Father could not have honourably become *our* Father; and without the work of the Spirit as a sanctifier, the Son could not have honourably become our Mediator. Christ Himself, therefore, looked as much to what the love of the Spirit would do for us, as God looks to what Christ has done for us. Thus, as our redemption by price required the death of Christ, so our redemption by power required the agency of the Spirit." Whilst, then, we speak of the love of God the Father and God the Son, we must not overlook "the love of the Spirit." To each and all of the holy three we are indebted for our present favours and prospects of future glory.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. SECOND SERIES. No. 10. BARTIMÆUS.

Chapter to be read—St. Mark x. (part of).

INTRODUCTION. Christ's life may be divided into two parts. What was He constantly doing to His disciples? Why did He teach them? What were they to do when He was gone back to heaven? (Mark xvi. 16). The other part of His life was for the people—healing sick, feeding multitudes, &c. Two reasons for these miracles—one, because He was so full of pity, the other, to show that He was God. Going to read to-day of one of these miracles.

I. THE BLIND MAN. (Read Mark x. 46—50). All children have seen a blind man—often seen begging by way-side. This one evidently well known. What was his name? What city was it near? Remind of Jericho taken by Israelites (Josh. vi. 20). Why was he begging? Could not work. No blind asylums in those days; no books with raised letters; no one to teach him. Could only beg for a livelihood. Blind have keen sense of hearing: he hears larger number of people than usual. What can it mean? He calls to some one to tell him. Is quickly told. Probably has heard of wonderful miracles before. Oh, if he could only get to this Great Man, he would run up to Him and beg Him to heal him! What can he do? He can call out to Him. How does he address Him? Wishes to do Him all honour. Gives Him His family name—not Jesus of despised Nazareth, but Jesus Son of royal David. Now notice the crowd, and of whom did it consist? Why did these people follow Jesus so closely? always anxious to see His miracles, perhaps also are listening to His words. What do they tell the blind man to do? So eager to see and hear Christ; cannot put off; the blind man's interruption: they keep calling to him to be quiet: what effect has this on the blind man? Why is he so eager? thinks this is his only chance. Christ is near him now, may, perhaps, never be again, he must call and call till He listens. Notice about the blind man (1) *His sense of need.* What did he feel he wanted? No mistake about his blindness; he indeed wanted help. (2) *His faith.* Not only felt his want, but realised Christ's power. Had never seen Christ, only heard of Him; believed in His love, pity, compassion, and in His power to save. (3) *His earnestness.* Not daunted by first failure; persevered in calling till answer came. Did all he could to attract attention. Gave Him His title of honour. Was such a cry ever in vain?

II. THE CURE. (Read 49—52). What did Jesus do? stopped in his walk and talk, and called for the blind man. What did the people say to the man now? Perhaps he had been desponding—"He will not deign to notice me, a beggar; I must finish my life in darkness and dreariness." What does he do when message reaches him? why cast away his garment? yes, so eager; puts off outer robe to go more quickly. No doubt, no delay; the Master has called—he will come. Picture the scene. Christ standing calm and dignified, the disciples around, the crowd looking on: all are hushed in silence to see what will happen: the crowd parts for the blind man to come up; perhaps Peter the messenger. Blind man comes, led by the hand, trembling with eagerness. Jesus looks at him, full of compassion, sees in him faith to be healed: what question does He ask him? Will let this miracle be seen and known of all. All must hear his confession of faith, and see the divine power. What does Christ say? "Thy faith hath saved thee." What follows? immediately receives his sight. Picture the joy of the man, sees the Saviour, sees his friends, the village in the distance, &c. What does he do? he must stay with Jesus a little, and feast his eyes on his Deliverer—tell others of his wonderful cure. So he follows Jesus in the way. What was it saved him? Christ's power. Yes, but would not have been given but for his faith. Remind of Nazareth (Matt. xiii. 58) where because of unbelief could not do miracles. Unless faith to accept Christ's gift—the gift not given.

III. THE LESSONS. Remind how blindness is type of heart as it is by nature (John ix. 39; Rev. iii. 17) cannot see God. If realise this what can we do? one only thing, try to cry for mercy. Like David, in Ps. li. 1, must confess sin and ask for pardon. Such a cry never in vain (1 John i. 9). We, like blind man, must (1) *Have a sense of need.* This the great work of Holy Spirit—to convince of sin (John xvi. 9). Whom did Christ call to repentance? Yes, He saves the lost; unless realise this He cannot save us. We must also (2) *Have strong faith in Christ as Saviour.* Not merely believe in Him as being good and kind and willing to bless, but as making atonement for sin, as a pardoning God. And also we must (3) *Persevere.* What did the blind man do? So must we call again and again. Like him, cast away all that hinders. Will pardon, and bless even little children if only they seek Him.

Questions to be answered.

1. What were the two things Christ was always doing?
2. What three qualities did the blind man show?
3. How did he honour Christ in addressing Him?
4. Describe the cure.
5. Of what is blindness a type?
6. In what three ways can we imitate this man?

THE FISHERMEN.

WAVE linked to wave in ceaseless motion,
The grey sky and the grey-green ocean,
And nought else to be seen,
Save here and there a flightsome bird,
Whose shrill shriek ominous was heard
The sky and sea between.

All lonely: yet a little band,
Manly of heart and deft of hand,
Pursue their dangerous trade;
Those fishers, borne from home afar,
Remote from friends, with peril near,
And only God to aid!

A gale, an unexpected breath
Of mischance drags them down to death,
With rude remorseless sweep;
No friendly hand to close their eyes,
No ear to list their latest sighs;
Poor toilers of the deep!

But sunset gilds the quivering sea
Athwart its billows bounding free,
(The day of labour o'er)
The little skiff triumphant rides,
And homeward each tired mariner glides
Safe with his finny store.

And loved ones wait along the beach,
And little hands extend to reach
His own, and bid him come
To the old hearth he loves so well,
Where quietness and calm best dwell,
Where all is dear—at home!

And we, too, in the dubious strife,
Changes and chances of our life,
Cast on the billows' foam;
Might we, when all our labour's done,
Glance upwards to a Father's throne,
And reach at last our Home!

T. H. GIBSON.

STILL AND DEEP.

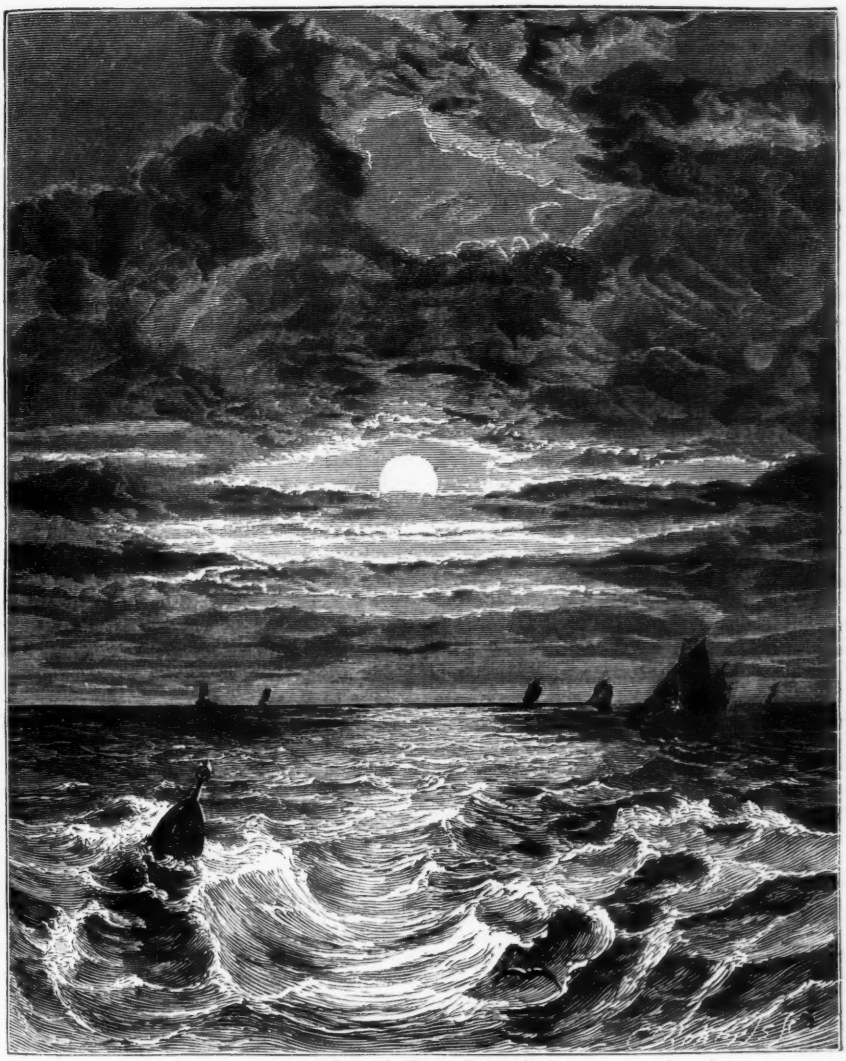
BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE terrible days of the Commune were over. The fatal 24th of May, which witnessed the massacre of the Archbishop of Paris and his fellow-hostages, had come and gone; the flames that had threatened the total destruction of the fair city were extinguished, and the troops of Versailles were in full possession of the capital. The storm that had broken over ill-fated France had finally subsided, and it was marvellous with what rapidity all traces of it were swept away, while the light-hearted people went back composedly to their ordinary occupations. Already the bright June sun lit up each day the Champs Elysées, thronged, as of old, with pleasure-seekers, and merry groups, who were seated talking and laughing under the trees; while never in this world will it be known how much of pain and anguish and terror the walls of the city had enclosed through the weeks that preceded the sudden calm. It had in truth been a dreadful time, when the darkest of human passions had been let loose without restraint, and death and destruction had been in the very air.

Yet all through that memorable period there had been one little spot within the sad tormented city where, despite the deep sympathy felt for the sufferers outside, an intense happiness, such as this earth rarely sees, filled the two thankful hearts that had met in perfect love and confidence after such long severance and unrest. Since that first joyful evening, when all the barriers that had been raised between them were suddenly broken down, the young Comte de L'Isle and his future bride had had ample time to sound the depths of each other's thoughts, and see how hopelessly forlorn and desolate this life would have been for both of them, had they failed to find its only completeness and satisfaction in each other's love. Each day that he lived Bertrand found more reason to rejoice that he had indeed won Mary's priceless love; for with him, who was to her almost a second self, her great reserve melted away, and he learned to understand as he had never done before the tenderness and truth of her noble nature.

He carried out his plan of maintaining absolute silence on his succession to the title and estates of his family; and he took an almost boyish delight in planning the mode in which he would bring Mary as his wife to Château de L'Isle, still in total ignorance of the truth, and reveal it to her there. Meanwhile it was a great source of pleasure to him to hear Mary talking with such earnestness of the means she would adopt to make his life comfortable, on the very small income she believed him to possess. Although he had quite regained the use of his limbs, he was not strong or robust as he used to be, and she would ask him, with the prettiest softest entreaty, to promise her that he would not attempt to take any employment, but let her earn the needful means for his



(*Drawn by* FRANK CARLESS.)

"The grey sky and the grey-green ocean."—*p.* 728.

support, which she was sure she could accomplish by teaching French and music, as she naturally assumed they were to live in England. To all this Bertrand would listen with the utmost gravity, and tell her that her plans were extremely sensible, but that it was not necessary they should come to any definite arrangement till after their marriage, as he had money enough in his possession to carry them over at least the time of their honeymoon.

It had been arranged, by Bertrand's special wish, that the wedding should take place so soon as Paris was restored to peace and calm; there was indeed no reason for delay, and he knew that his presence was greatly required at Château de L'Isle. It was also necessary that he should go back for a short period to the Italian town where he had held his diplomatic post, to wind up his affairs, which, in his haste to fly to the succour of France, had been left somewhat in confusion. He told Mary that they must proceed to this place immediately after their marriage, and that he meant to travel towards it by a route through France which was not quite direct, but which would enable them to spend a few days at a house where he had been very hospitably received when on his way to Paris with the despatches from the army. Mary was quite ready to go there, or anywhere else he liked, and she asked very few questions as to their journey; it was enough for her that she would be with Bertrand, that her bitter separation from him was now but a memory of pain, and the long aching of her heart for ever stilled in sweetest rapture of content; to hear his voice, to see his kind eyes turned smilingly on her, to feel the touch of his dear hand, was a joy so exquisite, so all-sufficient, that had he told her they were to spend their lives in the wilds of Siberia, it would have been to her a matter of indifference. The poverty and privation to which she looked forward with Bertrand were her own deliberate choice in marrying him, for she had had various opportunities, even since she had been in Paris, of attaining to brilliant positions, both in England and France, had she so willed it. There were many men of wealth and influence associated with her in the great Society for the relief of the sufferers, and her beautiful character, her gentle sweetness, her pure lovely face, had caused more than one to seek most earnestly to win her love, in vain. The true heart never wavered, even in its despair; and now, in its deep bliss of happy union, the outward accessories of life seemed absolutely nothing.

So, even while still the murderous cannon were thundering over their heads, those two inhabitants of Madame Brunot's little house were happy beyond all words, and their joyousness seemed to infect the other members of the family, who had not the same cause for satisfaction. One of Bertrand's first proceedings after his marriage was finally fixed, was to draw little Jacques into his room, where he could be alone with him, and, having set him standing on the top of the table, he sat down in front of him, folded his arms, and, looking at the astonished little boy with laughing eyes, he asked him to be so good as to state what he most desired to possess in the world, in order that he, Bertrand, might have the pleasure of presenting it to him, in recognition of the enormous service the young gentleman had unconsciously done him. When Jacques had thoroughly understood the nature of the large-handed long-bearded man's offer, he at once demanded an unlimited supply of bon-bons, and was informed that about a cart-load would be at his disposal that evening; but bonbons could not fill up the measure of Bertrand's gratitude, so he requested Jacques to name some more lasting tribute which he might offer him in memory of his great benefaction. Whereupon Jacques solemnly ordered him to endow him with a drum, a helmet, a sword, and a few other warlike instruments, with which Bertrand immediately promised to supply him, not taking at all into consideration the martyrdom which poor Nurse Parry would have to undergo from the music of the drum, and the terror with which she would see Jacques, who shared her room, possessed of implements capable of inflicting any amount of serious wounds on his own chubby little person.

Mrs. Parry was, however, almost as much delighted as Bertrand himself at the prospect of the wedding. She knew she was about to see her darling Mary happy at last.

Valerie, and her next little sister, Dorette, were looking forward with much ecstatic importance to the grand occasion when they were to officiate as bridesmaids at their dear Mary's wedding, and when they were to be attired in charming costumes presented to them by Mr. Lisle in preparation for the event.

Finally it came to pass that poor Madame Brunot herself could heartily wish Mary joy, without having any longer the tearful recollections of the missing colporteur, which made her feel it a sort of unfaithfulness to him to be happy, even in the bright prospects of others—for one evening in June there came a grey-haired travel-stained man to the door of their house, who asked the porter, in a very trembling voice, if Madame Brunot still lived there, and if she and her children had survived the siege; but he had scarcely received the answer, and clasped his hands in thankfulness, when Valerie, coming down the stairs to go out, suddenly saw him, and then her cry resounded through the house, "Father, father, is come back!" and, bounding from the steps, she flew into his arms, and nearly strangled him with her close embrace.

Yes it was indeed the husband and father, so long lamented, who had had a variety of unpleasant adventures, out of which it was somewhat amazing that he had escaped scot-free, and who, the moment Paris was opened again to the world, had hurried back, with very little hopes of finding, as he did, his

whole family alive and safe, if not actually well. He attributed this result in great measure to the kindness shown to them by Miss Trevelyan and Mrs. Parry, and was proportionally grateful; and, as Madame Brunot soon began to recover from her nervous maladies, when her anxiety and suspense were over, there seemed indeed to be no longer any cloud on the enjoyment of the whole party.

One person outside the house did, however, object strongly to Mary's marriage, and this was Marthe, who did not at all admire losing her services at the hospital. Bertrand consoled her, however, by a secret donation of alms for her poor people.

The last occupation to which Mary Trevelyan devoted her time and attention during the brief period which preceded her wedding, was the preparation of a design for a monument to be erected over the grave of John Pemberton in the cemetery of Père la Chaise, and Bertrand trusted the execution of it to one of the first sculptors in Paris, with the promise to Mary that after their marriage he would bring her back to the capital, to see it completed and fixed in its place.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

At last there came a morning when all the world seemed radiant with the glory and beauty of a lovely summer day—a day in sunny June, when the sky was clear and bright, and the birds were singing, and the flowerets blooming, while in the happy hearts of those with whom we have journeyed so long in the tortuous paths of human existence, there woke the dawn of a new life of joy and peace, where the trials and sorrows that might yet await them would be robbed of all their sting, because henceforth they would be met and borne together.

Bertrand Lisle stood waiting at the door of the English chapel where the marriage ceremony was to be performed after the civil contract had been concluded elsewhere, and his eyes beamed with delight as the carriage bearing his gentle bride drove up to the entrance. Slowly she advanced, all clad in white from head to foot, with a long veil thrown over her dark hair, and one single snow-white rose fastened at her breast. The significant flower had been brought to her by Bertrand himself that morning, with the earnest petition that she would wear no other ornament but this dear token of her faithfulness in love and truth, and of his own great happiness, and gladly had she granted his request.

Monsieur Brunot walked by her side, looking very dignified and proud, as the representative of her father; and the two little fairy bridesmaids came behind, pacing with solemn steps and serious faces, and bearing huge bouquets of rich red roses, which it was Bertrand's fancy they should have, in contrast to Mary's one pure blossom; finally, Mrs. Parry, all smiles and tears, brought up the rear with little Jacques, who, greatly to her consternation, insisted on bringing his drum, with the view of celebrating the wedding by a vehement assault on it with his heaviest sticks. After a protracted struggle, Mrs. Parry succeeded in leaving this musical instrument in the carriage; and no sooner did little Jacques find himself in the church, than he became much subdued, and remained perfectly quiet while the solemn rite proceeded.

Fair and still as ever, Mary knelt by Bertrand's side and uttered the vows that bound her to him in the sight of God and man; but none would have thought that her stillness indicated want of feeling, who had seen the expression of her deep dark eyes, as she raised them to heaven in unspeakable thankfulness that at last she had a right to live for the happiness of him to whom her whole heart had so long and so absolutely been given!

The momentous service was over, the final words were spoken, the union of Bertrand and Mary de L'Isle was sealed before high heaven, and no human machinations could ever part them more, nor aught on earth have power to come between them, save death alone, that seeming ill which holds within its fast-locked shell the hidden pearl of eternal hope. There was no sorrow in the temporary parting from their friends, and, followed by many blessings, they quitted Paris, and started on a journey which was to have a termination little dreamt of by the new-made wife.

A few days later an old-fashioned travelling chariot, drawn by four horses, and guided by two postillions with blue coats and long boots, was going at a smart pace along the road that led from the nearest station to the Château de L'Isle, a distance of some ten miles. It was open, and within it sat those who had so lately been united. It was a lovely evening, and the pretty wooded country through which they were passing was clothed with all the glory of high summer. Birds were singing amid the foliage, and sweet-scented flowers filled the air with fragrance, while the cloudless sky overhead was not more serene and bright than the sweet face of the young bride in her perfect happiness, as she sat by the side of her husband.

"You have not told me anything about the people to whose house we are going, Bertrand dear," she said, presently; "they must be very kind to have sent their carriage so far to meet us; who are they?"

"A young couple recently married," said Bertrand, composedly; "a comte and comtesse, Mary, of the old *noblesse* of France."

"And you made acquaintance with them on your way to Paris, I think you said? Are they nice? did you like them?"

"Oh very much indeed! they are delightful people; indeed, I think the young comtesse is, without exception, the most charming person I ever met. Are you not jealous, Mary, that I do not except you?" he added, looking down at her with a smile.

"Oh no!" she answered, meeting his eyes with her candid gaze; "why should I be? You must have met many people far better than I am in the world; but what does that matter, if you love *me?*" she added, softly.

"I think you may be pretty sure of that, my darling," he answered; "but look, Mary, what a splendid triumphal arch we are passing under!"

"Yes, and I see there are a number more, all the way down the road; what does it mean, Bertrand? is it a fête?"

"No, they have been erected by the tenantry in honour of the comte and comtesse, who were expected home to-day after their wedding."

"Only to-day? If this is their first day at home I hope we shall not be in their way."

"I hope not," said Bertrand, gravely; "but I feel sure the comte will be very glad of your presence, and I do not expect that the comtesse will object to mine."

Mary looked up at him, rather puzzled by this speech, but the next moment she was still more surprised when she saw him stand up in the carriage and take off his hat, while he bowed right and left, with his handsome face glowing with pleasure. Looking out, she saw that they were approaching a large iron gate, which was thrown wide open, while the road on either side was lined with the villagers in their best dresses, who were waving hats and handkerchiefs, and shouting with delight.

"Oh, Bertrand, what is it?" she said, trembling.

"Do not be afraid, darling," he said, taking her hand in his firm grasp; "I will explain it all to you presently. You must bow and smile to them, Mary, for it is you they are welcoming."

She did as he desired her, but her heart was beating wildly, and she clung to his hand with a terrified grasp. The carriage passed through the gate; the musicians of the village band, who were stationed near it, struck up a triumphal march, and it rolled on through a throng of rejoicing people, till it drew up before the great door of the château. There, on the steps, stood the mayor of the country town in gorgeous costume, the curé of the parish, and several of the county gentlemen.

"Vive Monsieur le Comte!" burst from the whole assembled throng, as Bertrand leaped from the carriage. He waited to help Mary to alight, and then, holding her by the hand, he walked up the steps to the paved space in front of the door, and, turning round, he presented her to the people, saying simply, "My wife," and instantly a great cry rent the air, "Vive Madame la Comtesse! long live our beautiful lady!" And she did look beautiful in that moment, in her pretty bridal travelling dress, with an exquisite rose-pink flush on her cheek, and her dark eyes shining like stars in the sudden excitement, while Bertrand stood bare-headed by her side, with the wind blowing through his rich brown hair, and a smile of unspeakable happiness on his lips. It was such a moment as is rare indeed in this changeful world, but Bertrand felt to the very core of his heart that sweet Mary Lisle deserved to the full all the crowning brightness of that hour, as a reward for the faithful deathless love which, through evil report and good report, through desertion and betrayal, had never failed him for one single instant.

But he saw, though she had caught the reflection of his joy, that she was still trembling and bewildered, and, waving his hand again to the people who were to be regaled by his orders in tents placed on the lawn, he led Mary into the entrance-hall. There a long file of servants was drawn up to receive them, to whom he said a few kindly words; while she, with her sweet smile and quiet grace, charmed them all, as she acknowledged their salutations. Passing through the hall to a door at the other end, Bertrand drew her into a small octagon room, which had always been used as a boudoir by the lady of the castle, and which, by his direction, had been newly furnished for Mary.

His own taste had guided all the arrangements—even to the delicate shade of the rose-coloured silk which lined the lace curtains, and the clusters of white roses which bloomed in every window; and when, at length, the door was shut, and they were alone, he drew her into his arms, saying, "Welcome to your home, my Mary! my Comtesse de L'Isle!"

She let her head fall on his breast, while, half sobbing, half smiling, she asked, "What does it mean, darling Bertrand? what does it all mean?"

"It means that I have succeeded in realising a cherished dream, which few people are ever able to do in this world. I have planned for six weeks past that I would give myself the exquisite pleasure of bringing you to this grand old place, all unconscious that it is in truth your home, and my scheme has been successful beyond my expectations; for I wished so much that you should find yourself mistress and queen of Château de L'Isle, while still you believed that in marrying me you had embraced toil and privation."

"Dear Bertrand! it was indeed kind of you to give me such an unexpected pleasure; but I cannot in the least understand how it has all happened."

"No, darling; how should you? But, come and sit down here, and I will tell you the whole history from the first; we shall have time before we go out to be agreeable to those kind people; they are not marshalled at the tables yet, where we must join them soon." And then, sitting by her husband's side in this charming room, with flowers and sunshine round her, Mary heard all that we know already respecting Armand de L'Isle, and the providential arrival of Bertrand at his father's home in time to give peace to the old man's accusing conscience, and to be recognised as the legitimate heir.

(*To be continued.*)

THE LIFE OF SOLOMON.

BY THE REV. W. W. TULLOCH, M.A.

SOLOMON was the second son of David and Bathsheba, and possibly the last born of all that great king's sons. His names are significant. He was born during a period of peace, and the old king, thinking probably of the many troubles of his own reign, and desiring, as was natural, that war should no longer vex and harass his countrymen, called him "The Peaceful One." We find David declaring (1 Chron. xxii. 9, 10) that the name and mission of his son were predicted to him when, after the capture of Jerusalem from the Jebusites, he first thought of building the Temple. The prophet Nathan gave him his other name, perhaps as a sign that David was forgiven, certainly with reference to the king's own name. David is "the darling," but to Nathan, the young child is more. He is Jedediah, the darling of the Lord (2 Sam. xii. 25). Although brought up under Nathan the prophet, it is doubtful whether the associations surrounding Solomon in his youth were altogether favourable to the development of a very high or finely-balanced spiritual character; nor are we sure that the influence of the aged king over the boy, of whom he was so passionately fond, was altogether good; while all that we know of his mother, who must have exercised much personal influence over him, does not lead us to form a very exalted conception of her character. The probability is that even if Nathan's influence over him was exclusively for good, it would, in some degree at least, be neutralised by the other circumstances of his early life. He was early brought under the shadow of evil and intrigue. He must only have been about ten years of age when he had to share the fortunes of exile with his father. Brought into contact with a wider sphere of life than ever his father had been, by reason of his country's intercourse with a larger portion of the world, his boyhood would lack that repose and time for quiet thought and meditation which his father had enjoyed, and which no doubt did much to fit David for the performance of his great duties.

After the death of Absalom, the eldest surviving son of David was Adonijah. His mother was Haggith, "the dancer." Like Absalom, he seems to have been dear to his father's heart, and for much the same reason. He was "very goodly" to look upon. He had seemingly grown up without any restraint, his father letting him have his own way, and did not "displease him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so?" We do not know if Adonijah was aware of the vow David had made to the mother of Solomon, in regard to the succession to the throne (1 Kings i. 13), but it is to be supposed he was afraid of the influence Bathsheba might exert on the king. He accordingly determined, if possible, to get himself declared king before the death of his father, thinking probably that if successful, his aged sire, who had always been lenient to him and desirous of peace, would not care to disturb what, without his knowledge or aid, had been accomplished. He therefore assumed the external marks of royalty, such as "chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him." In this he followed the same course as Absalom, and, like him, he was fortunate enough to win over some of the oldest advisers of the king. He found friends in Joab, the head of the army, and in Abiathar, the head of the priesthood. The relations of Joab and David had for long been very unsatisfactory. As Dean Stanley says, Joab "had more than one deep resentment brooding in his breast, and there is something mournful in the sigh that the sacred historian heaves over the events which, at the close of his long life, at last broke the unshaken loyalty of the venerable soldier." "Though he had not turned after Absalom, he turned after Adonijah." Abiathar was probably led to side with Adonijah, either on account of the assurance he received that the past would be forgotten, or because he was jealous of the favour in which Zadok was held. All the sons of David—with the exception, of course, of Solomon—seem to have favoured his claims, so that, with the influence of the commander-in-chief and the high priest, with the addition, doubtless, of a large number of courtiers, it must have been a somewhat formidable gathering which assembled at the great feast at En-rogel. Success seemed almost certain; but while they were feasting and crying "God save King Adonijah," events were happening at the court of David of which they little thought.

Amongst those who took no part in the general disaffection, and remained loyal to the claims of Solomon, were the Gibborim; "the mighty men," with their brave leader, Benaiah; David's own body guard; Shemei and Rei, probably surviving brothers of David; Zadok, the younger chief priest, "the seer" (2 Sam. xv. 27); and Solomon's guide and instructor, the prophet Nathan. Acting on the advice of the prophet, who seems to have brought her news of what was taking place at En-rogel, Bathsheba visited the king and reminded him of his oath. Nathan followed, and was successful in making David see the gravity of the position. He called for Solomon's mother, and swearing by the Lord, who had "redeemed his soul out of all

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Amongst those who took no part in the general disaffection, and remained loyal to the claims of Solomon, were the Gibborim; "the mighty men," with their brave leader, Benaiah; David's own body guard; Shemei and Rei, probably surviving brothers of David; Zadok, the younger chief priest, "the seer" (2 Sam. xv. 27); and Solomon's guide and instructor, the prophet Nathan. Acting on the advice of the prophet, who seems to have brought her news of what was taking place at En-rogel, Bathsheba visited the king and reminded him of his oath. Nathan followed, and was successful in making David see the gravity of the position. He called for Solomon's mother, and swearing by the Lord, who had "redeemed his soul out of all

distress," announced to her his intention of keeping his oath. Thereafter, he summoned Zadok, Nathan, and Benaiah, into his presence, and ordered them to conduct Solomon upon the royal mule to Gibeon, and there anoint him king over Israel. This was at once done, and Solomon became king—the sound of trumpets made known the fact. "The people shouted 'God save the king,' and piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them." Solomon is then formally installed upon the throne. His friends inform David of their success, and in answer to their salutation, "God make the name of Solomon greater than thy name, and make his throne greater than thy throne," the aged king "bowed himself upon the bed," and said, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which has given *one* to sit upon my throne this day, mine eyes even seeing it."

Jonathan, the son of Abiathar, conveyed the unwelcome news to the guests of Adonijah, who speedily made an end of their festivities, and dispersed in all directions. Adonijah himself fled to the altar for protection; and so great was his terror, that he would not leave it till he was assured of Solomon's pardon. This was communicated to him, with the order to go to his own house. He was not, however, content to rest there quietly. He persuaded Bathsheba, after the death of David, to ask the king for leave to marry Abishag, the virgin concubine of his father. This Bathsheba, suspecting no ulterior object on the part of Adonijah, did. But Solomon, and in all probability he was right (see Ewald, vol. iii., p. 212), interpreted this as an indication that Adonijah was still cherishing ambitious designs. He told his mother that she might as well ask the kingdom for Adonijah; and ordered his brother to be put to death. His friends, Joab and Abiathar, who had evidently something to do with the request, suffered for their fidelity to Adonijah. Abiathar was deposed from office, and only saved from death by the recollection of past services and the afflictions he had suffered in common with David. As the recollection of former services had spared the life of Abiathar, so the recollection of the murder of Abner and Amasa caused the king to put Joab to death. He was succeeded by Benaiah, and Abiathar by Zadok. Solomon seems to have considered it to be his duty to punish all those who had transgressed against David, even those who had lived under his father's prerogative of mercy. If, however, he punished the enemies of his father, he also showed honour to his friends. He maintained at his own cost Chimham and the other descendants of Barzillai, the Gileadite.

(To be continued.)

HOSPITAL STORIES.

PART II.

DURING the last few weeks (I write this in May, 1875) Willie has been able to go to the national school. I am again paying a visit to the Rhyl Convalescent Home, and almost the first word Willie said to me when I came was, "I go to school now, aint it nice for me to be able to do that? I never did expect to go to school!" I was afraid that his rather hot-bed existence previously would have unfitted him for roughing it with the other boys, but I found that he managed very well, and got no more buffeting than was good and wholesome for him. A few days after my arrival I met Willie looking very important. He burst out, "I've been inspected, and I've got a prize; the Queen sent a gentleman to inspect the school, and he has inspected me, and I answered some of the questions, and I am to have a certificate (Willie called it a stiff-cat), and we are going to have a tea-party, and I am to go."

It was only a fourth class, and for fear that the boy should be conceited, it was explained to him that had he been with boys of his own age it is probable that he would not have shone so brightly, but nothing damped his joy, and I have no doubt that his prize card was well deserved. I am glad to say that it is the diocesan fourth-class certificate for religious knowledge; the best of all knowledge surely! We can forgive Willie's being anxious that his kind Quiver friends should know of this, that, as he says, he "hasn't wasted *all* his time." He certainly looks remarkably well, fat and rosy as compared with his old skinny self. I paid a visit to Great Ormond Street just before coming here, and found the Quiver Cot empty, the little patient having that morning left, cured—a successful operation for cleft palate, by Willie's special doctor. He was a nice, quiet, good little lad, who allowed the delicate treatment necessary in such a case to be properly carried out.

I found that the moving into the large and handsome new building is to take place if possible in July. It will be a great blessing, for the old house is very old now, and for some time one of the wards had to be closed, as it was considered so unhealthy. Now, however, they are all in use, and the place looked much as of old, when I was one of the busy staff myself; and the familiar sounds and sights made me realise the strangeness of all the new faces. I told some of the boys about Willie, and how well he was; how long a time he had lain and waited patiently; and one dear little fellow said, "Do you think I shall ever get better if I am patient too?"

It was not easy to give a decided opinion, so I only expressed hopes. The wards were gay with spring flowers, and in one of them was a tiny boy, white and shaken-looking, with one poor little leg gone. He was going on his new crutches proudly enough. It was his first day up, and he was anxious that all the friends should see him. It is (and wisely) against the hospital rules for parents to take the children out of bed and nurse them, but one poor father, who was hanging over his little suffering mite's cot, could not resist the up-raised arms and beseeching eyes of a forlorn little three-year-old, and when the nurse very kindly but still firmly, suggested how unwise it was, the father and the child were equally tearful, and each tried to console the other. It was a very pathetic sight. It is beyond human nature not to feel very sorry for the fathers; but I often long to tell them that if some of them had spent less money on drink, and more on really wholesome food for their bairns, things would in some cases be far better. It is so often the old story. Sin must bring sorrow, and the sins of the parents are visited on the poor children. One tiny atom, who had no friends to see him, sat up in his little bed stiff and straight, with such a look of intense expectation as was sad to see. I spoke to him, and petted him, and he was sweet and gracious as only a baby can be; but after the first minute he looked on beyond me, and kept his eyes quietly on the door, giving a feeble start when any one entered. A woman told me that he always sat and looked like that on the visiting days. His mother had died since he was admitted. I fancy his hold of life is not very strong; and the thought passed through my mind —Was the mother looking for her little child as anxiously and sadly? At any rate the Good Shepherd has that little one in His special keeping, now that his father and mother have forsaken him. It is quite pleasant to feel the fresh air blowing in on the little sick children in the wards at Rhyl. The Home is close to the sea, and chronic cases get much benefit. I felt the contrast from Great Ormond Street, and wished I could transport a little of the invigorating freshness to the other pale darlings. There is one dear little boy at Rhyl, who was terribly burnt some time ago, who lies so still and patient, and is so grateful for a little chat, or a sight of that endless wonder to children—a watch. I told him about a little girl at Great Ormond Street, who was burnt much in the same way as he is, and he was so interested, and so delighted to hear that she quite recovered after being in bed for months. He has a weight attached to the end of his poor burnt arm to prevent contraction, and there he lies, day after day, poor little man! He was burnt in trying to put a flute up the chimney out of the way of his little brother. Poor boy, he has suffered for his thoughtless frolic sadly enough! After ever so painful a dressing, he never fails to give his quiet little "thank you" to the lady nurse.

Willie is very kind in going to the sick wards and amusing those in bed sometimes. The wards are very bright and pretty, and, of course, more airy and light than those in a London hospital ever could be; but Willie never will allow that they are in any way nicer than *his* wards. I told him that the Quiver Cot was empty just for that day on which I visited it, and he said with a smile, "Send me to it, I should like to go back again;" but the merry look and tone was so unlike anything I had seen in the old days from him, and I told him it would not do. His hospital days are over, we all hope, and now he must try and get on as fast as he can at school. He is sadly needing clothes, and if any of his friends could send him a few they would be gratefully received. He is about the size of most boys of eight or nine.

Before any more "Quiver Cot Stories" appear the old hospital will be gone. There is something sad in losing old friends, and we can but think a little mournfully that the old houses have had their day, and must disappear. So it must be, and certainly in this case one ought to rejoice, and hope great things for the future. I trust that if any of the readers of the QUIVER go to visit Rhyl, they will not omit to pay a visit to the hospital. M. S.

SURLY BOB.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER X.—COMING TO THE RESCUE.

THE following Monday afternoon Bob was going along one of the narrow back streets which led to his home, when, as he drew near to a greengrocer's stall, he caught sight of his cousin Sam standing looking longingly at some tempting apples displayed in a basket outside. As there was a long stretch of blank wall opposite, Sam, no doubt, thought himself unobserved; and seizing the moment when Mrs. Luke, who generally kept a sharp eye upon her property, had gone through for a moment to her cottage at the back, he put out his hand, and taking some of the apples stealthily, slid them into his pocket. Emboldened by the success of his first attempt, he was preparing to repeat the action, when a hand was suddenly laid upon him, and turning round with a violent start, he found himself seized in Bob's grasp.

The latter held him firmly by the collar, as he demanded, "What are you after now, you young thief? Stealing old Mrs. Luke's apples, be you?"

"Let go!" cried the boy, angrily, as he tried to wriggle out of Bob's grasp. "'Tain't no business of yours what I'm a-doing; let go, I say!"

"Not till you've put back all them 'ere apples as you've taken. Come, turn out your pockets, or else I'll make you."

"You shan't!" retorted Sam, furious with passion, and preparing to use both feet as well as fists in his own defence. "I ain't a-going to do what *you* tells me, so you needn't think it."

But at this moment a third person, who was no other than Mrs. Luke's son, came up behind, unnoticed by the boys. Overhearing their words, which were spoken in no gentle tones, he at once perceived how matters stood.

"So I've found you out, you rascal! you thief!" he exclaimed, seizing a stout stick, with which he gave Sam a sound thrashing. "Let me catch you at these tricks again, and, I warn you, I'll hand you over to the police, and get you punished as you deserve. Turn out your pockets, you rogue; and remember, if you ever go trying these dodges again I'll do as I said. Take care I don't see you hanging about in these parts any more," he added, with a threatening look, as he flung the boy from him.

Sam, the moment he was released, darted off like a shot; whilst Bob, who followed more slowly, found himself, when he reached home, greeted with very black looks from his cousin, who muttered, as he passed him in the doorway, "Won't I pay you out for this, you great bully! See if I don't do something to you as *you* won't like! I'll have my revenge; and I knows *how* too."

The next day, instead of going to school in the afternoon, Bob was sent by his aunt on an errand for her. Having accomplished his business, he was sauntering up the High Street on his way back, when his attention was suddenly attracted by the sound of horses' hoofs. Looking round he perceived a pony running away, and tearing at full gallop down the street towards him. His rider was a little boy, whose face was blanched with terror, whilst he uttered loud cries for help, which only served still more to madden the frightened animal.

For one instant Bob stood still, taking in the state of the case; the next he had sprung forward just as the animal approached him, and calmly and coolly seizing the most favourable moment, had thrown himself in front of the pony, and laying hold of the bridle firmly, had thus brought him to a standstill.

Then he turned to the child—a handsome little fellow of only seven or eight years of age—who, overcome with fright, flung his arms round his preserver's neck, and, regardless of every circumstance save the fact that he *was* his preserver, in his gratitude gave him a kiss, and then, laying his head on his shoulder, burst into a fit of sobbing. He soon recovered himself, however; for Bob's strong arm was thrown round him with a protecting touch, whilst he muttered, in the soft tones he could sometimes use when his feelings were moved, "You be all safe now, little master; there's nothing to cry for. I'll take care the pony don't start off again. But let me lift you off; shall I?"

The child held out his arms confidingly to Bob, who gently set him down upon the ground. Just as he did so a gentleman, with a face almost as pale as that of the child, came hurrying up through the crowd, which made way for him to advance.

The little boy, on perceiving him, sprang forward, crying, "Papa, papa, here I am! I am all safe! This boy here stopped the pony, though he was going at such a pace! I was all but off. Oh, I was so frightened!"

The gentleman clasped his boy in his arms with exclamations of deep thankfulness, and then said a few soothing words to the little fellow, who was still trembling all over with excitement. For the moment he was too much engrossed in ascertaining if his child were really quite unharmed, to have room for any other thoughts; but the next instant he turned to thank his little boy's preserver.

Bob, however, had already disappeared.

(To be continued.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

286. Quote a passage in the writings of the prophets which has reference to the pursuit of the enemy after the battle mentioned in Genesis xiv.

287. What was the law among the Jews as to the pledging of raiment?

288. How was it that Ahaziah, the *youngest* son of Jehoram, King of Israel, came to the throne upon the death of his father?

289. Mention a passage in the New Testament where it states that every kind of beast and serpent is capable of being tamed.

290. After what great battle was it that the men of Judah were *three days* in carrying away the spoil of their enemies?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 704.

273. "Therefore watch, and remember that by the space of *three years* I ceased not to warn every one night and day" (Acts xx. 31, see also ver. 17).

274. Because he was first successful in the attack upon the Jebusites (1 Chron. xi. 6).

275. Diotrephes (3 John, 9, 10).

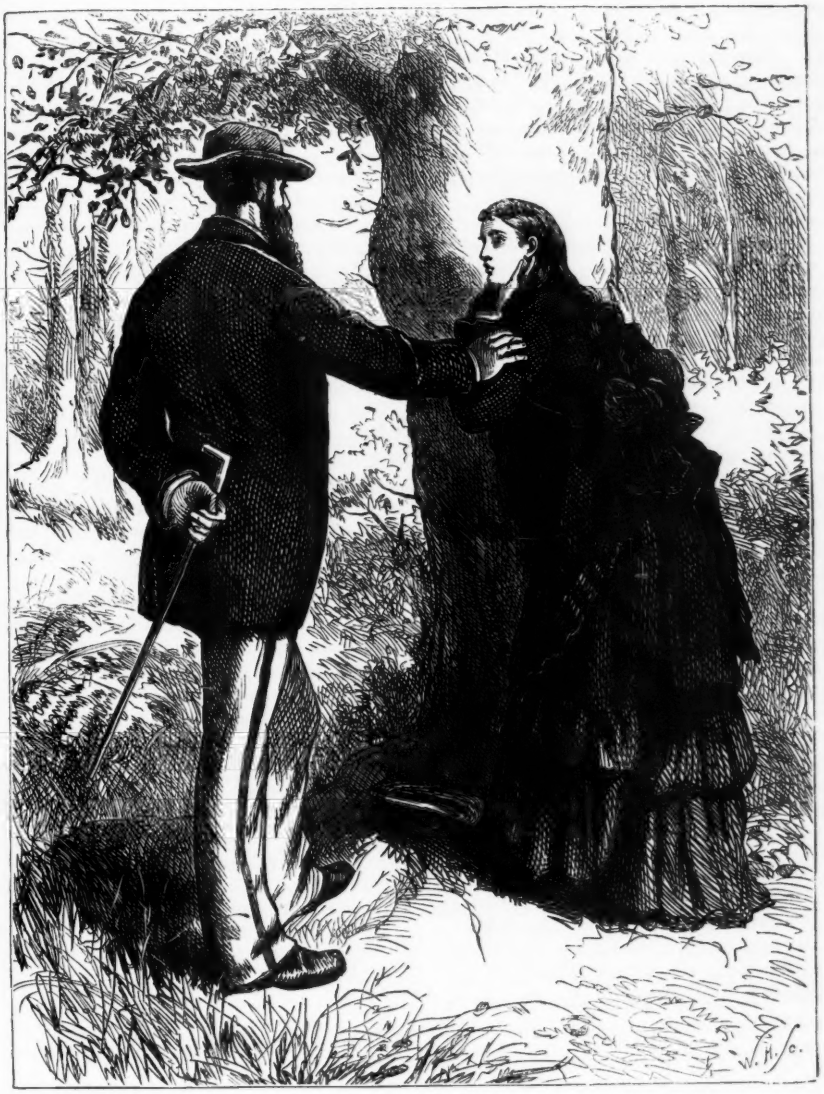
276. Admah and Zeboim (Deut. xxix. 23).

277. "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them" (Jude 7).

278. "And spared not the old world, but saved Noah, the eighth person, *a preacher of righteousness*" (2 Peter ii. 5).

279. Because he had told the King Artaxerxes that *God* would keep them from danger, and therefore he was ashamed to ask the king for help (Ezra viii. 22).

280. By Og the King of Bashan (Deut. iii. 11).



(*Drawn by* W. L. JONES.)

LAURENCE HERNE'S FIRST PICTURE.

THE rooks were cawing round the elm-trees; the water-mill had not long been set in motion, and was making early music with its splashing wheel; the sun was shining in at the east casement upon the worn face of a pale woman who had fallen asleep after a weary night, and was probably dreaming of her only son, for once the word, "Laurence," escaped her, and

she half awoke, but the next moment was slumbering as soundly as ever.

In the north room of the cottage Laurence Herne was at work upon a painting, by which he hoped to make his first step towards fame. He had taken his subject from the "Eve of St. Agnes," choosing the moment of Madeline's awaking in the "dim silver twilight" to find the table, with its "cloth of crimson, gold, and jet," spread with "spiced dainties, every one from silken Samarcand to cedar'd Lebanon," whilst beside it, lute in hand, stood the youthful Porphyro, gazing upon his beloved one.

The few relics of a life of early splendour that Mrs. Herne had passed had been elaborated into greater costliness in the picture; old faded damask and remnants of brocade, an antique silver vase, and mirror in quaint carven frame shorn of much of its gilding, were reproduced in pristine freshness.

But fairer than all these shone out the fair face that opened wide its blue eyes, half in fear, to look upon Porphyro. Where had the painter found the model for his Madeline?

The village doctor had an only daughter, with blue eyes and golden hair, just suited for the picture. Whether they had called into being the picture or not Laurence Herne scarcely knew; but at any rate, the love in his heart had nerved his hand to do its best, and had fired his ambition to gain a name for her sake, and also wealth, for Laurence Herne was poor. His widowed mother had a slender pittance, saved from the wreck of a fortune wasted by his father. And the two were alone in the world, clinging to each other, and making the joy and sorrow of each heart belong to both. Therefore, Phœbe Harcourt did not step between mother and son, but was taken alike into the heart of each, as making the life of the one brighter through the happiness of the other.

And Phœbe Harcourt sat for her likeness; and the picture-painting time was a happy idyll to the painter, interwoven with beautiful dreams. For he and Phœbe had hopeful visions of the future, springing out of the possible success of the picture, and from the happy stand-point of love and youth looked adown golden vistas into all coming time.

II.

Laurence Herne's picture progressed. Mrs. Herne's pale face lighted up with a rosy flush of pride as she looked upon her son's work. She was growing young again, for hope was whispering that Laurence would make his way in the world when she had left him. The village critics pronounced the painting to be wonderful; the doctor came with his magnifying-glass, examined it carefully, and found here and there a fault, in order to qualify the immense satisfaction he felt in his future son-in-law's success. He brought with him his new patient—a man of great wealth, who had just taken the Manor House, and was fitting it up in such a style as it had not entered into the hearts of the quiet people of Applethorp to conceive.

There was a report that Mr. Ford was going to be married, and that he was getting the house in readiness for his bride. One or two, bolder than the rest, ventured to hint this to him, whereupon he smiled, and did not deny it, which was looked upon as confirmation of the report.

Mr. Ford took much interest in the picture of "St. Agnes' Eve." Constantly he came to see it, and offered to use his influence in getting it into the Academy Exhibition. But Laurence declined. "The picture should be taken on its own merits, or not at all."

"But," Mr. Ford suggested, "there were so many more pictures sent than could be accepted, and a little influence——"

But Laurence somewhat curtly stopped him. "He did not wish his picture to crowd out those of greater merit."

Phœbe was disposed to take Mr. Ford's view, and was inclined to think Laurence a little uncourteous. But the young artist had been inwardly annoyed at Mr. Ford's criticisms upon his Madeline.

"Mr. Herne had scarcely done Miss Harcourt justice. There was a turn of the head, a curve of the lip he had not caught, and the eyes were scarcely of the right shade."

Laurence's colour rose. Phœbe grew a little nervous, and remarked, "that it was not exactly a likeness, only an ideal of her face."

"I cannot agree with you, Miss Harcourt," returned Mr. Ford; "an ideal implies something superior to the actual; allow me to say in this instance that the actual bears off the palm."

Laurence bit his lips, but made no comment. Afterwards he said, "I wish Mr. Ford would not come here giving his opinions."

"But I think he intends to buy the picture," answered Phœbe, "so of course he wishes it to be perfect."

"I shall not sell it to him."

"Oh, Laurence, you do not mean that! He has such a beautiful gallery to hang it in, and all his visitors will see it!"

Phœbe had been over the house with her father; for Mr. Ford had taken a great fancy to Dr. Harcourt, and was constantly asking his advice, and also Mrs. Harcourt's, and Phœbe's; there were so many things, he said, in which ladies had better taste than gentlemen.

So Phœbe wandered through the luxurious apartments that seemed to her glowing with Eastern magnificence; through the conservatory,

with the fountain in its midst, and the orange-trees, and pomegranates, and passion-flowers. She had sat down, fairly overpowered with admiration, and involuntarily exclaimed, "How happy people must be who live in such beautiful places!"

"Do you think so?" said Mr. Ford, with a smile.

III.

At length the painting was finished, and Laurence himself took it up to London. He was restless and excited, and his mind alternated between hope and fear.

Phœbe came down to the cottage daily to see Mrs. Herne; she seemed dispirited and nervous, but Mrs. Herne attributed it to Laurence's absence and Phœbe's natural anxiety as to the fate of the picture. Then, again, she fancied that perhaps Laurence had communicated some certainty of failure to Phœbe that he had not mentioned to herself. But in another week a letter came to set all doubts at rest—the picture was accepted.

Phœbe did not come that day, and Mrs. Herne was too much of an invalid to go up to sympathise with her in the joy, so she sat in her easy-chair by the window, weaving all imaginable schemes for the future.

But though she knew it not, one of the figures was already slipping out of the pictures she was sketching out. Phœbe, who had seen much more of Mr. Ford than usual during the last three weeks, and had been consulted on the finishing touches of beauty to the enchanted regions of the old Manor House, was becoming flattered by his deference, and to regard it as almost a right, and had found herself unreasonably vexed by an allusion to Mr. Ford's approaching marriage.

Dr. Harcourt had, in allusion to the old report respecting it, jestingly asked Mr. Ford when the mistress of so much splendour was to appear to take possession.

"That is for herself to answer whenever she pleases," replied Mr. Ford.

"I should think she would be pleased to come at once," said Phœbe, as Mr. Ford seemed to appeal to her for an answer. And a strange pang of jealousy shot through her heart. She wished Mr. Ford had never come, and that she had never seen the Manor House, then she should have felt more contented with the lot in prospect for herself.

"I hope so," returned Mr. Ford, after a short pause.

And the subject dropped; until the next day, when Phœbe, wandering through her favourite beech wood that bordered the Manor House estate, was suddenly startled by an approaching footstep; she turned hastily round and saw that it was Mr. Ford. Then, all at once, Phœbe became conscious of all that she had scarcely acknowledged to herself before—that the life of struggle that she had looked forward to with Laurence had suddenly become distasteful to her; that Mr. Ford's compliments and deference had become more necessary to her than Laurence Herne's straightforward speeches, which she began to think dull and tame; and that Mr. Ford, not Laurence Herne, was the one who was most continually in her thoughts: and as the flood of light poured in upon her she would have fled. But Mr. Ford put his hand upon her arm, and, looking into the frightened face, said, "One moment, only one moment, Phœbe!"

She stood irresolute. Laurence Herne's face seemed to rise up reproachfully.

"Phœbe!" said Mr. Ford, pleadingly, "you will hear me?"

And Phœbe listened. Wealth, luxury, were at her feet, instead of the up-hill struggle for life. And Laurence Herne was forgotten!

IV.

The painting was a success. People crowded round to look at it, and as the season went on, a pale young man in shabby dress might be seen gazing at it more intently than others, as though there were some fascination in it that held him there. It was the artist himself; fame and the prospect of success had come to him, but the hope that had animated him to the work had fled away, and life now seemed not worth living for.

Large sums were offered for the painting, but Laurence Herne refused to sell it; and at the close of the exhibition it was taken to his poor lodgings, where his mother had joined him. The pretty cottage at Applethorp, with its roses and honeysuckles, was given up, and the mother and son were once more all in all to one another.

The painting stood upon the easel, and Mrs. Herne was contemplating it proudly and sadly. Laurence stood beside her. The beautiful face of Madeline looked out upon them from the picture, and the young man's hand trembled as he laid it on his mother's shoulder.

"Mother," he said, in a low tone, "I could not have sold it."

"No," she said, half hesitating.

She was not prepared for his next act. He had seized a brush, dipped it in some dark paint, and was daubing it over the lovely face upon the canvas.

"Laurence!" she almost shrieked.

But he, with flashing eyes, painted on, not seeing, not hearing, until he had finished his work of destruction. Then he threw aside the brush; his sudden passion was over, and he covered his face with his thin hands.

"Laurence," said his mother, bending over him, "is this right?"

"So let the past be buried in oblivion," he said, not answering her.

But his mother sat down beside him.

"Despair not, my son, there is an overruling Power that guides us on: to follow, not to rebel, is the duty of a man."

V.

YEARS after, again in a quiet country home, a painter sat working at his easel, and from time to time a fair old lady came in to look upon her only son.

Laurence Herne had won fame and wealth. He had never married, and yet he did not regret the past. When the first grief and disappointment of heart were over, and the love which could not truly exist without respect had, as time crept on, faded away, he became calm, and rose up out of his sorrow a stronger and a nobler man.

His first picture hung up in his *atelier*, and the face he had painted out he had restored in more spiritual beauty. As his mother's eye rested upon it, he said, "Mother, are you satisfied now? I have followed the Hand, and can now look upon my first picture without regret, without one rebellious feeling, without one wish that the past had been otherwise. Perhaps that the actual was not the ideal has made me a painter."

JEAN BONCŒUR.

BALAAM: A WARNING.

BY REV. C. J. ELLIOTT, M.A., VICAR OF WINKFIELD, BERKS, AND HON. CANON OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD.

BALAAM, who is described in Joshua xiii. 22 as "the soothsayer," is one of those persons whose character and whose conduct are set forth by way of solemn warning, both in the Old and in the New Testament Scriptures.

The name of Balaam is supposed to be derived from two Hebrew words, and to denote "one who devours or destroys the people." Living in Pethor, a city of Mesopotamia, Balaam had probably inherited that traditional knowledge of the true God which may reasonably be supposed to have lingered in the land whence Abraham emigrated, and in which Jacob was for many years a sojourner.

The circumstances under which we meet with the first mention of his name may be briefly related as follows:—At the close of the long-protracted wanderings of the Israelites, we find them assembled for the second time at Kadesh, in anticipation of their promised entrance into the land of Canaan. It being deemed impracticable to effect a passage across the steep southern range of mountains, permission was sought from the King of Edom to pass through his territory, and thus to enter Canaan from the east. This permission being refused, and war with the Edomites, as "brethren," being forbidden, it was resolved to descend the Arabah, as far as the head of the Ælanitic Gulf, and thence, turning the southern corner of the Idumean range, to march northwards, skirting the eastern frontier of Edom, until, at length, having crossed the Arnon, the first river which the Israelites had seen since they left the land of Egypt, they entered upon their trans-Jordanic conquests, and subdued Sihon, King of the Amorites, and Og, the King of Bashan.

Having achieved these signal victories, in which it seems probable that a portion only of the entire forces were engaged, we find the Israelites collectively encamped in the so-called Arboth Moab—*i.e.*, in the vast plains or steppes on the eastern banks of the Jordan, nearly opposite to the city of Jericho. Although really secure from hostile aggression on the part of the Israelites, by reason of the Divine prohibition—"Distress not the Moabites, neither contend with them in battle" (Deut. ii. 9)—the Moabites, apprehensive of the same destiny which had already befallen the neighbouring nations, entered into an alliance with the Bedouin Midianites who inhabited the country to the east of the Moabite and Amorite territory,* an alliance which, though for a while lost sight of in the course of the narrative, has, as we shall hereafter see, a most direct and important bearing upon its sequel. In terms admirably adapted to the circumstances of a shepherd-king exciting the alarm of a pastoral people, Balak, the King of Moab, thus addressed the Midianites: "Now shall this company lick up all that are round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field" (Num. xxii. 4). Having concluded the desired alliance with Midian, Balak forthwith sent his messengers, with those of the Midianites, to invite the aid of Balaam; an acquaintance with whose fame as a soothsayer affords one amongst the many indications which are found in the Pentateuch of such a communication and circulation of intelligence amongst the scattered inhabitants of the earth as would scarcely be expected in those primitive ages;

* These Midianites, although allied to the Midianites amongst whom Moses lived, between the Ælanitic Gulf and Mount Sinai, must not *necessarily* be identified with them. It is probable, however, that their headquarters were on the east of Edom and Moab, and that, as nomads, their wanderings extended over the mountain range of Horeb.

and which may probably be accounted for in this instance by the consideration that the Moabites were the descendants of Lot, and, as such, were not unlikely to have maintained some intercourse with the original stock, which was still settled in Mesopotamia.

At the first summons which reached the mighty and far-famed seer, Balaam acts the part of a high-minded and conscientious man, and instead of yielding to inducements which to one of his character and temperament must have been extremely strong, he seeks the Divine direction; and having received from God a direct and positive prohibition, he at once, and in the most positive terms, dismisses Balak's messengers. For the second time Balak renews the application; and the length of the Assyrian desert is crossed on the second occasion by messengers more numerous and of higher rank than those that were previously employed. And it is in this portion of his history that the true character of Balaam begins to disclose itself. For having first announced, in high-sounding terms, his fixed resolution not to transgress either by way of excess or of diminution the Divine command, Balaam, instead of at once dismissing the messengers of Balak, as on former occasions, seeks to obtain a revocation of the express injunction which he had already received, "Thou shalt not go with them;" and though fully conscious both of the object for which his presence was desired, and—as he afterwards was constrained to admit—of the immutability of the Divine purpose, he secretly indulged the hope that he might yet be permitted to utter curses against a people whom God had blessed.

The result of Balaam's second appeal to God for direction is contained in the following words:—"If the men come to call thee, rise up, and go with them; but yet the word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do." We are not told whether the condition contained in the words, "If the men come to call thee" was, or was not observed by Balaam. The key, however, to the subsequent history appears to be contained in the fact that God's will had been clearly and unequivocally expressed, and that it was a wilful tempting of God, and a provocation of His righteous displeasure, when Balaam sought to obtain a reversal of so express and so positive a prohibition as that which he had already received.

The circumstances attending the prophet's journey attest in a very decisive manner the truth expressed in the few but significant words of the historian, "And God's anger was kindled because he went." These circumstances are well known, and it is needless here to recount them. Suffice it to observe that, as in the case of other miraculous incidents of Old Testament history which have been the objects of assault to modern scepticism, direct testimony has been borne in the New Testament to the historical truth not only of the history of Balaam generally, but particularly to the fact that it was "the dumb ass speaking with man's voice" which "forbad the madness of the prophet" (2 Peter ii. 16).

Upon his arrival in the land of Moab, Balaam accompanied Balak successively to the high places of Baal, to the top of Pisgah and to the top of Peor, and there, on heights defiled, as it would seem, by idolatrous worship, Balaam, though maintaining the character of a prophet of the true God, directed that seven altars should be built, and seven oxen and seven rams prepared.

We are carried, in imagination, by the graphic pen of the historian, from point to point of the extended mountain range, as we follow the king in his untiring efforts to extort from the lips of the soothsayer a curse which should be fatal to the invaders, and as we trace the conflict of contending emotions which raged within the breast of the seer—the overwhelming influence of the Spirit controlling his lips, whilst "dreams of avarice" still lingered within his soul. With a fixed determination, which the idolatrous king was himself constrained to ascribe to a higher will than that of the prophet, the lips of Balaam continued to pronounce upon Israel an uninterrupted series of blessings, which he confessed his own inability to restrain:—

> "And he took up his parable and said:
> From Aram Balak bringeth me,
> The King of Moab, from the mountains of the East:
> Come, curse me Jacob;
> And come, defy Israel.
> How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed,
> And how shall I defy whom Jehovah hath not defied?
> For from the top of the rocks I see Him,
> And from the hills I behold Him;
> Behold a people that dwelleth alone,
> And that reckons not himself among the nations.
> Who hath counted the dust of Jacob,
> And the number of the fourth part of Israel?"

And then—contrasting, it may be, the dark forebodings of his own end with the present peace and the future blessedness of that people which had the Lord for their God—there proceeded from the lips of the sordid prophet an impassioned prayer which his own avarice was destined to convert into a curse—

> "Let me die the death of the righteous,
> And let my last end be like his"

The same or the like blessings having been renewed from the tops of Pisgah and of Peor, Balak, in final despair of the attainment of his object, desires Balaam to "flee to his place," inasmuch as, having been called to curse his enemies, he had "altogether blessed them these three times."

The vision of the seer is now enlarged, and the man "whose eye was closed," "falling down and having his eyes opened," beholds amidst the

outlines of the "giant forms of empire" the advent of the stone, "cut out without hands," which was destined to break them to pieces. Dimly standing out before his view, as he gazes into the future, with an intuition higher than that of Chaldean art, he sees, though "not now," the brightness of that "star" which was destined to "come forth out of Jacob," and the might of that "sceptre" which, though "not nigh," should hereafter "rise out of Israel."

And here it might be presumed that the designs of the sordid prophet had been wholly baffled, and that the expectations of the idolatrous king had been finally disappointed, for, as though overwhelmed by the magnificent visions which he had just recorded, the historian, whilst he proceeds to record in the chapter which follows the successful wiles of the Moabites and the Midianites, drops the veil for the present over the deep degradation of the prophet.

But the end of Balaam was designed to stand on perpetual record as a solemn warning to all that it is "better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." That which Balaam as a soothsayer was unable to effect by his enchantments, he accomplished too successfully by a recourse to sensual enticements, and by the attraction of idolatrous orgies. It is true, as has been already observed, that in the 25th chapter of Numbers, which records the participation of the Israelites in the whoredom and idolatry of the Moabites and the Midianites, there is no mention made of the name of Balaam. But, if we pass onwards to the 31st chapter of the same book, we find in the 16th verse the following words: "Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the Lord in the matter of Peor." Moreover, St. Peter, when describing the guilt and the doom of those who "beguile unstable souls," declares concerning them that such have gone astray "following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor,* who loved the wages of unrighteousness" (2 Peter ii. 15). And, once more, in the Epistle to the Angel of the Church in Pergamos, we read of those "that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication" (Apoc. ii. 14).

The measure of Balaam's sin was now full, and it remained only that he should reap the bitter harvest which he had sown. The Divine vengeance was about to overtake the Midianites, who had been partakers, as it has been shown, in the sin of the Moabites, and who were not, like them, in virtue of their origin, exempted from the sentence of destruction. One of the latest of the Divine commands which was addressed to Moses was this: "Avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites: afterward shalt thou be gathered unto thy people" (Num. xxxi. 2). In obedience to this command the Israelites made war upon the Midianites, and "slew all the males." And then the narrative proceeds thus: "And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; namely, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: *Balaam also the son of Beor* they slew with the sword" (v. 8).

It was thus that Balaam, being found amongst the hosts of Midian, fighting against the people on whom his lips had invoked blessings, perished in their slaughter, and received his portion amongst those whose "latter end is worse than their beginning."

We have seen that the Moabites, in virtue of their descent from Lot, escaped the destruction which overwhelmed the Midianites, with whom they had allied themselves. It must not be supposed, however, that their sin did not find them out, or that they were permitted to escape the righteous retribution of the Lord.

On the contrary, the bitter consequences of hiring the sordid prophet to curse Israel followed the Moabites from generation to generation. The penalty denounced against their sin is recorded in the Book of Deuteronomy in these words: "An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the Lord for ever: because they met you not with bread and with water in the way, when ye came forth out of Egypt; and because they hired against thee Balaam, the son of Beor of Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse thee" (xxiii. 3, 4).

The history of Balaam left its standing lessons of warning both for the Jewish and for the Christian Church. The reference made to it by the prophet Micah, whilst it shows how deep a hold this history had taken upon the prophetic mind, reveals to us also, in a fuller manner than the history itself, the extent of Balaam's knowledge, and the clearness of the revelation communicated to him of the Divine will. The words of the prophet are as follows:—

"My people, remember now
What Balak, the King of Moab, consulted,
And what Balaam, son of Beor, answered him,
From Shittim even unto Gilgal,
That ye may know the righteousness of Jehovah."

* Lightfoot considers *Bosor* as a Chaldaism, and infers from it that St. Peter wrote from Babylon. Ewald, in his "History of Israel," considers that it arose from a misreading for *Boor*. He observes, however, that in the ordinary MSS. of the text the name is *Beor*

The inquiry of Balak is then given, in these words:—

"Wherewith shall I come before Jehovah,
Or bow down unto God on high?
Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings,
With calves of a year old?
Will Jehovah delight in thousands of rams,
In ten thousand streams of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

And then follows the reply of Balaam:—

"He hath made known to thee, O man, what is good,
And what doth Jehovah require of thee,
But to do justly,
And to love mercy,
And to walk humbly with thy God?"—MICAH vi. 5—8.

We learn, then, from the history of Balaam, that the highest spiritual gifts may be found in conjunction with the love of this present world. We learn, further, that opposition to God's clearly-revealed will must in all cases be fraught with imminent danger, and when wilfully persevered in, must be attended by inevitable ruin. But such opposition, when veiled beneath the semblance of piety, outward profession joined with inward hypocrisy, the utterance of blessings with the lips, whilst the heart—though unconsciously, it may be, even to itself—is full of "cursing, deceit, and fraud:" this is that condition which is the most hateful in the sight of Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and which is pre-eminently calculated to provoke God's heaviest judgments—"the wrath of God on the children of disobedience."

The condition of such persons is most perilous when they are themselves least sensible of their danger. Like Balaam, they "know not" when God "stands in the way" to oppose them. Whilst uttering the empty confession with the lips, "I have sinned," they lay the blame—as Balaam on his ass—on any outward circumstances rather than on the perversity of their own wills and on the impurity of their own motives. Even when the Lord's hand is lifted up, and He has drawn His sword, and has bent His bow, even then they cannot, because they will not, see. The blindness which was at first wilful, gradually became judicial; and, in the end, when too late their eyes are opened to discern their sin and their danger, it is but to realise the fulfilment of the inspired psalmist's prediction, "They shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them."

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. SECOND SERIES. No. 11. THE MARRIAGE FEAST.

Chapters to be read—Matt. xxii.; Luke xiv. (parts of).

INTRODUCTION. Have read a great many stories about Christ's life. Was always doing or saying some good, wise, or kind thing. Did not always keep to same class of people; sometimes rebuked proud Pharisees, sometimes rich Publicans, now spoke to poor, now to rich, as Simon the leper, Matthew, and others. At this time has been eating a meal in the house of one of the chief Pharisees on Sabbath-day. So Christ talks to him about feast—whom to invite, and why.

I. THE GUESTS. (Read Luke xiv. 12—14.) Christ had been watching how the people behaved at the feast: how they chose the best seats (v. 7), and He rebuked them. Now He turns to the master, and tells him whom to invite. If invite rich friends, what will they do in return? therefore, you can expect no credit for that. Who, then, are to be invited? Can they return the same? Then who will reward us, and when? Just as had told them to lay up treasures in heaven (Matt. vi. 20), and so to use money that those benefited by it would receive us into heaven (Luke xvi. 9).

Practical. Let children see how this applies to them. Are always ready to do good in return—to exchange kindness, &c., at play or school; but are they ready to help those in need; to invite poor school-fellows, to lend books, invite to games, &c., those who can make no return? Such acts, if done from love to Christ, shall have their reward—here, in a good conscience, hereafter in the blessing of heaven.

II. THE INVITATION. (Read 15—17, and Matt. xxii. 1—4.) What remark was made by one of the persons at the feast? Yes, all such would indeed be blessed; but certain things were necessary. Guests must be invited, must accept, must come to the feast, must have a certain dress. So Christ tells a story. Who made a feast, and on what occasion? Who were those first bidden? By whom were they bidden? Yes, king's own servants first sent invitations, then sent again to bid to feast when all was ready.

III. THE EXCUSES. (Read Matt. xxii. 5—7; Luke xiv. 18—20.) What did the guests do? Made light of king's invitation; went about ordinary business, and sent impertinent excuses. What was the first? An excuse of business—must go and see new farm, go and try new oxen. What was the second excuse? Married a wife, which prevented coming. Were they good excuses? Why not? Had received king's invitation and accepted it? Nothing ought to stand in the way. What did the rest do? Actually beat

and killed the king's messengers? What did the king do? Must punish such conduct.

IV. THE NEW GUESTS. (Read Luke xiv. 21—24.) Now where were the servants sent? What kind of guests were bidden? Could these give feasts in return? Picture the king's servants in royal apparel, collecting the poor and lame, describing the glories of the palace, the kindness of the king, the joys of the feast; gently helping the lame to walk, leading the blind by the hand, seating them all at the feast. Now, what is the report? Still more room: they must go further, beyond the city, into all the highways and hedges; tell the news of the feast far and wide; compel them to come in, that the house may be full of guests.

V. THE WEDDING GARMENT. (Read Matt. xxii. 11—14.) Explain the custom of providing each guest with a suitable dress at a feast. Now picture the king going round the rooms to see and welcome all the guests. What does he find? What does he ask the man, just to make sure no accident? What did the man answer? No possible excuse; dress was there, but he would not wear it, therefore nothing to say. What was done to him? too late to get one now. Such pride and contempt of king could not be excused; he must be shut out of the feast. Same servants who brought him in and offered the dress now removes him.

VI. THE APPLICATION. (1) *The invitation.* The children will at once see who the king is. To what does God invite us? Often described as a feast (Rev. xix. 7, 9). Who were those first called? Who were sent to the Jews? Prophets and messengers. So far accepted invitation as to be received into covenant by circumcision, and perform all external requirements of law. What more were they bidden to do? Yes, to come near to God, and to repent. Show how just in the same way we have been called. (2) *The excuses.* Let children name some prophets sent to Jews, as Samuel, Elijah, Isaiah, and others, and read Heb. xi. 36—38, to see how they were treated. Who were called when Jews refused? Remind of lessons on Acts. Whom did Christ call? (John xii. 32.) Remind how all did come to Him: common people, poor women, blind Bartimæus, &c. So, still, Gospel is preached to all who may come if will, without money or price (Is. lv. 1). (3) *The wedding garment.* At present all live together, wheat and tares (Matt. xiii. 30), nominal Christians and real ones. Will that always be so? Who will come to judge? What will be seen then? not mere profession but life (Matt. vii. 21).

Questions to be answered.

1. Whom are we to invite to a feast, and why?
2. How does this practically apply to children?
3. Describe the parable in brief.
4. Who was first called, and how? Who are called now?
5. What excuses do children often make?
6. Explain the wedding garment.

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER XLIX.

"NOW, my Mary," said Bertrand, when he had concluded the long history he had told her as briefly as possible, "I think you quite understand the circumstances which have suddenly converted me into a wealthy peer of France and the master of Château de l'Isle, and you can see, of course clearly all that it involves as regards yourself, and your position in the world, and I must tell you that I have but one fear left as regards the fair prospect before us, and that is, the possibility that it may be a grief to you to have to leave England entirely, and live—as I think we ought to do—altogether in France."

"You need have no fear of that kind, dearest Bertrand!" she answered, looking at him with her earnest eyes; "it can never make the smallest difference to me where I am so long as you are with me. Your presence makes my home, my most happy home, wherever you may chance to be, and all the world apart from you would be to me but a dismal desert!"

"And this is the being whom Lurline tried to persuade me was as completely without feeling as a block of marble!" said Bertrand, while he gazed at her admiringly.

"That was because she herself was always so animated, and I so silent," said gentle Mary, who tried to think charitably even of Laura.

"Still and silent you were, dear, no doubt; but only because of the depth of feeling below. I owe little Jacques a great deal," he added, smiling, "for having taught me that 'still waters run deep.'"

"Jacques?" said Mary, inquiringly.

"Yes, little mischievous Jacques. I have never revealed to you yet the potent influence that small individual has had on our fate, but I shall some day, when we have more time than we can spare to-night. The crowd which bewildered you so much were all our own tenants, come to bid us welcome to our home."

"Oh, Bertrand, it is indeed happiness to see you



(*Drawn by* WILLIAM SMALL.)

"Laura clung to her with a frantic grasp."—*p.* 749.

in your rightful place at last! and I know that I shall love your grand old home with all my heart; but do you know," she continued, squeezing her hands into his, "I feel just a little sorry that I shall never have occasion to work for you, as I meant to do!"

"Oh, but you will, my Mary; not certainly in order to help me to a livelihood, seeing we have a rent-roll which we shall find it a hard matter to spend, but you will have to work with me in caring for the welfare of our tenants. I fear their interests have been greatly neglected since my grandfather owned the property. He and his wife—you have heard my father speak of his admirable mother, have you not?—did all they could for the people, according to the ideas of those times; but since then they have been left to shift for themselves absolutely. We shall have to see to the improvement of their dwellings, the education of their children, and the nursing of their sick—that last item will suit you, Mary."

"Yes indeed, I can see there will be plenty to do. Oh, how happy it will be! And is it really possible, Bertrand, that we are settled at home already, when I thought we should have to start off again in a few days; I believed we were only going to pay a little visit to that charming comte and comtesse!" and she laughed merrily.

"Yes, I trust you admire the comte now you have made acquaintance with him. We are indeed at home, Mary, and here I hope we shall spend all our lives in peace and happiness. But, darling, after we have been here a week we must go on to Italy, as we intended, for I have left various matters there which I must set in order; we need not stay long, only a fortnight or so."

"I shall like to go so much! I want to see the place where you lived so long, and which I tried to picture to myself day after day. Bertrand, have you ever remembered that if we go there we shall perhaps see Laura Brant?"

Bertrand started. "I hope not," he said; "but you are right, no doubt; they are living there. However, I cannot help it, we must go; and we need not encounter her unless we please. I for one will not meet her, if I can possibly help it; for I do not think I could bring myself to be even reasonably civil to her. But do not let us speak of her, Mary; her very name is a discord in the harmony of this happy evening. Come, let us go to our friends."

And so that peerless day closed in upon them with smiles and congratulations from all around, and a sense of peace and blessedness in the sunshine of God's favour, which amply compensated them for all that they had suffered by the generous self-denial with which in different ways they both had acted.

After a very happy week spent at Château de l'Isle Bertrand and Mary found themselves in the beautiful Italian city where he had dwelt so long. They took up their abode for the few days they meant to remain at an hotel where he was well known, and the news of his return soon spread through the place, bringing many of his old acquaintances to call on them. The tidings of his new dignity and of his marriage had preceded him, and added to the warmth of his welcome. As yet however he had not actually seen many of his old friends, for the first day after their arrival had been spent in taking Mary to some of the picture galleries, and in arranging his affairs; but on the following morning they had hardly finished breakfast when an Italian gentleman, who had been one of Bertrand's greatest intimates, came rushing in with great delight and excitement to see his friend once more, and congratulate him on all the various improvements in his position.

Mary was amused at Signor Vilalta's vivacity and enthusiasm, and, accustomed as she was to the gesticulations of Frenchmen, she had never seen anything like the sort of dramatic representation with which he described everything he had to tell.

He had not been very long in the room, when Bertrand asked him the question, which both he and Mary specially wished to have answered. "Could he tell them anything respecting Mr. and Mrs. Brant?"

"Can I tell you anything!" exclaimed Vilalta; "I have volumes to tell, if you do not already know the final catastrophe. But you must have heard it; the whole place has been ringing with it."

"We know nothing," said Bertrand. "You forget, my friend, that we have been living in a besieged city, where, naturally, balloons and carrier pigeons were not used for the conveyance of gossip. My wife and I knew Mrs. Brant well in England, but we have heard nothing of her since her marriage."

"Indeed! then you shall hear a most exciting little history—a comedy first of all, and now a tragedy; but the public have got behind the scenes, and the whole affair is understood. Thus it is:—Mr. Brant about a year ago finds himself suspected of insolvency, and with very great reason; he goes to England, and manages, by false representations, to get enough ready money to make a great show of wealth and security, while he plunges deeper into some enormous speculations which he thinks may redeem his fortunes, with an alternative of the most absolute ruin. In order to assist him in his display of wealth he brings with him from England a wife most brilliant, most bewitching, and a consummate coquette; he teaches her the part he wishes her to play, but, to his dismay, she enacts it a great deal too well. She rushes into the most headlong extravagance, far beyond what his new-found ready money can meet, and, further, she gives herself up to a life of incessant gaiety, in which, while she uses his house, his money, and his servants, for the benefit of her numerous guests, she never considers him or his interests in any single thing she does. She has but one object, and that is to shine in the world, and to amuse herself in the very indiscriminate society with

which she surrounds herself, and in which she goes to the utmost verge of propriety. Very soon the more noble and estimable of those with whom she became acquainted at first, drop away from her, and her perpetual fêtes and balls and riding parties are frequented only by the most reckless of our young men and women. All this does not suit Mr. Brant; he is furious that she compromises instead of enhancing his reputation, and that she squanders his money without furthering his object. He is jealous; he is indignant at her neglect of him; he is humiliated at finding himself reduced to a cipher in his own house. He reproaches her violently, she retorts with scornful indifference; he orders her to obey his commands, she laughs in his face, and tells him she always pleases herself; he tries to restrain her, she breaks out into more reckless expense, and more undesirable proceedings than ever. Open rupture between them. Mrs. Brant details every circumstance of the quarrel to the whole circle of her acquaintance. Mr. Brant's creditors begin to see the truth; his last speculations fail more entirely than any before. One month ago there comes a most tremendous crash; Mr. Brant's liabilities are made known; it would take the wealth of the whole province to cover them. Crushing ruin overtakes him, as well as hundreds more whom he had defrauded. He is bankrupt; he is criminal; he is on the point of being arrested; he takes flight in the dead of night; he wishes his wife to go with him, were it only because she knows too many of his secrets; she refuses, she will not leave her magnificent house. He tells her the goods will be seized, and she will be turned out; she tells him she shall know how to take care of herself, and turns her back on him. He departs, and they see each other no more; he disappears—none know where he is. Next day the creditors come to take possession of the house and all it contains; they tell Mrs. Brant she must go; she refuses; they discover that she has concealed some valuables; they threaten her with prison; there is a struggle; a terrible scene; she becomes very ill; they cannot remove her in the state she is in; they force her to retire to a small room in the attics, and send a wretched old woman out of the street to watch her, and report to them when she can be carried away, for all the servants had left. There a child was born to her, and the last that has been heard of her is that she is still in this place, very ill; dying, I believe."

Mary had listened to this long history with breathless attention, and ever-increasing pain and distress showing itself on her gentle face; but when Vilalta uttered these last words, she started from her seat, exclaiming in English, "Oh, Bertrand! poor Lurline! this is terrible! do let me go to her without a moment's delay!"

"We will speak of it when our visitor is gone," he answered, gravely, in English, and docile Mary sat down again at once in silence, without another word.

CHAPTER L.

THERE was a pause in the conversation for a few minutes after Mary's unusually impulsive outburst, and then Bertrand asked Signor Vilalta a few more questions about the unhappy woman who had so nearly marred for ever both his own life and his wife's, and on whom such dire retribution seemed to have fallen. "He wished to know," he said "whether, should she recover, the creditors would proceed against her for secreting the valuables which she had no doubt intended to carry away." Signor Vilalta thought not; the jewels and other treasures she had feloniously concealed had been taken from her, and nothing would now be gained by sending her to prison. They would turn her out of the house so soon as they could do so without risk to her life, and give themselves no further concern about her.

"But is she left quite without means?" asked Bertrand.

"Absolutely penniless, I believe," replied the Italian. "One of the creditors, who is an Englishman, gave the old woman a small sum to procure the mere necessaries of life for Mrs. Brant, and to pay for her attendance on her, such as it was; but he said, quite openly, that he did so very grudgingly, as he did not consider that either Mr. or Mrs. Brant deserved the smallest consideration."

"But she must have at least the means of living," said Bertrand. "What will become of her she if recovers?"

"It was thought she would write for help to her friends in England," answered Vilalta.

"I do not think there are any who could help her," said Mary. "Her father was so very ill when I left England that I do not believe it possible he can be alive now."

"Then I do not know what she is to do," said the Italian, shrugging his shoulders; "go to the house of the poor, I suppose."

"Does no one go to see her or help her now?" asked Bertrand.

"No one but the old woman who is paid to do it, I believe. You must know, my dear friend, that the fair Mrs. Brant did not make herself very much beloved in our city; she was so selfish, so heartless, so intriguing, she only attracted the silly young men."

Bertrand glanced round with a comical smile to Mary, whispering to her in English, "I suppose I may consider myself described in that speech, and it is quite true; I was a perfect ass to let myself be attracted by such a being as the Lorelei. I should have thought that some one would have gone to her for the sake of mere charity," he said aloud, in Italian.

Vilalta made an expressive grimace, as he answered, "I only know I do not feel at all disposed to befriend her myself, although she used to flash her

brilliant eyes at me as much as at other men; she might have helped Brant, and been of real service to him, if she had chosen; but she wilfully hastened his ruin to please herself, spite of his remonstrances. Bah, she has no heart!" and he snapped his fingers in the air, as if this finished the subject.

After a few more words on other subjects, he embraced Bertrand, foreign fashion, on both cheeks; bowed most elaborately to Mary, and took his leave, promising to see them again before they left Italy.

He had no sooner closed the door than Mary turned quickly to her husband.

"Dearest Bertrand, you will let me go to do what I can for her, will you not? Only think of poor Lurline alone there, ill and unhappy!"

"Lurline, who injured you so much!" he said, laying his hand caressingly on her soft hair.

"That is one reason why I wish so much to help her," answered Mary, gently.

"You are right, my darling; she has injured us both, and therefore we must not leave her to perish unaided; but I wish much it had not happened thus. I had no desire that there should be any renewal of acquaintance. I myself will not see her; on that I am fully determined."

"Then had I not better go at once, dear? I think we shall both be happier when I have done it; and I shall try to be back with you by the time you have finished writing your letters."

"I suppose you must go!" he said, reluctantly; "but you must take your maid with you, Mary; I will not have you go there alone."

"Then you were right in thinking I should find some use for such an appendage," she said, smiling, "though I thought it so needless to bring any servant for me only from the château."

"Every one there would have considered it very odd if the Comtesse de l'Isle had travelled without an attendant. You must live according to your rank, my little Mary, and you will find the maid a great convenience. But now as to Lurline; when you have ascertained what condition she really is in, remember you must make no promise which would involve her coming to our house, or being seen by me. Only whatever she requires in the way of money let her have at once, the person I once thought to make my wife must never know want," and he threw back his handsome head with a somewhat lordly air; then he rang, and ordered a carriage to be got ready for the comtesse.

Very soon Mary and her French maid Justine, who was the daughter of one of Bertrand's tenants, were driving rapidly through the streets of the beautiful city, and they speedily arrived at the door of a house which might well be called a palace for the size and beauty of the building, but it looked deserted and uncared-for. A number of Italian beggars were lounging on the marble steps in front of the door, which stood open, revealing a splendid hall destitute of furniture, where a man, who seemed to be a lawyer's clerk, kept guard over a number of cases, apparently awaiting removal. He rose as Mary came forward, with her maid, and asked what she might be pleased to want. She said she wished to visit Mrs. Brant, who was ill, she believed, in the house.

"There is a sick woman somewhere in the attics," he said; "but I know nothing about her, excepting that my master means to send her to the hospital to-morrow, whatever state she is in; he will not have her here any longer."

"Will you show me the way to her room?" said Mary, giving him her card, and putting some money into his hand at the same time.

"I will call the old woman down to you, Signora Contessa," he said with much more alacrity than he had yet displayed, and he was gone before she could attempt to follow him; he soon returned with a disagreeable-looking old Italian, whose brown skin and shrivelled face would have made her seem like a mummy, but for the cunning black eyes which twinkled brightly under the yellow handkerchief she wore over her head.

She made a cringing salutation to Mary, and said, in a whining tone, "The Contessa must pardon me, but that ill-conditioned sick woman refuses to see her."

"Oh, I hope not!" exclaimed Mary; "why does she object?"

"She says she will not have any proud fine lady coming to make her an object of charity; and what else is she I should like to know?"

"Ah, no doubt she does not know me by my new name," said Mary to her maid, and, taking another card, she wrote under the printed words "Comtesse de l'Isle" "Your friend, Mary Trevelyan." "Go with the old woman, and give her this," she continued, to Justine, and the French girl at once told the Italian to show the way, and hurried off. In a few minutes she returned, running swiftly down the marble staircase, which was all covered with dust and straw, saying, "Ah, madame, the moment she saw your English name, she called out to you to come to her quick, quick!"

And Mary went to look once more upon Laura Wyndham.

Could this be Lurline, that faded haggard woman, with fevered lips and tear-swollen eyes, tossing from side to side on a miserable little bed which constituted almost the sole furniture of the small ill-ventilated attic? Mary stood at the door for a few minutes before the sick woman perceived her, trying to realise that this was indeed the brilliant Lorelei of Chiverley, who had stolen Bertrand's heart away from her, and destroyed all earthly happiness for poor John Pemberton. Her appearance, apart from the look of illness, was so squalid and neglected, that it was hard indeed to believe she could be the same. Her long fair hair was matted about her head, her once pretty

hands and arms were so thin that the bones could be traced beneath the skin, and the expression of her face was wholly changed; its brightness, its saucy archness, all were gone, and she wore a look of restless gloom and misery. On a broken chair at her side was a jar of water and a little wine, and at the foot of the bed, wrapped in an old shawl, lay a puny infant, sleeping, happily unconscious of the wretchedness around him. Mary's heart swelled with pity for the rival who had been so cruel to her, and, whispering to Justine to take the old Italian woman away and leave her alone with Mrs. Brant, she advanced into the room, closing the door behind her. Suddenly Lurline saw her; then a look of wild eagerness flashed into her dimmed eyes; she started almost convulsively from her hard pillow, and stretched out her wasted arms to the graceful white-robed figure, so fair and sweet, that looked like a ray of silver moonlight passing into the dark room, where a small window, high up in the wall, admitted not a gleam of sunshine.

"Oh, Mary, Mary, come to me!" almost shrieked out Laura. "Oh, the comfort of seeing a good kind face again! Come to me, come!" and as Mary went forward and knelt down by her side, she flung her arms round her neck, and, laying her head on her friend's shoulder, burst into a torrent of tears. Mary soothed and caressed her for a few minutes, as if she had been a frightened child; but when she would have risen to bring her a little wine and water from the other side of the bed, Laura clung to her with a frantic grasp, and seemed almost beside herself with terror and misery. "Don't leave me, Mary! take care of me! help me! I am going to die! I know I am! and I am so frightened! I have been so wicked, I don't dare to go before God! What shall I do! oh, what shall I do!"

"Dear Laura, I am not going to leave you! do not be afraid! I am only going to get you a little wine, which will quiet you and give you strength. Let me try to make you more comfortable, and then we can talk together as much as you like."

"But you promise not to leave me," said Laura, clutching at her dress as Mary rose from her knees.

"Certainly, I promise," she said, with her sweet smile; "you can trust me, dear."

"Yes, I can trust you, Mary; you were always true and good. Oh, that I had been like you!" and she burst out again into a wail of piteous weeping, which went to the heart of Bertrand's wife, deeply as the miserable woman had injured them both.

(To be continued.)

COMFORTABLE WORDS.

BY THE REV. GORDON CALTHROP, M.A., VICAR OF ST. AUGUSTINE'S, HIGHBURY.

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations."—JAMES i. 2.

COUNT it all joy—that is, consider it a subject of unmixed rejoicing, a thing to congratulate yourself upon. And yet our Lord said to His disciples, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." How can the two injunctions be reconciled? Probably in this way—We are to be on our guard, we are to pray, lest we *should have a hand in placing ourselves* in circumstances in which our faith will be tried; the path of duty is the path of safety; and if we find ourselves in a position which is not of our own seeking or selection, we have the protection and the promise of God to fall back upon, and may reckon upon emerging from the difficulty unscathed. Not so if we have to any extent taken the matter into our own hands, then we have no safe-conduct through the enemy's territory; we are thrown upon our own resources, and these are only too likely to fail us. Now, when we *fall* into divers temptations, that is to say, when we are encompassed by trials as a man by foes coming suddenly and unexpectedly around him, we may feel that we have a claim upon the Divine aid, and so our minds may be at ease; we have nothing to reproach ourselves with; we need have no misgiving; He, whose Providence placed us here, is pledged to bring us safely out. And so we are to watch and pray, lest our own self-will should bring us into circumstances of temptation; but if God brings us there we are to be confident and tranquil.

"Yes," it may be said, "but tranquillity is one thing, and rejoicing is another. Why are we to rejoice when so situated? Joy is a singular emotion for those who are it may be sorely and grievously tempted by the troubles that surround them."

Certainly, the tried disciple is not to rejoice in trial for its own sake, that would be contrary to the nature which God has given us, and there is nothing unnatural about true Christianity. But he may rejoice in the prospect of result. The bitter medicine brings health. "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

And what is the particular cause of rejoicing which St. James mentions here? It seems to be this: that every victory over temptation contributes to the full and perfect development of the

Christian's character, that we may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. Let us give a little earnest consideration to the subject thus suggested.

Men have to acquire a mastery over any art by practice. First, they are instructed in the theory; and then they have to apply that theoretical knowledge in the manipulation of materials. A boy is apprenticed to his master; for a certain term of years he is occupied in learning his trade, in seeing how his master works, and in preparing to imitate him; and then the time of his apprenticeship expires, and the command comes—"Go and work yourself." And he works, and makes blunders, and spoils much material; but at last, profiting by his mistakes, and taught by experience—the best of all teachers—he masters his art practically, and attains such proficiency as he was intended for by Nature. Or, a soldier learns his drill. He is instructed in the use of his weapons, and acquires the art of performing evolutions in company with many others; but the most important part of his work is yet to come. "You have been trained and disciplined; now go and fight. There is your enemy; contend with him and deceive him." And we who call ourselves Christians are workmen, and we are soldiers. We learn the theory of our holy religion, and then the summons comes to go forth and put it into practice; for unless we do so we can never hope to become the perfect men in Christ Jesus which we ought to be.

Just so, argues the apostle, as we understand him, when we come into circumstances of trial, we are carrying our Christian theory into practice—we are called upon to translate what we have learnt into timely reality. If I require a box, I do not care for a man who can merely select the material and describe to me ever so accurately and graphically the way in which the thing can be made; *I want one who can make the box.* And what is wanted for the Christian Church and the purposes of Christ is not a man who can expatiate on the scheme of salvation, and tell us how the thing ought to be done, but one who can do the thing; who can bear suffering patiently; who can trust his God in the dark hour; who can deny self, and follow Christ; who can bring forth the fruits of righteousness, which are to the praise and glory of God. Observe, what is required is correct theory, but correct theory working itself out in act; and this is accomplished in circumstances of temptation, in such chiefly, if not in such alone. Say that you have faith; but how is it to be exercised? Why, you are brought into a situation in which your virtue is tried. Suffering comes, you must show patience. Loss comes, you must be trustful and hopeful. Disappointment comes, you must not be cast down. Your principle is tried, you are tempted to abandon the paths of rectitude; you must resist, for all these things is a trial of your faith. And if by God's grace you are victorious, your faith is strengthened, your character is developed, you have made some progress towards the stature of the perfect man in Christ Jesus.

Such seems to be the meaning of the apostle in the passage to which our text belongs. You learn rules—in your Bibles, in the instructions of the minister, in your solitary meditations and musings—you put those rules into practice in the conflict of daily life, in the encountering of divers temptations, and so become living practical Christians. "Blessed is he that endureth temptation."

But St. James suggests another thought. In order to see and feel that to fall into divers temptations is a blessed thing, a wisdom is required—a wisdom from above, a wisdom which God alone can give. It is not easy to pierce through the outward appearance into the inner reality. For this a well-balanced mind and a sound and penetrating judgment are required. "Wisdom"—that is what we want. Without it, it will be impossible to discover that there is a soul of good in so painful and perilous a thing as a surrounding by temptations. We must look through the temptations, we must fathom their secrets, before we can count it all joy to fall into them. And this wisdom God gives without grudging, but gives it to those only who ask in perfect and unfaltering reliance on the truth of His word.

Are we in trouble—sadly, sorely, terribly tried? Do we want the interpretation of the trouble? God giveth *wisdom* to all men liberally, and upbraideth not. He will enable us, if we ask Him, to see into His purpose, and to divine His motives.

Here, then, is another way of dealing with the subject of affliction: regard it as the proof of Divine love. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." Regard it—regard it as the appointed pathway to the crown. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." But regard it also as the sphere of your Christian activity, in which you shall attain to your full spiritual development, and become perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

SURLY BOB.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER XI.—A SORROWFUL HEART.

BOB meantime had slunk off, never dreaming of waiting for thanks, nor even thinking that anything he had done merited them; but his heart had been strongly moved and stirred, first by the sight of the child's danger, then by the sense of having rescued him from that peril, and lastly by that unexpected embrace of the grateful little fellow.

He seemed still to feel the warm soft lips pressed to his cheek; and to think of that lovely child having actually kissed him—"Surly Bob!" It did indeed seem very strange and unreal. And yet it was so pleasant too, it made his heart glow to think of it.

Full of these reflections, he scarcely noticed where he was going, until his thoughts were suddenly interrupted by his stumbling against some one who was coming at a quick pace from the opposite direction. Glancing up, he first of all perceived that it was a gentleman, and then that the gentleman was no other than Mr. Hill, the doctor who had been so kind to Johnnie, and about whom the latter had often spoken to Bob when he went to see him.

Covered with confusion, he was attempting some awkward apologies, when Mr. Hill began, "Why this is Bob Saunders, isn't it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Just the boy I was wanting to see. Can you turn and walk a few steps with me, my lad, as I am in a hurry, and I have something I want to say to you?"

Bob turned in silence, wondering what Mr. Hill had to say, but little dreaming what it would be. He soon knew, however, for Mr. Hill, after a few words about Johnnie, went on, "I half feared from the first that we should not be able to save the poor little fellow's leg; and now that we have tried every means that could be thought of, we find there is no course left us but to take it off above the knee. The injury received was too great, and the disease too deeply seated for a cure."

Bob was slow in comprehending some things, but he understood what these words meant, and his heart seemed to die away within him. He did not speak a word or show any sign of grief, so that a stranger would have thought him utterly indifferent; but when Mr. Hill left him he turned to walk homewards like one half stunned, feeling as if a heavy weight had suddenly fallen upon his heart, crushing it and making it ache with a dull pain, whilst it seemed full to bursting with yearning love and tenderness towards little Johnnie. If he could but go to him and comfort him, and stay beside him and help him to bear it! but the doctor said he must not see any one until the operation was well over, and he was making progress towards recovery.

Oh, if he could but bear it for him! He would give his leg, he would give both of them, gladly, if it could spare Johnnie. And yet he could do nothing for him! That seemed the hardest part of all.

When Bob reached home, finding it was not yet tea-time, he went straight out to his den at the back; for he always preferred his own company to that of his cousins, more especially now that his heart was so sore and heavy. But no sooner had he opened the door, which, by the way, did not seem to be fastened so carefully as usual, than he perceived something lying on the ground, and stooping, he found it was their little dove—Johnnie's pet—already cold and dead. Yes, there was no doubt about its being dead; for though Bob stroked it gently, and put his warm cheek down against it, and blew softly upon it, and spoke to it, and even kissed it, nothing was of any avail; the bird still remained motionless, not so much as a feather stirred.

At length Bob, seeing that the little pet was past recovery, laid him gently down; his face darkening meantime, as he muttered to himself, "There's been foul play here, that's plain enough. Somebody must have got in somehow, and killed Johnnie's bird. Let me catch him, that's all!" and Bob's looks and clenched fists expressed pretty plainly what he meant by that word "all."

But at that moment some slight sound attracted his attention; and glancing up at the little opening in the wall which went by the name of window, he found his cousin Sam's face squeezed against the small panes of glass, as he tried to obtain a view of what was going on within.

"So this is the revenge he threatened," thought Bob, as their eyes met; when Sam fell back with a mocking laugh, which left the other in no doubt as to who had been guilty of the death of their favourite.

Bob's wrath blazed out in uncontrollable fury; and before Sam could escape he had caught him, and was giving him such a thrashing as he had never before given to any one. Sam's cries and howls were so loud that they drew Mrs. Saunders out to see what could be going on.

At length with a sudden jerk he flung Sam from him, and bolting into his room, slammed the door in the faces of the others, and then firmly secured it. To make it still more safe he planted his back against it; and remained standing thus, listening to the sounds outside, but paying no heed either to Mrs. Saunder's demands to him to open, or to her threats of punishment, whilst Sam's

howls grew more and more dismal as he found his mother taking his part. So he made the most of his hurts, whilst Mrs. Saunders exhausted all her powers of eloquence, as, in her loud shrill voice, she set before Bob, in strong terms, the baseness of his ingratitude, "in turning thus upon the child of them as had clothed and fed him all these years. But Bob would come to a bad end, that was certain. She always did say so, and always would. He'd find himself in gaol some day with that temper of his, and 'twould serve him right too. And, moreover, the sooner he moved off and learnt to shift for himself the better; for 'twas high time he did so; and she knew it was very wrong of her to let him stop on, setting such a bad example as he did to her own children. But let him dare to lay a finger on one of them again, and she would take care he didn't get off without a punishment! And his uncle should be told all about him when he came home; and she guessed he'd turn him out of doors that very day."

The longer Mrs. Saunders continued to pour out her words, the more angry she seemed to get; whilst Sam (of whose late behaviour she was quite ignorant, or she might, if only for the sake of justice, have rebuked him as well) stood by whining, and trying to make out that he had been very desperately hurt.

How long this would have lasted it is impossible to say, had not Mrs. Saunders, pausing to take breath, suddenly become aware that some one was rapping loudly at her front door. She accordingly hastened to open it, followed by Sam, and found a gentleman standing there, who had dismounted from his horse, which he was holding by the bridle.

"Does any one of the name of Saunders live here?" he inquired.

"Yes, sir; that's my name," replied Mrs. Saunders.

"Then perhaps you may be the lad's mother? It is a boy of the name of Bob Saunders I am seeking."

"Oh then he ain't *my* son, thank goodness!" ejaculated Mrs. Saunders. "What has he been a-doing now, sir? Something bad, I'll be bound; for that boy wouldn't stop at anything, it's my opinion."

"I am sorry to hear such a character of him," returned the gentleman, who was no other than Mr. Deveron, "for he has just performed a very brave action, and I have come to thank him for it, as he slipped away before I had time to do so. This isn't the lad, is it?" he added, turning to Sam.

"No, sir, not if his name's Bob. This is my own boy, Sam, sir."

"But does Bob live here? I was told he did. He is your nephew, probably."

"Yes, sir; my husband's nephew."

"And is he in? Can I speak to him?"

Mrs. Saunders turned to Sam, saying, "Go and tell him to come here, will you."

Sam went off slowly and reluctantly; for as his angry revengeful feelings had not yet cooled down, he by no means relished the idea of seeing Bob noticed, and praised, and even thanked by the strange gentleman, whilst he was totally overlooked. Therefore he obeyed his mother according to the letter, but that was all.

Giving a loud kick to the door, he cried out to Bob, "You're to come, mother says," and then ran off, seized with fear lest his enemy should suddenly pounce out upon him and give him another thrashing like the last, from which he was still smarting.

After lingering a few moments in the back kitchen, in order to make it appear that he had been all this time endeavouring to persuade Bob to accompany him, he returned to the other room, where Mr. Deveron meantime had been relating to Mrs. Saunders the part which Bob had been playing that afternoon, finishing by saying, "After taking my little boy home, and telling his mamma all that had happened, I came back here at once to seek Bob, as we both were so anxious to thank him."

"Well, is he coming?" asked Mrs. Saunders as Sam stole in.

"No; I've told him, but he won't come."

(*To be continued.*)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

291. What was the name given by Hezekiah to the brazen serpent which Moses had made for the children of Israel in the wilderness?

292. Why was it that SS. Paul and Silas were beaten and put in prison at Philippi?

293. What happened to the Assyrians whom the king sent to occupy Samaria?

294. What seer is stated to have kept a kind of genealogical record of the events of the lives of the kings of Judah?

295. Give some passage from the prophets to show that Jeroboam King of Israel held his court at Bethel.

296. In what way does St. John the Baptist express his unworthiness to be the servant of Christ?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 720.

281. "Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat" (Acts xviii. 17; see also verses 12—17).

282. "Then Isaac sowed in that land (Gerar) and received in the same year an hundredfold" (Genesis xxvi. 12).

283. St. Peter in his first Epistle (1 Peter i. 24, 25).

284. "Forty years old was I when Moses, the servant of the Lord, sent me from Kadesh-barnea to espy out the land" (Joshua xiv. 7).

285. "What time she lifteth up herself on high she scorneth the horse and his rider" (Job. xxxix. 18).



(*Drawn by* M. E. EDWARDS.)

THE THREE FLOWERS.

A STRANGER from a far-off land,
Within my garden, waste and dried,
Planted a plant with wounded hand,
Moistened it with his blood—and died!

And from one stem three branches grew,
Of diverse fashion, wondrous fair,
From which the summer sunbeams drew
Three lovely blossoms rich and rare.

As ardent as the morning light
That melts the stars like flakes of snow,
So did one flower's intensest white
A lake of light translucent glow.

Another like a sapphire sky,
And in its heart a star of white,
That shone and mirrored in the eye
A depth of colour infinite.

The third was like a kindling eye,
And smiles with heart's blood warmly drawn,
Or clouds of pearl and rosy dye
That sail and kindle in the dawn.

To grace the garden of my heart
They caught the sunbeams from above,
And wove their tints with heavenly art
In one device—"Faith, Hope, and Love."

J. Hue.

THE THOROUGH CHRISTIAN.

BY THE REV. JAMES SPENCE, D.D., AUTHOR OF "HOURS WITH DANIEL," ETC.

"I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."—3 St. John, 2.

WHO Gaius was for whom the apostle St. John expressed the somewhat singular wish recorded in these words we have no means of knowing. Several persons of the same name are referred to in the New Testament: one, of Corinth (1 Cor. i. 14); one, of Macedonia (Acts xix. 29); and one, of Derbe (Acts xx. 4). But the name was a common one, the same as the Latin *Caius*, and the identification of the person addressed by St. John with any of those bearing the same name is simply a matter of valueless conjecture. Perhaps nowhere in the New Testament is there a more complete though concise testimony to the piety and consistency of any Christian disciple than these words supply. They describe a character of rare excellence and worth, and give us a portrait of a thorough Christian man. Gaius seems to have been a person of social position and worldly substance, and to have been much respected. Some suppose that an ailing and feeble state of health at this time suggested or dictated the peculiar form of the apostle's wish on his behalf. It may have been so, but it is not necessary to assume it. There is much in St. John's wish for his friend calculated to lead all who read it to thoughtful reflection. It is really a prayer for Gaius that God would give him health and outward prosperity in accordance with his prosperity of soul—that he might in all things prosper as truly as he did in his spiritual life.

I. What bodily health is we all know, and how great a blessing it is, though that is learned often only when it is taken away for a time. Nor are we ignorant as to what temporal prosperity means, involving success in secular affairs and happiness in the various relations of life. But what is prosperity of soul? The soul of Gaius was prospering, and St. John desired for him prosperity in all other things in keeping with the spiritual prosperity which he enjoyed. What are the elements or evidences of this prosperity of soul? There are signs by which we can generally discern bodily health and energy, and signs by which we may judge of a man's worldly prosperity. Some of the things by which the apostle formed his opinion and estimate of the spiritual life and prosperity of Gaius we can find in this very brief Epistle. There was *first* the enthronement and indwelling of the truth. "I rejoiced greatly," says St. John, "when the brethren came and testified of that truth that is in thee" (ver. 3).* Gaius had received the truth, and held by it fondly and resolutely amidst temptation to error; it was enthroned in his heart. We can be in no doubt as to what St. John understood by "the truth" which was in Gaius. "We know," he says in his first Epistle (chap. v. 20), "that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." With the gospel and epistles of John before us, even were there no further record, we could not doubt what were his ideas of "the truth." To him Jesus Christ was the True One, "the way, the truth, and the life;" and to have the Saviour dwelling by faith in the soul was to have the truth of God enthroned in the citadel of manhood. This was the foundation of spiritual prosperity, and the very ground of the new life. "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth." The truth as it is in Jesus Christ, the eternal Word, is to the soul as food to the body, the means of nourishment, healthy development, and growth into the likeness of God. Truth, then—the truth of which the Son of God is at once the personal subject and the revealer—is essential to the life and the prosperity of the soul. This spiritual blessing does not depend on intellectual speculation, but on truth dwelling within, assimilating to itself the thoughts, desires, and affections of our manhood, and achieving its holy victories throughout our entire nature, "even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

* "Thy share of the truth," as rendered by Dean Alford.

Practical obedience, or holy consistency of character, is a *second* element and evidence of soul-prosperity. "Even," says St. John to Gaius, "as thou walkest in the truth" (ver. 3). To walk in the truth involves a course which includes all sides of the character, and all aspects of the Christian life. It means the regulation of the conduct and the exercise of all the powers according to the principles of the truth, which is "after godliness." There can be no spiritual prosperity in the presence of cherished sin, or in the absence of holy watchfulness. Holiness is the evidence and beautiful efflorescence of spiritual prosperity.

Again, the practical manifestation of love was a third evidence and element of the spiritual prosperity of Gaius. "Thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; which have borne witness of thy charity (love) before the Church" (vs. 5, 6). Such conduct was Christ-like, and what higher evidence could there be of having prosperity of soul? "Love is the fulfilling of the law;" "love is the bond of perfectness;" "he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God." The inspired writer of the Epistle of the Hebrews says to them, "We are persuaded of you things that accompany salvation. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister" (Heb. vi. 9, 10).

Intelligent faith and holy conduct, earnest convictions and practical benevolence for Christ's sake, constituted the highest evidence of godliness. To receive the truth, to abide in the truth, to walk in the truth, to spread the truth—all are essential to the presence and manifestation of sterling piety. Such were the signs in Gaius which St. John regarded as evidence of a healthy spiritual condition. We see, then, in him the type of the thorough Christian. The warmth of love in his heart was in harmony with the light of truth in his mind, and the purity of his life reflected the attractive beauty of both. So it is still. The true Christian has strong convictions, earnest purposes, generous sentiments; he cherishes holy affections, displays enlightened zeal, and performs benevolent deeds. The truth is in his soul, his words are truth uttered, his conduct is truth acted, his character is truth reflected. The beauty of truth charms him, its power purifies him, its love constrains him, its harmony strengthens him, and its glory fills him with gladness, energy, and hope, so that in and by the truth he lives in the present for the future. The consistent Christian is the highest style of man—the enemies of the truth themselves being judges.

II. The apostle desired for Gaius outward temporal prosperity, in keeping with his healthy and prosperous spiritual condition. In this wish, placing as it does temporal and spiritual prosperity together in the same human life, several truths were suggested, to which we do well to give some attention for our own instruction.

1. Temporal good is a legitimate and proper object of desire. It is not wrong to wish to be healthy and strong, or to be successful in business. St. John wished it for Gaius, and we may wish it for ourselves and for others. Health is better than sickness, and strength is to be chosen before weakness. God has no pleasure in our indigestion or our rheumatism, any more than He has in lying lips, which are "an abomination" to Him. It is in harmony with His highest law that His rational creatures should be well, and it is, therefore, perfectly right to wish for bodily health. Moral and spiritual considerations often make affliction good for us, but our Divine Father has no pleasure in chastisement. He would rather have His children good and obedient without the rod than be in a condition to need it. So would He rather have them prosperous and happy than disappointed and miserable. Progress is His law, and it pleases Him more to see the hand of the diligent making rich, than to see its labour fail and its skill fruitless. Here also other influences may come in to bring disappointment and failure which will issue in our highest good; but God would rather, for our sake, have the good with prosperity than the good with adversity and sorrow. It is perfectly legitimate, therefore, to wish for prosperity in all respects — in bodily energy, secular business, domestic relations, and social and public life. There is no solid reason, no religious reason, why a Christian should not seek bodily and outward prosperity.

2. Further, it is manifestly implied that temporal prosperity is not incompatible with the highest spiritual prosperity. They may exist together in the experience and history of the same man, even as John wished them to exist together in the case of Gaius. Some, indeed, might be disposed to think that the apostle's wish was an unwise one, because temporal prosperity seems often a sad hindrance to spiritual progress. Christ Himself said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God" (Matt. xix. 24). There can be no doubt that, practically, the difficulty of maintaining healthy, elevated, and progressive spiritual life amidst all kinds of worldly happiness and prosperity is very great, but the thing is not impossible. The difficulty lies in our nature, not in the nature of the things themselves. There may not be many Gaiuses, but happily there are some. Would there were more! Had St. John seen or supposed that the spiritual prosperity of his friend would suffer by an accession of wealth, or a robuster condition of bodily health, he would not have

wished for them in his behalf, but he saw no incompatibility between them. Gaius was in such a prosperous spiritual state as to be able to bear a larger measure of temporal good than he possessed. In this fact doubtless lay the secret of the apostle's wish. He took the prosperous condition of his soul into account when he wished for him temporal good of all kinds, more than he was at that time possessing.

3. Hence we may learn that temporal prosperity can be advantageously received and rightly enjoyed only on the basis of true spiritual prosperity. Except the soul be in a healthy spiritual state much temporal good is more likely to prove hurtful than advantageous to a man's highest interests. Christ does "not break the bruised reed," nor "quench the smoking flax," but the world often does so. If religion in the soul be feeble, if piety be but a weak and sickly plant, what is more likely than the accession of riches and prosperity to injure it, and even to crush it altogether? Sometimes we are disposed to think we could bear any amount of wealth, and wish God would only try us with it. But he knows our weakness better than we do, and holds back what he sees would prove our spiritual injury or ruin if we obtained it. This should tend to moderate our desires in relation to all worldly good. It is not, however, to be supposed that only those whose souls are prospering receive outward good at the hands of Divine Providence. Oh no, it is far otherwise. Many have secular wealth in abundance who are altogether destitute of spiritual life; many have much increase of worldly riches who are very poor towards God; multitudes have vigorous bodily health who give no place to God and His claims in their hearts. They think not of Him in whom they live and move and have their being. We live here in a state of probation, where God tries His children in various ways, to test their character in relation to Himself. The possession of wealth and the enjoyment of outward prosperity may often involve a grand test of spiritual character leading to everlasting issues, just as in the case of the young man who came to Christ asking the way of life, and went away sorrowful when the Saviour told him to sell all that he had and give to the poor. He was not prepared for this course of action, and seems to have preferred keeping his wealth to following Jesus. Though outward prosperity is by no means contingent or dependent on spiritual prosperity, yet the possession of the latter is the only solid and safe basis for the enjoyment of the former. We cannot in wisdom wish for the outward when we are not conscious of possessing the inward. This is in practical harmony with the words of our Lord when he said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

4. The measure of spiritual prosperity may be therefore viewed as a safe standard for the measure of temporal good. The spiritual prosperity of Gaius dictated the apostle's wish for his prosperity in all other directions. It is not very often that, in our good wishes for the welfare of our friends, we can make the prosperity of their souls the standard of our wishes for them in regard to other things. How would this standard affect many of ourselves? Would it not be a terrible thing for some of us? How poor and ailing, maimed and suffering, would many be if they had no more bodily health or outward prosperity than they have of actual enjoyment in communion with God, and the exercises of spiritual religion! They would speedily be amongst the poorest and meanest on earth. With many Christians whose life is low, dwarfish, and languid in divine things, how terrible would be the test which St. John applies to Gaius! If bodily health were to be measured by the health of the soul, would not the dwellings of many become as hospitals, and their beds of ease be turned into beds of disease and languishing? The physical beauty of not a few would give place to deformity and ugliness, and secular wealth would at once take to itself wings and fly away. In some cases, on the other hand, disease would take its departure, and the vigour of health and strength would come by every avenue into the bodily frame.

Would not this wish of the apostle for Gaius be a safe standard for all? Unless religion keeps pace with the measure of our temporal good, our spiritual welfare is sure to be endangered by it. A Christian need have no fear of success in business, or of abounding tokens of outward prosperity, if at the same time he be growing in grace and in the knowledge of his Lord and Saviour. The danger is to have so much sail, as many have, of outward prosperity in the voyage of life, and so little ballast of spiritual piety. It is infinitely better to be content with little, and have wealth in God, than to have much worldly success while God is forgotten. Bodily health, even of the best and strongest, is but a temporal blessing, and secular success belongs exclusively to this life, but spiritual prosperity has its issues far beyond the things that are seen and temporal—"within the veil." Which was the richer and the happier man—Dives, with his goods laid up for many years, but without any conscious interest in the love of God, or Lazarus, who, happy in the Maker as his Almighty Friend, was only fed from the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table? No one is in doubt about the true and just reply.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. Second Series. No. 12. The Transfiguration.

Chapter to be read—Matt. xvii. (part of).

INTRODUCTION. In order to understand this story must go back a little. Christ been talking to His disciples as usual about the future, but had now said some hard things (see Matt. xvi. 21—24). What were they expecting Him to do for their nation? Under whose power were the Jews at this time? So they hoped He would prove indeed a mighty king, and deliver them from Romans. He tells them He is going to Jerusalem. Is it to be crowned? What only crown did He have? Is it to put down Romans? No. What is He going for? (xvi. 21). To suffer all that He must suffer for our salvation.

I. The Story. (Read xvii. 1—9.) The story having been read, question it out of the children, drawing out the following points. (1) *The time.* One evening, after long day's work, as usual, of healing, talking, teaching, &c. Can picture Christ and disciples climbing up the mountain, getting views of Lake of Galilee, seeing sun set, stopping now and then to rest; at last reaching the top; darkness coming on. (2) *The persons.* Who were they? Christ leading the way, the others following: who were they? Let children name other occasions when these three were thus chosen out specially—in the raising of Jairus' daughter, and at the Garden of Gethsemane (see Mark v. 37, xiv. 33). Why should they be with Christ now? What had Peter just said? What did the mother of Zebedee's children ask for them? (Matt. xx. 20). Perhaps these three thought more of the kingdom than the others, so were to have a special lesson about it. (3) *The vision.* What did they see? (Mark viii. 3). Try and picture the scene: the mountain-top; Christ and three apostles; the bright cloud suddenly descends; His face suddenly lighted up like the sun; His raiment suddenly shining; how different to usual! How had Christ lived with His disciples? Poor and despised; sometimes no food, no lodging; a poor man. Now they see Him in glory, what will they think of Him and His kingdom? It must be a *real* kingdom, and it must be a *glorious* kingdom! But who else are here? Whence do they come? What was there remarkable about Moses and Elias? How were they like Christ? Where did Moses fast, and where Elijah? (1 Kings xix.). Remind of Moses' mysterious way of leaving this world, and of Elijah's translation (2 Kings ii.). What is Moses often called? Moses there as lawgiver, and Elijah as representing prophets—fit companions for Christ. What did He say about the law and prophets? (Matt. v. 17). (4) *The conversation.* Now the apostles hear Christ and Moses and Elias talking: what are they talking about? Surely about His glory, His kingdom, His power. No! (see Luke ix. 31) about His death. But was there no glory in it? (Heb. xii. 2, ii. 9). Yes; but not the glory they expected—the glory of saving souls, not merely of delivering bodies from power of Romans. While the conversation continued, what did the apostles do? Eyes dazzled with brightness, fell asleep; woke up presently, in time to see Moses and Elias depart (Luke ix. 33). Now Peter joins in: what does he ask? Why does he want three tents? How delightful to stay there always; no more long travels; no more taking up of cross; but to stop always and see glory of Christ! What happens while he is speaking? Another bright cloud comes over all; another voice—whose is it? Now they are indeed afraid. Who had heard God's voice before in a mountain? As Israelites, so the apostles. Now fall on faces in worship, and listen. Once more hear a voice—whose is it? (Matt. xvii. 7). Jesus speaks and touches them; they knew His voice—listen, look up. Jesus is alone with them; no more fear: they descend with Him.

II. The Lessons. (1) *The time.* Tell the children this occurred towards the end of Christ's ministry. When had voice of God been heard before calling Christ His Son? (Matt. iii. 17). So now, as He draws near the end, to strengthen Him; He knew all that was coming, so received comfort from communion with God. Just so with all; when something coming to us which we dread—*e.g.*, leaving home, going amongst strangers, some illness coming on, some death approaching, if seek God, shall find Him very near; perhaps shall have some special sense given of His presence, causing face to shine and heart to rejoice; therefore learn a lesson of *comfort.* (2) *The place.* Where was the Transfiguration? So in prayer, soul rises to God, will find God. Whose voices shall we hear? How does God speak? By the law, hear it (see Ps. cxix.); by the prophets (Heb. i. 1), hear them; by His Son, hear Him (Heb. i. 2). Going to God in this spirit, with humility, reverence, teachableness, will be taught, cheered, comforted. (3) *The conversation.* What was it about? This lesson still to be learned. Glory in suffering (James i. 2); glory in patience (1 Peter ii. 20); glory in self-denial for Christ's sake; to be followed by glory in heaven, harps of gold, glory of God, endless bliss. Shall this be ours?

Questions to be answered.

1. What did the disciples expect Christ to be?
2. Who were with Him on the mount, and what was there remarkable about them?
3. Describe the vision.
4. What was the conversation about?
5. What lessons may we learn from the story?

RUTH TO NAOMI.

BID me not leave thee, mother dear,
Thy country shall be mine,
Those sunny plains my heart shall cheer,
Where clings thy native vine;
Oh, chide me not, for I am bent
On following thy feet,
No words can move my firm intent,
Then do not thus entreat.

To leave thee in thy widowed years,
Sad, childless, and alone,
Would fill mine eyes with burning tears,
Were I as hard as stone!
Do I not love thee passing well?
Did I not love thy son?
And canst thou bear to say farewell
To me his cherished one?

I view thy calm and thoughtful brow,
I read thy earnest eye,
And think our Mahlon's spirit now
Shines through them from the sky;
Then tell me not to tarry here,
And call another lord,
My love died on thy dead son's bier,
As music leaves a chord.

Thy great Jehovah hears my vow,
And He will bless our way;
To Him alone my knee shall bow
At night and early day;
Thy father's God who gave us breath,
Sheds light on what I do:
There's but the icy hand of death
Shall ever part us two. JANE DIXON.

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER LI.

MARY DE L'ISLE was too experienced a nurse not to see at once that the first thing to be done for the unhappy Laura Brant was to lessen her physical discomfort, before she made any attempt to quiet her mind. She therefore persuaded her to drink a little wine, and then bathed her face and hands with cold water, smoothing back the long hair that hung over her burning forehead, and gathering it into a net, so as to be out of the way; then she shook up the pillows, and raised Laura sufficiently to enable her to sit up in the bed, and, finally, she lifted the sleeping child very tenderly in her arms, and placed it where it could lie more comfortably, and give Laura greater freedom of movement. She managed, too, to open the high window, so as to relieve the oppressive atmosphere of the room, and when all these arrangements were completed, she came and sat down beside the poor changed Lorelei, and took her hand lovingly in her own.

"Oh, Mary!" sighed the invalid, who had watched all her gentle movements with tearful eyes; "it is like a breath of sweet air from heaven to have you moving round me; you look so fresh and pure, and snow-white as an angel, in the midst of all the wickedness and misery this wretched room contains. I cannot understand how you have come here; why did they bring me your name as Comtesse de l'Isle? Are you married? and to whom?"

"To Bertrand Lisle!" said Mary, very softly, and averting her eyes from Laura's face, over which her words brought an angry flush for a moment; but it soon faded, and Lurline gave a weary sigh.

"I might have guessed it," she said; "but how does that make you a countess?"

"Bertrand has succeeded to the title and estates of his family, by the death of his uncle."

"I never knew that he had any prospects of that kind," said Laura.

"He did not know it himself," replied Mary; "he was not aware of the existence of the château or the property till he visited his uncle last autumn, and soon after he came into possession."

"Then he is wealthy now, I suppose, and a peer of France?"

"Yes," said Mary, simply; "but, dear Laura, do not let us speak of such matters now, when you are so ill."

"Oh, the irony of fate!" exclaimed Laura, flinging up her arms with a gesture of despair; "and this was really the position I abandoned when I discarded Bertrand Lisle because he had become a poor soldier! I gave up the rich Comte de L'Isle to end my days as a beggar in a garret!" She flung herself round, buried her face in the pillow, and groaned aloud.

"Dear Laura!" said Mary, earnestly, "if you are indeed so ill that you think your life is drawing to a close, you have no need surely to trouble yourself about earthly riches and honours; they are at all times utterly valueless compared with that peace in

immortality, which alone can avail any one of us at the last."

"Yes, you are right," she answered, turning slowly round; "if that awful hateful mystery of death is coming upon me—from which I would fly to the ends of the earth if I could—nothing matters much in my past life, except my wickedness. But where am I to find peace, or hope, or pity in that other world which they say is the presence of God? Mary, I see many frightful visions in my feverish nights—serpents crawling about me, and demons mocking me, but the most hideous sight of all is the spectacle of my own soul. I do not suppose you have the remotest idea how bad I have been!"

"We all need to repent, Laura."

"Repent! I do not know if I do, rightly; I repent of everything which has brought me to such a pass as this, but I cannot tell if it is repentance which will avail in the sight of God. How can I suppose the all-pure God will ever look on me with pardon or compassion, when I do not believe that you would sit there beside me, Mary, if you knew what my sins have been, even only against yourself!"

"It could not make the smallest difference to me, Laura; it is all past and forgotten; do not let us speak of it."

"But do you know that I parted you and Bertrand by a systematic course of falsehood, in order to win him to myself?" said Laura, with a bitterness against herself which caused her to use her natural frankness of speech for the purpose of self-accusation.

"God brought us back to each other," said Mary, gently; "so you need think of it no more."

"I doubt if Bertrand would be as forgiving as you are, Mary. He must hate and despise me, and so must poor John Pemberton."

For a moment Mary started, to hear the dead spoken of thus, and then remembered that Lurline could not possibly know of the catastrophe which had put an end to that noble life during the siege of Paris; she determined to say nothing on the subject at that time, when Laura was so much excited, in the hope that when she did tell her all the history of John's blessed passage to his rest, it might help to draw this wayward spirit nearer to the Saviour whom he had loved so well. Mary could remember his very look and accent, when he had begged her so earnestly to try and bring poor Lurline to the light and truth, if ever she had the opportunity. Perhaps his prayers had obtained this meeting for her, Mary thought, and when a fitting moment came, she would do her best to carry out his generous wishes for the woman who had destroyed all his earthly happiness.

"They do despise me! they do hate me! I see you cannot deny it, Mary!" said Laura, excitedly, mistaking altogether the reason of her friend's silence, "and they are right. I behaved shamefully to them both. I deceived them, for I cared nothing for either of them; I never loved but one man truly, years ago, and he would have nothing to say to me. I was utterly false to John and to Bertrand, when I pretended they had won my affection, and I betrayed them without a pang—first one, and then the other, when it suited my purpose. I see all the hatefulness of my conduct now as well as they can, but you can tell them that they have their revenge, Mary. Here I am, in this wretched hole, dying—dying! going before the awful judgment-seat of God; and I am terrified, I am appalled! What hope have I? I am lost! Yes, I am hopelessly lost!" and her voice rose to a shriek, as she tossed her arms about, and gazed wildly upward.

Mary took hold of her hands, drawing them firmly down into the soft steady grasp of her own, and, looking at the feverish violently-agitated woman with a calm and decision which had an instantaneous effect, she said distinctly, "Laura, you must compose yourself, that we may talk quietly over your position and prospects. Will you listen to me calmly?"

"I will do whatever you like," said Laura, wearily. "I can lie still as long as you are beside me; the sight of your peaceful face makes me feel safe."

"Then let me tell you, first, that I think you are mistaken in supposing yourself to be dying. I have had a great deal of experience of illness and death lately, and I feel convinced you have, at present at least, no fatal symptoms."

"I am sure I feel ill enough to be dying, Mary," said Lurline, pushing back the hair from her forehead; "I am so weak, and I am always light-headed at night, and every day I hear that dreadful old woman who waits on me say to the men who want to turn me out, 'Wait a little longer, and she is sure to die!'"

"Poor dear!" said Mary, compassionately, "it has been miserable for you to be left to such a nurse, but no doubt she said it because she wanted to continue in charge of you, so as to get the payment. We shall take you out of her hands now, you may be sure; and I still think, though you have a great deal of fever, and are very much exhausted, that you are in no especial danger. With care and good nursing, I believe you will soon recover."

"I don't think I wish it, Mary," said Laura, with tears rolling down her cheeks. "I am afraid to die—horribly afraid—because of my wickedness, but I am almost as much afraid of coming back to a hopeless poverty-stricken miserable life. What have I to live for now?"

"Your child, Laura! Surely you have not forgotten it!" said Mary.

"Poor little helpless mite! I think it would be happier for it to die too, than to live to have me for its mother!"

"Not if you fit yourself, as you may, to bring it

up worthily; and there is your husband, Lurline," she added, in a low voice.

Laura turned her head away. "I do not love him; I never did!"

"Still, it is your duty to be with him; and if you try to please him, affection may grow up between you."

"I do not believe he would have me with him now; he wanted me to come too, when he escaped that night, and I was so enraged because he had reduced me to poverty that I refused. Then he said his failure was chiefly my fault, and we parted in anger. I do not know where he is now."

"Did he not give you any address to which you could write?"

"Yes, he did, a place in New York; but it is no use, Mary, I am not good like you; I cannot bear the thought of a life of privation and wretchedness. I think death would be happiest for me, if only I am not punished hereafter. I am so tired of suffering!" And she flung herself back in the bed, and closed her eyes.

Mary rose, and knelt down by her side, stroking her cheek with her soft hand.

"Laura, dear, you are completely worn-out now. and you must not talk any more; you need some strengthening food more than anything else at this moment, and I will see that you have that immediately, but I want you just to grant me one request. Will you let me take care of you now, and manage everything for you, as I think best, at least while you are so weak? I feel sure I can make you willing to live again, when you are better, and away from this place. May I do what I like with you, Lurline?"

"Oh yes, dear sweet little Mary," she said, bending forward to kiss her; "you are the only friend, the only hope I have in the world; how can I thank you enough, if you will indeed be burdened with the care of such a one as I am?"

"That is well!" said Mary, brightly; "then, dear, I shall go at once to make some arrangements for you, and you shall soon be very differently placed."

"But you will not stay long away from me, will you? I feel as if I could not let you go." And Laura held her tight with her burning hands.

"Only a very little while; do not be afraid; and I shall send back Justine, my maid, to you, almost immediately, with some fruit and nourishing food, and she shall stay with you till I come again."

"Oh then, I can bear it," said Lurline, "if I am not left alone any more with that cruel old woman!" and she relaxed her hold. Mary stooped to kiss her, and then quietly left the room.

CHAPTER LII.

SWIFTLY, as if her feet were winged, Mary de L'Isle ran up the long staircase at the hotel, and into the private sitting-room where Bertrand was waiting for her, apparently with no small impatience, as he was pacing discontentedly to and fro, glancing out of the window every moment.

"Ah, my darling, here you are at last!" he exclaimed, catching hold of her hands; "I cannot think how I ever managed to live without you, Mary, though it is not long, certainly, since I have had you for my own. It has seemed to me such an immense time since you went away this morning."

"I wanted so much to come back sooner, dearest, but I could not leave poor unhappy Laura. Oh, Bertrand, I am so glad we are rich!"

"That means that we are to pay a great deal for this very undeserving Lorelei, I am sure," said Bertrand, with a smile.

"I do not think she is undeserving now," said Mary; "she is so miserable, and she blames herself in all ways, as much as any one could do."

"She has some reason," said Bertrand, sternly; "but, Mary, is she really dying?"

"No, I think not, though she believes it herself; but she will require great care and good nursing. You never saw anything so hopelessly wretched as her present position."

"And of course you have been making all sorts of plans for her relief?" said Bertrand.

"Yes, indeed; for I am sure she would die if she were left there neglected and forsaken. She says herself she has no one in the world now except ourselves. No doubt her father is dead."

"And Mrs. Wyndham gone back to live with her brother; I heard she meant to do so. She will not trouble herself about her step-daughter, and to say the truth, Lurline does not deserve much mercy at her hands, any more than she does at yours or mine."

"But we are going to help her?" said Mary, coaxingly, as she passed her hands round Bertrand's arm, and drew him down to a seat beside her. "Come and sit down, darling Bertrand, and let me tell you all I want to do for her."

"I hope you are not going to tell me that you mean to nurse her yourself, Mary. You will be sacrificing me to her altogether if you do."

"As if I could ever sacrifice you!" she answered, tenderly. "You first, Bertrand, ever and in all ways; so long as life lasts you will find it so with me, and I never thought of leaving you to go to Lurline for more than a few hours each day."

"But I am due at Château de l'Isle next week, little wife, and I am not going there without you."

"I should be very unhappy if you did," she said, smiling up into his troubled face. "Now listen, Bertrand mine, and you will see how nicely it can all be managed. Poor Laura must not be left a day longer under the care of that Italian woman, who is quite cruel to her, and in that miserable place. I wish that we should at once take rooms for her in some quiet respectable house, and move her there



(*Drawn by* M. E. EDWARDS.)

"Oh, chide me not, for I am bent
On following thy feet."—p. 758.

this afternoon, having first taken a doctor to see her, that he may authorise her removal, as I am sure any sensible medical man would. Then we must get him to send in a proper nurse, and Justine, who is with her now, can stay till she comes. And then, Bertrand—and this is the most important part of it—I want you to telegraph to nurse Parry, and ask her to come and take care of poor Lurline when we go home next week."

"Ah, that is an excellent idea, Mary; what a wise little woman you are! But will the Brunots consent to part with her?"

"Oh yes; she is really not required there now, I believe, as Madame Brunot is getting quite well in the atmosphere of happiness which has surrounded her since her husband's return."

"And I suppose the dear old nurse herself would always do anything in the world we liked to ask her, though she used to anathematise the Wyndhams with all her heart!" said Bertrand, laughing.

"That was because she thought I was not happy with them; but she is tolerably well satisfied about me now, Bertrand, and she will be only very sorry for poor miserable Lurline."

"And what is to happen next? Are nurse Parry and Mrs. Brant to live all their lives in rooms provided for them in this city by your humble servant?"

"No, I do not mean to tax your good-nature quite so long as that, said Mary, laughing. "I hope that eventually Laura will return to her husband. She can only be happy if she does her duty to him and to her child; but before she can be brought to that, I know she must change very much from what she is now, although she is already as different as possible from the brilliant Lorelei you knew."

"I suppose she has lost her factitious beauty, which never was real, and has grown old and ugly," said Bertrand, who was certainly not disposed to think charitably of the woman who had deceived him. "And that is all the difference: I do not believe she can change her false selfish nature."

"But the grace of God can," said Mary, softly; "and this is just the part of the whole matter concerning which I am the most anxious, Bertrand; we shall do very little for poor Lurline if we only remove her from her temporal miseries, unless we can also help her to find the only source of real happiness and hope."

"Well, Mary, I have no doubt you could do more than most people in the way of converting sinners, but I do not think you will ever make a Christian of Laura Wyndham."

"I shall incur a grievous responsibility, and fail in a mission most solemnly confided to me, if I do not," said Mary, in a tremulous tone.

"What do you mean, my dear child?" said Bertrand, surprised; "you speak as gravely as if you had been appointed to some office in the Church for the reformation of careless and ungodly women. What special responsibility can you have with regard to Lurline, excepting the fact that she has injured you?"

"I have been given a charge almost from the other world, as it seems to me, with regard to her, and I have longed so much for an opportunity of acquitting myself of it, and now I believe it has been almost miraculously sent to me."

"You are speaking in riddles, Mary; do explain yourself."

"Yes, dear Bertrand. I wish I had told you before, as I fully meant to do; but it was a subject I felt to be almost sacred, and we have been so gay and happy, I did not care to allude to it. Now, you shall hear it all, from beginning to end. I am sure, glad as I should be to make her happier, I would not wish to assume any responsibility with regard to her from which I could escape, but it is in the name of poor John Pemberton that I am called to act."

"Did he really still think of her when you saw him in Paris, in spite of all her cruel treatment of him?"

"Oh yes, as far as this world was concerned; she was to the last his one thought, his one care. I am not sure if you know all his inner history, Bertrand—the history of his soul, in fact?"

"Probably I do not; he never gave me his confidence, and I suppose he did to you, most fully."

"I think he did," said Mary, simply; "we were together very often in our care of the sick and poor, and we were both brought so near to death during that terrible siege, that we could hardly bear to talk of anything but matters which concerned the life to come. Gradually I came to understand John's hidden existence quite well, though he never actually explained it to me in detail. Before he ever saw Lurline, he believed himself to have been drawn in very special love to his Saviour, and to have received from Him a call to devote himself wholly to the service of God in the sacred ministry. Into the pure peace and joy which this self-dedication gave him, his passionate affection for Laura came like the fiery blast of the hot simoom, drying up all the springs of heavenly aspiration, and withering his generous impulses to a life of toil and glorious abnegation. He forgot all for her; he ceased to desire aught on earth but her love, or to have any other purpose but to win her, at whatever cost. He became faithless, even to that which he believed to be a God-given vocation, and then the mercy of his Lord struck suddenly across his downward path, and she betrayed him. At once he learned what she was, what he himself had been, and all that he had lost through her fatal fascination. He never saw her face again, but he turned back to his God straightway, with—oh, Bertrand, how can I tell you with what heart-wrung penitence, what deep humility, what intense overwhelming desire to enter once more into a

living union with Him who was his only and eternal joy, and whom in a brief madness he had forsaken! His remorse, his agony, cannot be told. He did not feel that he dared to offer himself for the ministry till he had proved the reality of his repentance by a service of suffering. For this reason he came to Paris, and there, Bertrand, he so lived night and day in heart at the feet of his Lord, even while with all his strength he was toiling for Him in the outer world, that he won to himself the great blessing of a power of love to his Master which seemed actually to draw him out of life into the arms of Christ. You will think me fanciful, I know, my husband, but his longing to pass into the immediate presence of his Saviour was so intense that I do really believe it attracted to him the bullets which freed his soul from its earthly prison. And so, in like manner, with regard to Lurline: I believe that it has been his prayers which have brought me to her side this day; for he had but one desire, so far as this world was concerned, and that was the intense longing that Laura might herself be turned from darkness unto light. He spoke to me of this very shortly before his death. He knew that to him it could never be given to do more than pray for her, as he did unceasingly; for nothing would have induced him to place himself within the sphere of her attraction again, and, therefore, he laid it upon me, in the most solemn manner, to do all in my power to bring Laura home to her God, if I ever had the opportunity. I undertook the charge, Bertrand; his earnestness acted upon me with a sort of magnetic power, and I could not have refused, even had I wished it. But I thought it most likely I should never come across her on this earth again, and now that I have so unexpectedly been brought to her, I do entirely believe, Bertrand, that it is in answer to John's prayers for her, incessantly offered to the last moment of his life, and for the same reason I believe that I shall be allowed to bring her back to her Redeemer; for, although personally I should be utterly weak and incapable of such a task, yet I do think that I shall be able to accomplish it by means of Pemberton himself. I think his beautiful history will touch her heart as with a ray of divine light. She does not even know at present that he is dead, or anything of the life he led after he parted from her; but, surely, when I have told her all, as I hope to do, she too will learn to desire that Deathless Love for which he was so glad to die."

And as Mary remembered the look that had been on John Pemberton's face when he spoke to her of his longing to depart, but a few hours before his death, the tears rose suddenly to her eyes, and she hid her face upon her husband's shoulder.

(To be continued.)

"ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."

BY THOMAS ARCHER.

WITH THE PRISONER.

WHAT is the first greeting which a convict receives when he or she is discharged from prison?

Imagine, if you can, the shivering, shrinking, bewildered feeling of the man or woman who, after undergoing a term of penal servitude, some of it passed in hours of solitary confinement, has all this great city suddenly opened again, with its wilderness of streets, its crowd of unfamiliar faces, its tremendous temptations, its few resources for the friendless and the suspected, its great broad thoroughfares, where on every side may be seen evidences of wealth and plenty; where the tavern and the gin-shop offer a temporary solace to the wretched; and where, also, in every neighbourhood, there are foul slums in which vice finds companionship, and the career of dishonesty and crime can be resumed without difficulty or delay.

Those who have stood outside the walls of Clerkenwell or Coldbath Fields prison, and have watched the opening of the gates, whence the prisoners emerge into a freedom which is almost paralysing in its first effects, will tell you how the appearance of these poor wretches is greeted in low muttered tones by silent slouching men and women who await their coming. How, after very few words of encouragement and welcome, they are taken off to some adjacent public-house, there to celebrate their liberation; and how, almost before a word is spoken, the male prisoner is provided with a ready-lighted pipe from the mouth of one of his former companions, in order that he may revive his sense of freedom by the long-unaccustomed indulgence in tobacco.

I should be very sorry to cavil at these marks of sympathy, as such, they are eminently human. They do not always mean direct temptation—that is to say they are not necessarily intended to induce the recipient to resume the evil course which has led to a long and severe punishment. That the result should be a gradual, if not an immediate, weakening of that remorse which is too frequently sorrow for having incurred the penalty rather than repentance of the sin that led to it is obvious enough; but what else is to be expected? Not many men or women come out of gaol with a very robust morality. Without entering into the

question how far our present system of prison discipline and management is calculated to influence the moral nature of culprits who are under punishments for various crimes, scarcely ever classified, and never regarded in relation to the particular circumstances under which they are committed, or the character and disposition, the social status, or the mental and moral condition of the offender, it may be broadly and barely stated that our penal legislation is not effectual in promoting the reclamation of the criminal.

Even if some determination to begin life anew, to avoid associations that have led to infamy and disgrace, to accept any labour anywhere in order to obtain an honest subsistence, has been working in the mind of the convict during the period of imprisonment, and under the advice and remonstrance of the chaplain and the governor, what is to sustain such half-formed resolutions? Supposing even that the discharged prisoner has been so amenable to the regulations of the gaol that he or she has had placed to the credit account that weekly "good-conduct money," which, when the term of punishment has ended, amounts to a sum sufficient to provide for immediate necessities, where is employment to be looked for? In what quarter is the owner of a few shillings—which may have to last a week or more—to seek a lodging and a meal, and that companionship which must be one of the keenest longings of the newly-released and yet solitary and half-dazed creature, who is ready to receive with grateful avidity any friendly greeting that promises relief from the long monotony of the gaol?

Surely, then, there can be few conditions which appeal more forcibly to Christian beneficence than that of the captive who is released after having undergone a sentence of penal servitude, part of which has been passed in solitary confinement. Whatever may have been the impressions made upon the mind during the period of punishment, and the influence exercised by instruction or exhortation, the very fact of regaining liberty, the excitement of freedom, and the uncertainty of the first steps a man or woman is to take outside the prison walls, will always involve a danger, before which a very large proportion of released convicts will succumb.

What, then, is being done in order to extend a helping hand to these, who are among the most destitute and unfortunate; who, even if they have relatives, may be ashamed to seek their aid, or are doubtful of the reception that awaits them, while the only companionship which they can claim at once, and without question, is that which will surround them with almost irresistible incentives to a lawless life?

In the very centre of this vast metropolis, at the point where its great highways converge, and yet in a modest quiet house standing a little back from the roar and turmoil of the main street, we shall find what we seek. Here, on the doorpost of No. 39, Charing Cross, is the name of "The Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society," and in two or three offices on the first floor—one of which is, in fact, a reception-room for the discharged prisoners themselves—the work for which there is such a constant and pressing need is steadily carried on, under the direction of a very distinguished committee, of which the treasurer is the Hon. Arthur Kinnaird, and the first honorary secretary, Mr. W. Bayne Ranken, who is assisted by Mr. S. Whitbread and Mr. L. T. Cave. In looking at the names of the gentlemen who are concerned in this admirable effort, you will have noticed that some of them are also associated with other charitable organisations which we have visited together, and notably with those of that Soho district where we last joined in the musical diversions of the Newport Market Refuge. As we enter this front office at Charing Cross, we have a pleasant reminder of that occasion, for we are welcomed by the indefatigable performer on the cornet, who, when we last met him, was making "the hills resound" in the upper room of the old slaughter-house, and carrying all his juvenile military band with him in one resonant outburst of harmony that awoke the echoes as far as Seven Dials. To-day he is carrying out his ordinary secretarial and managerial duties, as officially representing the Society, about which he can give us some information worth hearing.

But there are other visitors for whom preparation has already been made in the next room—men dressed decently, and yet having a certain furtive, unaccustomed bearing, as though they were not at the moment quite used to their clothes or to public observation. Some of them are not without a truculent half-defiant expression lurking beneath their subdued demeanour; others have an open, keen outlook; and a few others, again, both in the shape of their head and the peculiar shifty expression of eye and mouth, and one might also say of hand, would at once be characterised by the experienced observer of London life as men who had "been in trouble" more than once. On the table of the front office the object which has at once attracted our attention is a perfectly new carpenter's basket containing a decent set of tools, and the man for whom it is intended will be here for it by-and-by to take it away, just as the shoemaker who has just gone out has carried with him "a kit," with which, in addition to a little stock of money, he is about to begin the world afresh, under the auspices of his friends, one of whom—either a member of the committee, or the secretary, or one of the visiting agents—will keep him in view, and give him an occasional encouraging call while he remains in the metropolitan district;

and if a situation should be found for him in the provinces, either the clergyman of the district, or some other friend of the Society, is informed of his previous history, and has a sincere interest in his well-doing. In no case have the London police anything whatever to do with watching or inspecting discharged prisoners under the care of the Society; and, on the other hand, it is a standing rule that where situations are found for these men and women, the employers are informed of their previous history, though any recommendation of the Society may be regarded as a strong inference that their *protégé* is trying to redeem lost character.

It must be remembered that a report of each of those who are under the care of the Society is made at the office once a month, either by the man or woman in person, or by one of the visiting agents or correspondents of the committee of management; and that, though the police are forbidden to interfere with these cases, except on strong suspicion that they are about to commit a crime, the most accurate and careful record of their mode of life and conduct is kept at the offices of the Society. Should they fail to observe the regulations which the Society demands, they are liable to police surveillance instead of friendly, encouraging, and confidential visitation; and it needs scarcely be said that this liability is often of itself sufficient to make them desire to retain the aid and protection which has been extended to them.

From a long and tolerably intimate observation of the lower strata of the London population, and of the results of various methods adopted to check the progress of crime, I am convinced that what is called police surveillance, as it is conducted in this country, is altogether mischievous in relation to any probable reformation of the offender. Even if it be denied (as it has been) that it is a practice of police-constables to give to persons employing a discharged prisoner information conveyed in such a way as to lead to the loss of employment and despair of obtaining an honest living, it is quite certain that the constant dread of being branded as a returned felon, and the hopeless dogged temper which such a condition produces, must be enormous obstacles to true reclamation. The man who could really surmount them must, whatever may have been his casual crime, be possessed of a hardy and indomitable desire for virtue which should challenge our profound respect.

But, apart from what may be called legitimate surveillance of convicts by the police, it is unfortunately notorious that members of "the force," who occupy positions as detectives, or "active and intelligent officers," employ agents of their own to bring them information, and that these agents, being men of bad character—frequently thieves—are interested for their own safety's sake in providing "charges," or "putting up cases," by conveying information of suspected persons. This is according to the old evil traditions that have descended to constables from the time of Jonathan Wild, and probably earlier; but it is obvious that where such nefarious tools are employed for obtaining evidence which will suffice to sustain a charge and convict a prisoner, there is constant danger to those who, having been once sentenced for crime, are not only peculiarly liable to be drawn into fresh offences, but are, from their position, easily made the victims of cunningly-laid traps for their re-arrest, or a suspicion that is readily endorsed, because of their previous conviction and the knowledge of all their antecedents.

It is the removal of discharged prisoners from this probability, and from the kind of interposition that forbids their return to the paths of honesty, and so actually produces "a criminal class," that is, in my opinion, the best distinction of a Society like this.

Amidst the volumes of interesting records which are preserved here are doubtless many that would confirm this view. Let us refer to one only, where a nobleman residing in London had engaged a butler who went to him with a very excellent character, and in whom he had the greatest confidence. Happening to have occasion to employ a detective constable on some business, his lordship was dismayed at receiving from that astute officer the intelligence that his trusted servant had once been sentenced to five years' penal servitude for some dishonest act, but had been liberated on a ticket-of-leave. Puzzled how to proceed, the nobleman had the good sense to apply for advice to this Society, where it was discovered that the representation of the detective was true enough, and that the man had been recommended to a situation by the Society itself, an intimation of his antecedents being given to the employer. In that situation he had remained for several months, without the least fault being brought against him, and he then applied for and obained the vacant and more lucrative appointment in the family of his lordship, who, though he acknowledged he should not have engaged him had he known of his previous fault and its punishment, kept his secret, and retained him in his service, where he remained at the time of the last report, respected by the household, and faithfully fulfilling his duties.

Probably this was one of those cases where, yielding to sudden temptation, a man incurs for a single crime punishment that awakens moral resolution; and it must be remembered that there are many convicts who, while in prison they are practically undistinguished from the habitual or the repeated criminal, or from the convict of brutalised, undeveloped, or feeble moral nature, are

in danger of being utterly ruined because of a single and perhaps altogether unpremeditated offence, of which they may bitterly repent. The feeling of shame, of humiliation, of doubt as to any but a cold and deterrent reception by former friends, the dread of scorn, derision, or abhorrence, may lead such men or women to abandon as hopeless any expectation of resuming their former avocations, or even of once more attaining a respectable position. To such as these the Society offers such aid as may keep them from the despondency that destroys; and in every case, even in that of the wretch who has been convicted again and again, it holds out some hope of reformation. That there is some such hope even here may be learned from the fact, that even thieves—"habitual criminals"—do not, as a rule, bring their own children up to dishonesty, and are often careful to conceal from them the means by which they live. The ranks of crime are not so largely augmented from the children of dishonest parents (though, of course, evil example bears its dreadful results) as from the neglected children of our great towns.

(To be concluded.)

SURLY BOB.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER XII.—BOB'S DREAM.

BOB meantime, ignorant of what was going on, remained safely barricaded in his fortress. Finding, after a while, that all had grown quiet outside, he moved from his position by the door, and sank down upon the low stool with his face buried in his hands.

Very miserable he felt; perhaps more miserable than he had ever been before. His fit of passion was over now; and as he thought how he had been trying to revenge himself, forgetting all he had lately been learning about forgiveness, and had yielded to that fierce temper of his which had so often brought him into trouble, he felt humbled and sorrowful. For he had been grieving that Heavenly Friend, who had lately at times seemed so near, but Who now, if He treated him as he deserved, would go away and leave him. And it had been so sweet to think that there was *One* Friend who was ready to love him just as he was—so unlovable that none but little Johnnie cared for him! It had been such happiness to think that Jesus would not turn from him because he was clumsy, and awkward, and stupid, and ill-tempered; but in spite of all his badness would receive him and help him to grow better. And now this was the return he was making for that love!

His aunt's taunts and reproaches now came back to his mind, adding their sting to all these other troubles. His independent spirit had long chafed at the thought of being a burden to others; but to-night it seemed more intolerable than ever. Better would it be to beg his bread, he thought, than go on thus. Besides, after his treatment of Sam he should be in worse disgrace than ever.

For a long time he sat, running his fingers through his hair as if to assist his puzzled brains, whilst he tried to think of some plan for the future; but his efforts seemed in vain, as every now and then he gave a dejected shake of his head. How long he remained thus he could not tell, but it had grown dark some time ago. At length he began to feel drowsy; his thoughts became more and more confused; his head dropped forward, and by degrees he slipped from his stool down on the ground, where he lay fast asleep.

Then it seemed to him that the little boy whose pony he had stopped that afternoon was standing over him, and, bending down asking why he was looking so sorrowful. And he fancied that he replied, "Because he had no friends; for the only One who was willing to love him he had vexed so much that he didn't know whether He would be his Friend any more." The little boy's blue eyes filled with tears at the thought of his having no friend; and he stooped down and kissed him. The tears seemed to come into Bob's eyes now, as he felt the touch of those little lips, and he put up his hand to brush them away. And as he did so he saw another Form, more beautiful than anything he had ever beheld, standing behind the child, and the Form bent towards him with a face so kind and loving, and placed something in his hand, saying at the same time that he need never again feel that he had no friend, for He would always be one to him, and would never leave him nor forsake him. Then Bob looked down to see what it was He had placed in his hands, for at first he thought it must be their little dove come to life again, it appeared so like it, and felt so warm and soft. But as he looked it seemed to grow whiter and whiter, and larger and larger, until at last it folded its wings all round about him. Then he felt so safe and happy that he scarcely knew what to do for joy. And that Form seemed to smile upon him, whilst he fancied a voice said, "He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust." And then he thought he asked if Johnnie mightn't come in too, and have those wings folded round him as well; but before the answer came Bob awoke, and found it was nothing but a dream.

With the first faintest streak of daylight Bob rose, and prepared to put into execution the plan he had formed over-night, which was no other than to go

forth and seek his fortune in the world. Various motives had led him to this resolve; and having once made it, he was not the boy to change his mind.

Gently picking up the dead dove, with a sorrowful glance at it he laid it in his pocket, and then paused to consider how to get away without being noticed. His only mode of escaping unobserved he saw was to climb over the garden wall. But having done that, he would find himself in a neighbour's garden, and have still another wall to scale before he could get into the lane; and if any of the neighbours happened to perceive him he should get into trouble, for they would be sure to say he had come after the hens or to steal the eggs. However, there was not much chance of any one's being about at that early hour; and as that was the only way of getting off, save by going through the cottage, which Bob specially wished to avoid doing, he determined to risk it.

Using all the caution he could he managed his escape in safety, and found himself free. But what should he do with his freedom? Whither should he bend his steps?

The hospital seemed more like home to him than any other place, for Johnnie was inside it; therefore he turned in that direction, though feeling so forlorn that he would at that moment have been willing to submit to any accident, pain, or suffering, if only he might be admitted within the building as a patient, and thus enabled to be with his brother.

The morning was wearing on, the sun had shone out brightly by this time, and people were going their various ways, some intent on business, others tempted out of doors by the fine weather; but all, whatever their errand or object, passing by without noticing the lad who was standing leaning against the railings of the hospital, wondering whether any who came by might be in want of a boy in some capacity or other, and might be induced to try *him*.

But none as yet had taken the slightest notice of him; and, meantime, he was growing more and more hungry, and longing more and more for some breakfast. But he had yet a deeper longing than that one for food, and that was for a kind word, for an encouraging look, for a helping hand stretched out to him.

All these wishes and longings, however, though unknown to others, even to little Johnnie, who would have been so grieved had he known that Bob was standing outside feeling so lonely and sorrowful, were yet all known to the Great Father above, whose heart was sharing each pang that passed through that of the boy, whose eye was reading each thought and feeling, and whose hand was already bringing comfort near.

For as Bob was standing, full of anxious forebodings, looking up the street in one direction, a lady and gentleman and a little boy were approaching in the other. Suddenly the child, with the cry, "There he is, mamma! That's the boy that stopped my pony, papa!" darted forward, and seized hold of Bob's hand.

The latter turned with a start, and found himself face to face with the little fellow whose bright engaging countenance had haunted him in his dreams the night before. The next moment Mr. and Mrs. Deveron had also come up, and were overwhelming him with thanks for having done what he had thought such a simple thing that he never expected to hear of it again.

He grew quite shy and hot at finding himself made so much of, and fancied somehow it must be all a mistake, or he must be dreaming again; for the lady had actually taken his hand—his rough, coarse, dirty hand—in her small one, and was even holding it there as if she did not care even if the dirt did come off on to her light kid gloves. And she was not only holding his hand, just as if he had been a friend of hers, but she was looking down upon him with the sweetest face Bob had ever seen, and in the kindest of voices was saying, "How fortunate we were to meet you, for we were on our way to your home in hopes of finding you there. I could not rest until I had come to thank you for your brave conduct yesterday. It makes me shudder to think of what might have happened but for your help;" and she glanced towards her little son, who was standing by, bright and rosy, the picture of health, but who, had it not been for Bob's timely aid, might have met with a terrible accident. "I can never thank you enough for coming to the rescue as you did," she added.

"No, we cannot forget it," interposed Mr. Deveron; "and you must let us know in what way we can be of service to you, for you have a claim upon our gratitude, and we should like to befriend you."

Bob's heart gave a great leap, and even his face grew eager and animated for once. Could it be possible that the gentleman might help to get him a place, or work of any kind? But no; that seemed too much to hope. For he was afraid there must be a mistake somewhere, or the lady and gentleman wouldn't be treating him like this. Perhaps they were taking him for some other lad; at any rate, they could not know how bad a boy he was. And his face fell again.

"Well, what is it?" asked Mr. Deveron. "What would you like us to do for you?"

"Please, sir, I'm only Bob Saunders," was the unexpected reply.

"Yes; I was told that was your name," returned Mr. Deveron.

"And I ain't a good boy, sir. I'm a reg'lar bad 'un, so they say. They call me 'Surly Bob.'"

"At any rate you're an *honest* fellow," said Mr. Deveron, with an amused smile, "you don't try to pass off for anything better than you are. And now you've told us thus much about yourself, tell us what it is you would like us to do for you? What was the wish that came into your mind just now?"

"Please, sir, it's a place as I wants so dreadful

bad. But nobody won't take me 'cause I'm so slow and stupid you see, sir."

This was rather a long speech for silent Bob, and he seemed astonished himself at his courage in making it, for his face grew redder and redder as he went on.

Little Edgar standing by, looked as if he was wondering at Bob's strange request, and was, moreover, a little disappointed at it. "Why doesn't he ask papa for a nice new coat and trousers?" he was saying to himself, "for those he has on are so very shabby and ragged. And he might have asked for a better cap too, in fact a whole new suit of clothes. And then he might have said he'd like to have a jolly dinner, with plenty of plum-pudding and mince-pies, for I'm sure he looks hungry enough. Oh, he might have asked for such lots of things, and I know papa would have given them to him! But instead of that he just asks for some work. I'm sure I'd have said something very different!"

Mr. Deveron, however, did not seem to be of the same opinion as his little boy, for he looked pleased at Bob's request; whilst Mrs. Deveron, turning to her husband, said, "You'll be able to help him in that way, will you not?"

"I dare say I shall; I will see. But what sort of work are you wanting to find, my boy?"

"I'd do *anything*, sir, if somebody 'd only try me. Leastways, I'd do my best, but I know I'm stupid, so p'raps there ain't much as I *could* do."

And as this view of his own qualifications presented itself to poor Bob, a hopeless look came over his face.

"A willing spirit is better than any amount of cleverness, my boy," said Mrs. Deveron, laying her hand kindly on his shoulder. "So cheer up, for I dare say we shall be able to find some kind of work that you may be able to manage."

"Yes, I will consider it over, and you can come out to my place this afternoon and ask for me," said Mr. Deveron. And having told the lad his name, and described to him where he lived, he turned to go farther on.

But little Edgar, who had been listening attentively to the whole conversation, came running back before they had gone many steps, and holding out a bright new sixpence, he exclaimed, "There, Bob, that's for you! for your own, to do what you like with. Mamma says I may give it to you. I'd meant to buy some chocolate with it, but I'd ever so much sooner you had it. And now you can go and get some buns, or something nice, can't you? for you look so hungry, I'm sure you must want something!"

And the little fellow, scarcely waiting to be thanked, ran off again, though looking back once or twice to give a friendly nod and smile.

The tears fairly came into Bob's eyes, and he almost forgot to brush them away as he stood looking at the bright coin lying on his palm.

"No; I ain't a-going to spend that in buns, though I be hungry," he said to himself, shaking his head at the idea. "I wouldn't go and change away that in a shop for anything! but I'll keep it all my life to 'mind me of that little chap. I never came across any fellow afore as made me love him all in a minute like that 'ere little 'un. My word! I *am* glad as nothing happened to him that day, and I wish there was something else as I could do for him, for I wouldn't stop at anything. But to think of their coming and thanking of me! First time anybody's ever had anything to thank *me* for: it's been mostly cuffs and scoldings as I've always got—not as I mean to say I haven't deserved 'em; I know I've been a bad boy, and I know I've a reg'lar temper, but I means to try and be different now. But I wish the afternoon would come that I might go out to the house."

(*To be continued.*)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

297. In Leviticus xxii. the people of Israel are commanded not to sacrifice any animal to God which was blemished. What prophet do we find blaming the people for having done this?

298. Where is the growth of *nettles* mentioned as a mark of desolation?

299. What especial power was given to the first followers of Christ? Quote passage.

300. In St. Matthew xxiii. 35, mention is made of "Zecharias, son of Barachias." In whose reign did he prophesy?

301. Quote a passage which shows David's gratitude to God.

302. In what way did Jesus excuse His disciples for sleeping during His agony in the garden of Gethsemane?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 736.

286. "Who raised up the righteous man from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings? He gave them as the dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow. He pursued them, and passed safely, even by the way that he had not gone with his feet" (Isaiah xli. 2, 3).

287. That all raiment of the poor should be returned at sunset; and that a widow's raiment was never to be taken in pledge at all (Deut. xxiv. 10—17).

288. Because a band of men who had come with the Arabians to the camp of Israel had slain all the eldest sons (2 Chron. xxii. 1).

289. "For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind" (James iii. 7).

290. After the battle against the Moabites and Ammonites (2 Chron. xx. 25).



(*Drawn by* M. FITZGERALD.)

DETHRONED.

FOND things have oft to thee been said,
Dame Fortune! kings and clowns,
Trembling before thee, bow the head.
I heed nor smiles nor frowns!
O'er flatt'rers wave the magic wand,
Bless this with rank and that with land,
Then sudden close thy lavish hand!

I serve a nobler mistress, life
With me is sober, sure;
Fate, fortune, splendour's giddy strife
In vain ye cast the lure;
Steadfast my queen smiles, in her train
A quiet conscience free from pain
Of anxious lookings on I gain.

Thus, through th' all golden summer day,
That crowns man's stormy Spring,
I wear the tranquil hours away,
Nor dread that fickle thing,
Its slaves call Fortune: let me wend
The way where Duty's footsteps tend,
My God my only guide and friend!

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXIX.—WATCHING THE SUNSET.

"DOROTHY," said Netta, early the next morning, "I want to send a note to your knight, George Blakesley, where does he live?"

"Oh, Netta, what can you want to write to him about? Besides, he starts for Liverpool to-day."

"Let me do as I like, dear," the Beauty answered, tenderly looking up at her sister's flushed face. "I want to say good-bye to him before he goes; I used to be so rude to him once." Then Dorothy caught at the idea; perhaps if he saw her again things might come right after all, she thought.

"Tom will take the letter if you ask him. Mr. Blakesley is staying with his aunts. Yes, do write at once, Netta!" for the Beauty had found out Dorothy's secret, and there was no longer any reserve between the sisters.

So Netta sat up, and wrote a note, and sealed it before Dorothy returned from asking Tom if he would take it before he went to business, for fear it should be too late if entrusted to the post. "He will be sure to come," Netta said, hopefully, "for I have told him how ill I am." So all through the day Dorothy waited, first patiently, and then impatiently, but no answer came to the note, and no George Blakesley appeared. "He will be sure to come," Netta repeated, "for, of course, the note got to him before he could have left home; so, cheer up, Dorothy." Still he did not come, and when the sun began to set poor Dorothy's tears fell fast. "Oh, Netta!" she said, "it is too late; I shall never see him again." Then, suddenly, there came a quick sharp ring at the door-bell, and Netta looked up and nestled down again among the shawls on the sofa.

"Let me get out of the way," pleaded Dorothy, her courage failing when she needed it most.

"No; stay, dear, I am not well enough to talk," pleaded Netta. Mrs. Woodward had gone out with Sally. So Dorothy folded her hands and waited. The door was opened, a rustling of silk was heard,—and instead of George Blakesley there entered his two maiden aunts.

"I came to see you, my dear," Miss Blakesley (dear kind Tabby, as, without a thought of disrespect, Dorothy always called her at heart) said to Netta, "I was so sorry to hear from your brother, when he came with a note this morning, how ill you were," and then she and Black-and-White sat down and talked, and presently the latter mentioned the name Dorothy was trembling with longing to hear. "I am so sorry your note came too late, Lady Finch. My nephew started by the mail last night for Liverpool. My sister sent him on his morning letters, and yours with them, for he does not sail till this evening, so he probably has it by this time."

Poor Dorothy's heart sank. "He is gone," she thought, and could think no more, but rose, longing to escape. Then Black-and-White unconsciously came to her aid.

"I am so glad to see you back in your old house," she said; "and George has often told me about the garden; I should so like to see it if it would not be troubling you too much, dear." Neither of the old ladies showed that they saw that the rooms were filled with their nephew's furniture, though the sight of the old things they had known so long touched them sorely.

"It is a very wild overgrown old garden," Dorothy said, almost humbly, in an apologetic tone, as she took Black-and-White down the mossy pathways; "but we have known it like this all our lives, and would not have it done up for the world."

"No, dear, I dare say not," Black-and-White answered, with the nervous little laugh that had now and then something almost sad in its sound; "my nephew has often spoken of it, and said how he liked it because of its wildness. And there was the cat's grave, I have often heard of that, too," and she laughed again.

"Here it is, Miss Mildred, under this tree." She stopped under the shady boughs, and looked half-wistfully half-sorrowfully up into the old maid's face. It had been a pretty face once, and showed evidence of past summers still; but there were lines, hard sad lines, around the eyes and the gentle simple-looking mouth. Perhaps, she had had her history, too, Dorothy thought, as she stood still, longing to throw her arms round Black-and-White's neck, and ask

her if she thought whether by any wild chance George Blakesley would ever see or care for her again; but this was impossible. Half mechanically she sat down, and then rose, as if ashamed of her momentary forgetfulness.

"I should like to rest a minute, too, if you don't mind," Black-and-White said, pleadingly. So they sat down, but neither seemed inclined to talk. Dorothy's face was turned towards her companion, but her eyes wandered to the mists beyond gathering over the pleasant fields of Hampstead, and her memory went back with a bound to the different phases her life had known in sight of them; and then she thought suddenly of George Blakesley, who was probably on board the ship which was to take him, oh! so far away, and with almost a start her eyes dropped to Black-and-White. There was a look in her face that somehow made Dorothy droop her head down on to her shoulder.

"What is the matter, my dear? You looked so sad just now, and yet, you know, you ought to be very happy," she added, with the nervous laugh again, "for George told me he thought you were engaged to Mr. Fuller, and that he knew he was very fond of you. Dear George was so glad, for he thought you had always liked him." Dorothy raised her head, and answered Miss Mildred almost passionately, "I am not engaged to Mr. Fuller, Miss Mildred—I never was and never shall be. It is all a mistake."

"But are you not fond of him?"

"No, certainly not; oh, no, no, no!" and then her excitement died away, and the tears filled her eyes.

"Why didn't you tell George this? He might not have gone to America then."

"He doesn't care for me now," exclaimed Dorothy, a wild hope springing up in her heart.

"I don't know," answered Black-and-White, in the nerveless manner which was her wont. "One never knows anything, my dear; but he was engaged to you once, and he must have liked you then, and he used often to talk to us of you; but he thought you liked Mr. Fuller. I often wondered why you never cared for George," she added, simply.

"I was not in love with him at the time I was engaged to him," Dorothy answered; "I was very different ——" and she stopped herself. "But I always admired him more than any one I ever knew. If there is anything good in me, Miss Mildred," she said, earnestly, "I owe it to him; and now I don't suppose I shall ever see him again."

"Perhaps not, dear; one never knows," and Black-and-White turned her eyes towards the dim fields and the fading sunset, and Dorothy's gaze followed hers for a moment.

"Let us come in, Miss Mildred; Netta is not well enough to talk much," she said, so they went back to the sitting-room, and found Adrian Fuller there talking to the elder Miss Blakesley and Netta.

"It is very bad taste in him to come, considering all that occurred yesterday," Dorothy thought, and received him stiffly and coldly.

"Do you know," said Black-and-White to her sister, when they were outside the door, "I can't help thinking that perhaps our dear George may not have gone, and that he may marry little Dorothy yet."

But George Blakesley was safe on board the good ship *Syren*, watching the sea and sky, and sailing slowly but surely away from his native land; and it was not till late in the evening that, looking over the packet of letters that had been put into his hand just as he stepped on board, he read Lady Finch's note.

"Probably the Beauty knows nothing about it," he said, after a long pause; "and if she does, well it's too late now," and so he passed on under the evening sky, farther and farther from the old house and the overgrown garden at Hampstead.

(To be continued.)

THE BLADE, THE EAR, AND THE FULL CORN.

BY THE REV. W. BOYD CARPENTER, M.A., VICAR OF ST. JAMES'S, HOLLOWAY.

St. Mark iv. 25—29.

IT has been thought by some that this parable describes the state of the Christian Church after Christ Himself had ascended into heaven.

According to this view, the man who cast the seed into the ground is the sower of the parable in verses 3—13 of this chapter, that is Jesus Christ; for so St. Matthew tells us our Lord interpreted His own parable. Having accomplished the work which He had to do—having planted His gospel in the hearts of His disciples, He then left it, as the farmer, having sown his seed, leaves it to the ordinary processes of Nature to bring forth the fruit at the harvest time. There is much in the history of the Christian Church which harmonises with this interpretation. In its earlier years the immediate presence of Christ, and the special gifts of the Holy Ghost, the signs and wonders wrought by the apostles, were as tokens of the fostering love of God. But, as years rolled on, the Church was left to herself. The power of the seed was the same as before, but the immediate and obvious superintendence of the Lord was removed, and the gospel seed was left to work silently in the world.

This suits the analogy of things about us. The Almighty does not interpose to teach men what they can learn for themselves. Nay, so true is this principle, that though suffering and perplexity have been occasioned by human ignorance of the laws of Nature, yet man has been left to discover them for himself. God made no special revelation in medical science, though small-pox was a death-scourge throughout Europe. It was left till the patient study and keen observation of Jenner discovered a preventive, if not a remedy. The mariner's compass must have been the means of saving thousands from perishing on the pathless ocean, yet the invention is not anticipated by any direct Divine intimation. Innumerable instances of the same class will occur to the reader; and the same has been seen in the growth and progress of the Christian Church.

But this view of the passage places one point at least in a very ambiguous light. It is difficult to see, if Christ be the man who cast seed into the ground, how it can be said of Him that He knoweth not how the seed springs up and grows (ver. 27). And farther leaving aside this expression, the above view hardly does justice to the general drift of the parable.

A little attention to the earlier verses may serve to clear the way to the general meaning. The object of a light is to give light. The candle when lighted is placed on the candlestick; and even if for a while it is hidden from view, it is only that it may come forth with fuller and stronger light (ver. 22). With this the parable comes into strict harmony. The Gospel which, as a light, is to give light, is as a seed also which must first be hidden in the ground, but this hiding in the ground is only that it may come forth, stage by stage, into fuller and richer beauty and benediction. Slow though this manifestation of life and loveliness may be, it follows the simple and natural cycle of all growth—the blade, the ear, the full corn.

But the temporary concealment of the good leads naturally to the thought of the sanctuary in which it is concealed. It is to the heart that the words spoken, of good or ill, naturally penetrate. Hence the caution, "Take heed what ye hear." To this, and its accessory warnings, correspond that part of the parable which speaks of the native energy and natural reproductiveness of the soil. "The earth bringeth forth fruit of itself." The heart does so likewise; whatever is sown there will grow. These two points the parable seems designed to illustrate, and to them, in the course of it, our Lord adds a third, which intimates that there is in all spiritual, as in all natural or physical processes, much that is beyond man's power of explanation: the seed groweth up but he knoweth not how.

I. There is the natural reproductiveness of the soil. In the parable, it is said that the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; and this is certainly true. There are very few plants which do not multiply and grow without the intervention of human agency. Man may improve their culture, and aid them in their efforts to reach the typical form after which they seem to strive; but their mere growth continues, though men neither plant them nor sow them. This, however, is not the exact point of the expression, "The earth bringeth forth fruit of herself." It rather refers to the native energy of growth in mother Earth, so that whatever is cast into the soil will grow; for the corn-seed which is spoken of here is a plant which dies out without human cultivation. Though it will grow where it is sown, yet it is said, that it will not spread and increase without man's care.

It is simply then to the natural reproductiveness of the earth that the words apply. Of this our Lord gave indication in the former parable of the sower; no matter what the quality of the ground--rocky, thorny, or good—it showed that the power of growth was natural to it, since all brought forth some returns for the seed sown.

There is indeed what we may well call a fatal fecundity in the earth. The man who owns a plot of land dreads the thistledown as much as he yearns for the corn-seed, for he knows that the latent energy of the soil will give life to both alike. It matters nothing to the indifferent earth what you sow; but whatever it be, good, bad, or indifferent, food or poison, flower or bramble, that mother Earth, faithful to her calling, brings forth as the seasons roll. In illustration of this may be mentioned a weed well known to gardeners, which now is the enemy of every little stream or miniature lake. Notwithstanding all the most strenuous efforts to banish it, as the seeds drop they are caught and reared by the invigorating soil. Bountiful as Nature is in the teeming benedictions she she bestows, she is an undiscerning nurse, and nourishes the weeds as readily as the corn and the wine and the oil for the food of man.

This fatal fecundity is paralleled by the natural fruitfulness of the heart. This is the soil on which all things moral and immoral are sown. Here, too, they spring up and grow. Whatever is once received into the heart never lies dormant there. The inherent natural activity of man is too great. Thought will revolve, analyse, ponder, and bring forth in changed form the thing sown, tinctured perhaps with the individual character, as the corn is flavoured by the soil. The feelings, the wishes, the desires, are all called into exercise, and supply their contribution to the reproduction of the seed. No illustration of this is so striking or so painful as in the case of families. Children grow up pert, forward, cunning, false, incorrigible. Parents wonder; but the seed was dropt perchance by

themselves into the busy little hives of feeling and reflection, the hearts of the children. Do they wonder at this child's insolent bearing, when the decencies of common courtesy have been wanting in the home, and neither father nor mother have treated one another with respect? They are appalled, perhaps, at the sudden (as it seems to them) exhibition of cunning or baseness in the child, and yet perhaps in younger days the mother has shielded it with artful phrase and ambiguous kindness from some well-deserved punishment, or with ready wit framed the plausible excuse which has nurtured into precocious aptitude for artifice the mind which has been thus taught to dread punishment more than sin, and to think it a comfortable blessing to avoid a penalty but no disgrace to have degraded or blunted the moral sense; they marvel perhaps at the impenetrable reserve or obstinate falseness and utter unlovingness of a child whose innocent wishes they have thwarted, whose artless affection they have crushed, and whose proffered confidence they have repulsed.

The earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; and none the less surely will this life reproduce the fruit of that which has been scattered on the too ready and open soil of the heart.

But this has a bright as well as a gloomy side. The heart cannot indeed be said to be like the earth, indifferent to the seed that falls. There is unmistakably a greater readiness to reproduce the evil than the good. The foul word or the blasphemous word will find quicker echo from the child's lips than will the kind or the godly speech. But notwithstanding this, the energy of the heart is not paralysed, and when the good seed has really taken root there, it will as surely spring up. It is too often the habit of our minds, taught by sad and depressing experiences, to disbelieve in the natural processes of spiritual growth. It is against this Christ warns us. There is, He says, a native vigour in the heart, which brings and must bring into fruit the seed that has been hidden there. Your duty is not to be wondering, but to be working. As the farmer sows the seed, and then leaves it to the forces of Nature, so must the Christian parent or the Christian teacher cast in the seed, pray to Him who can truly sow it there, and then leave it to grow. The heart is so constituted, that whatever it receives at all, it must reproduce in the life. All that remains for man to do is to gather the stones which lie scattered on the surface, lest they crush some up-struggling stalk, or to pluck up the brambles of ill habits which might entangle and choke the tender blade.

II. The natural fecundity of the earth is great, but it is not hasty. It is impossible on any extended scale to quicken the processes of Nature. The days when the cycle of spring and harvest shall so rapidly succeed each other that the reaper shall overtake the sower, belong to the days when the sceptre of righteousness shall rule unquestioned in the earth. Ordinarily the stages of growth are slow and methodical: first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

This gradual and tardy progress is reflected from every side of Nature. The earth on which we tread gives evidences of the vast periods of physical gestation which preceded our era. Pine and fern and moss have risen and fallen ere oak and elm could grow, and cattle graze, and man live upon the earth. The history of thought and discovery tells the same story. If Kepler could say that it pleased God to wait 6,000 years for an astronomer, he only expressed the fact that the march of intellectual progress has been slow. If it be a wonder that the Christian world existed 1700 years without a Sunday-school, it is saying what our Lord here implied, that the outcome of Christian fruit in life and in practice would be but gradual.

Are we to expect that when we come to the growth of this faith in the individual heart we are to see a different law? No! here too, by the often insensible increments of Divine blessing on the means of grace, the character is built up to reflect in form and symmetry the image after which it was created.

The full corn in the ear will not—nay, cannot—come till the stalk has lengthened and been strengthened to bear it; nor can the stem rise from the soil till the tender blade has spread abroad its little fan-like crest, to gather the healthful virtues of the atmosphere. The young and earnest susceptibilities of the awakened heart break bright over the dull level of life, to find the discipline of life lead to the establishment of character and the strengthening of faith in the Father; but not till the maturer days of Christian life does the blossom drop and the fruit appear, and even then the full corn is often concealed from view in the enclosing ear. Nor will its full weight—the thirty, the sixty, or the hundred-fold—be known till the sickle has been thrust in, the harvest come, and the good grain gathered into the garner of God.

Gradual as the process is, there is easily to be seen the marks of a wise forethought. Early fruit is no real gain to the gardener. Unseasonable ripeness perplexes him more than it profits him. That the fruit may endure is Christ's wish, and He will not hasten the day lest a premature ripeness should be followed by an early decay. "The husbandman hath long patience," says St. James. "God is patient, because eternal," said St. Augustine. Christ is patient with us and over us. Let us be patient, and in us let patience have her perfect work. The stages of this progress are

distinctly marked—first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

These readily correspond with the general features of heart-growth—freshness, strength, usefulness. The blade, which appears first above the soil, is tender and fresh and green, like the early feelings and impressions of the awakened soul. There is a freshness about these early impressions; they are diffused throughout the whole framework of the soul; the thought is keen to drink up new truths; the conscience is roused into energy; the affections are warm and susceptible. But, like the little blade, the soul is sensitive and pliant; every little breeze thrills it, every strange thought or whispered misgiving makes it tremble lest the new-found life should ebb away. Doubts, like the February gales, shake the thoughts and the experiences, and toss and trouble the young growth.

But through all the little plant weathers its way, for its true life is hidden deep below, and draws its power and nutriment from hidden sources, and in its next stage appears strengthened. It is no longer the tender leaf-like blade, it is the firm and hard stalk. The impressions and experiences have crystallised into convictions and knowledge. With less perhaps of religious sensitiveness there is more of religious character; with less of the freshness there is more of the power of a Christian life. Indeed, it is upon the character that the change becomes most clearly seen; it is more in the general habit than in actual deeds; it is in the high principle, the unswerving fidelity, the untiring regularity, the circumspection, the quietude, the purity of the life, that the next change is noticeable. There is not so much of visible fruit, but the ear is there, rounding itself to encase the full corn which is forming from within. Such a one is less occupied with testing his own experiences than with methodising his own life, less careful about the emotions than about the actions, less looking back on the past than looking to the tendency of the present and watching the opening opportunities of doing good. In this comes the last stage, with the full corn in the ear, when the era of experience has given way to the era of character, and this has issued out in the era of action and true usefulness. He who has tasted the love in the heart has tested it in the life, and now seeks to scatter it.

And at the last stage, when the full ripened corn droops expectant of the sickle, there opens up the final, but the richest analogy of all, that it is only in the fall of the tall bearded ear that the truest usefulness is reached. The sickle must cut down the corn ere the new seed, discaged from the ear, can be used to sow new fields for future harvests.

But we are reminded of one point, which it is important to bear always in recollection. Though there is a natural reproductiveness in the heart of man, so that the thoughts of truths lodged there cannot long live there without coming out into the life, yet in the growth of all life, and most of all of the life of man's spirit, there is a point beyond which man cannot really penetrate. It is a matter of experience, indeed, that the seed will grow when cast into the earth; but many a sower has flung bushels of grain broadcast over the earth, and reaped in whole acres of rich corn-fields, without knowing how it is that this wondrous result has come to pass. The philosopher, or chemist, who has studied the properties of matter, may explain to him that certain elements of the soil, in conjunction with the virtue of rain and the power of sun, assimilate with the decaying seed, and send it forth in renewed vigour and perfect form; but though he may explain thus far, there is a question which starts up which he cannot solve. The fact he knows, the analysis of the fact he knows; he has pierced through one veil of the temple but to find another beyond, and into that holy of holies none can pierce, for his explanation yet needs explaining. It springs up and grows, but he knoweth not how.

It is alike in all Nature. The movements of the celestial bodies were a mystery to men till Newton discovered the law of gravity; and then, as far as science goes, the mystery was explained; but still the law is only the statement of the fact in more general terms, and is in no high or true sense an explanation of it. They move, they move by law, that law is gravity, but who will explain the explanation or tell the secret of this mysterious affection of all things? They move, they roll, but after all he knoweth not how. To question further is useless, profitless; the margin has been reached when the facts have been observed and the law derived.

Precisely parallel is the fact in the domain of the Spirit. The fact of growth is noted, the sources of growth are known, the means of support are known, a certain fitness in the method of it is observed, but the full explanation lies beyond, and baffles the thoughts that strive to penetrate the veil.

The readiest and most important illustration of this is taken from the central Christian doctrine of the death of Christ. As a matter of Christian experience the cross of Christ brings gladness to the heart; in it there is the pledge of love and the assurance of pardon; in it the accusations of conscience or the taunts of the wicked are all silenced; the soul which has been harassed and uneasy finds indeed rest when it learns that it has redemption in Christ's blood, that peace has been made by the blood of the cross. But when the restless mind begins to turn over the reason of this, it finds itself baffled at every turn. A certain

fitness he may note, but to the full understanding of the reasons of this fitness he will never attain. To fly restlessly forward into the infinite wastes of speculation which lie beyond is but to find ourselves beating our enfeebled wings against the barriers of time and space, and to sink at last, baffled and blinded, back to the same little spot whence we started. It is well for us to sow the fields, to reap the harvest, to observe all that may aid us in securing the fullest benediction from the earth which God has made so prodigal of energy, but it is not well to let the earth run waste while we probe problems which can only end in barrenness; and neither is it well for us to seek the "why" of every Christian mystery, but rather be content to grow in grace, though we know not how; be content to rejoice in the new life we have found, though we are in much a mystery to ourselves; and put aside the pertinacious inquiries of metaphysical Phariseeism with the true answer of heart gratitude—"I know not, I cannot answer all these speculative questions, but one thing I know, whereas I was blind, now I see. I cannot explain to you how it is I am what I am, but by the grace of God I am what I am. I cannot tell you all that I shall grow to be in the future, but I know that I shall be like Him, for I shall see Him as He is. I cannot give elaborate demonstrations of the happy assurances I now enjoy, but the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. Second Series. No. 13. The Unmerciful Servant.

Chapter to be read—St. Matthew xviii. 21—35.

INTRODUCTION. Ask who always accompanied Jesus? how many disciples were there? why did Jesus keep them with Him? what were they to do after His departure? But before they taught others must themselves learn. What Christ told them often very different from what had previously learned; sometimes apostles great difficulty in understanding; used to come and ask questions; made Peter their spokesman; so now.

I. The Question asked. (Read 21, 22.) What was the question? Who was Peter's brother? Very little told us about Andrew. Remind of his bringing Peter to Jesus when had found Him himself (John i. 40, 41). Perhaps the brothers sometimes quarrelled, as brothers often do, or perhaps Peter was only putting a case to Christ. What was the teaching of the law on the subject? (See Matt. v. 38). But Christ came to give a new law, that of love. Remind of sermon on Mount; how had taught to do good to enemies (Matt. v. 44, &c.). So now, what answer did Christ give? Seventy times seven, meaning an infinite number of times; as often as is the offence, so must forgiveness be. But Peter would say, Is it possible? can I forgive such repeated injuries? Surely I must have revenge. So Christ answers by a parable.

II. The Question Answered. (1) *The forgiving master.* (Read 23—27.) Describe the scene. The king, after an absence, taking account with his servants. Had entrusted them with money to be spent for him; perhaps been away for long time; reckoning time not expected just yet; suddenly all are called to account; some approach joyfully, money all ready, have good account to give of money entrusted, receive smile of approval, and pass out of royal presence. Another comes, pale and trembling, accounts made out; what does he owe? an enormous sum; what has he to pay? nothing! What does the king command? Explain that, as now, in the East, slaves, with wives and families, absolutely the property of masters. So decree goes forth: servants approach, proceed to bind the slave, and carry him off. What *can* he do? throw himself on his compassion. Let children notice that he acknowledges the debt, and justice of sentence. Simply appeals to his lord's compassion; offers to do all he can. What effect did it have on the master? Yes; was moved with pity—had prisoner's bonds removed—forgave the debt, and set him free. What effect would it have upon the servant? Surely will make him full of gratitude and love to master, and gentleness to fellow-servants. We shall see. (2) *The unforgiving servant.* (Read 28—35.) Once more describe the scene. The servant going out freed, forgiven, joins fellow-servants; is congratulated, becomes elated, thinks *he* will take account too; finds one who owes him money, how much? an infinitely small sum. Surely he will at once forgive him! Does he? Nay, he cannot refrain from violence; seizes him at once, treats him more harshly than his lord had treated him. What does the other do? Uses precisely the same words that he had; but with what effect? Who had been with him to see all? Cannot contain their indignation; go and report to their lord; tell the whole story. What does he do now? Sends for him. Can fancy the eagerness with which fellow-servants would drag him in, place him before the master, and then listen to what he would say. What does he say? (v. 32, 33) he makes him see his wickedness and hardness of heart, and then gives him up to punishment till could pay all his debt.

III. The Application. (Verse 35.) This is so simple and natural that children cannot help seeing the general application at once; the particular application to themselves is more difficult. (1) *God's forgiveness.* See that they clearly understand who is the master; how is God our master; we are His by creation (Psalms c. 2). He has a right to us; He can do with us as He pleases. What do we owe Him? *Worship* as to God (Psalms xcv. 6); *obedience* as to a King; *love* as to a Father. Have we always given Him these? What have we cared for more than God? Perhaps made idols of friends, pleasure, idle books, &c. More than that. Show how God, as holy God, requires perfect holiness in His children; all sin then is a debt. Have all our lives given way to it—evil tempers, idle words, sullen looks, disobedience to parents, if not grosser sins; owe more than 10,000 talents. What can we pay? nothing! Have no holiness to give. What then can we do? simply cry for mercy, like Peter on the sea (Matt. xiv. 30); like the Publican in the temple (Luke xviii. 13). And what will God do? Yes, He delights in mercy, will forgive for Christ's sake all who ask (1 John 1—9). (2) *Man's forgiveness.* Just as God forgives, so must we. Our forgiveness then must be *free*, without making a bargain; *full*, so as to treat the person who has wronged us just the same as before, just the same as if he had not wronged us. This very difficult, but very necessary. Remind of Joseph's forgiveness of his brethren, Moses bearing with the Israelites, David sparing Saul, Christ praying for his murderers. Show children the true joy this will give to both. Remind of miserable feelings when have done wrong, confession made to father or mother, forgiveness obtained, the exquisite pleasure of being again taken into favour, evident joy of parents at being able to receive child back, as figured in parables of Lost Sheep and Prodigal Son (Luke xv).

Questions to be answered.

1. What was Peter's question, and how was it answered?
2. What had Christ taught in the sermon on the Mount about forgiveness?
3. What debts do we owe to God?
4. Show the nature of God's forgiveness.
5. Give examples of forgiveness of injuries.
6. What parables teach us the joy of forgiveness?

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER LIII.

BERTRAND DE L'ISLE had listened with ever deepening attention and seriousness, to the simple yet earnest words with which his wife told him the source and nature of her hopes on Laura Brant's behalf, and when she paused in her momentary agitation, he still sat silent for a few minutes before he spoke.

"Well, Mary, I hope it may be as you expect," he said at last, thoughtfully; "and after the account you have given me of poor Pemberton's ceaseless prayers, one might almost believe that a miracle of grace would indeed be worked on the woman who injured him, because of his noble devotion; but it will be in very truth a miracle I think if Lurline is ever brought to anything like real religion, for I am convinced that she is godless and false to the very heart's core."

"She has never known God, certainly," said Mary, "but I think that has in part, at least, been more her misfortune than her fault; and in other respects I believe there is greater ground for hope even in her natural character than you would be disposed to admit. I imagine the root of the evil in her case lies simply in the fact that she has never at all realised anything beyond this outward visible world and her personal existence in it; this present life, and her own happiness throughout its duration, is all she has ever thought of or aimed at or desired; she has not even recognised a moral law as applying to herself, and therefore has not scrupled to use any means, however full of falsehood and cruelty, to gain her own ends. She has been kept from graver evils mainly by her instincts as a lady and her position in society; but I think that if once her spiritual sense could be awakened to a knowledge of the truth of God, of the love of Christ, and of the immortality that surely awaits her, there are good and hopeful qualities within her, which will help her at once to respond to such a revelation."

"You have evidently studied her character more than I have, my wise little wife, and you may be right."

"At all events, Bertrand, I have your full sanction, have I not, for trying my best to fulfil John Pemberton's charge, and for my other plans with regard to Laura?"

"Certainly you have, my darling. If he who suffered so much more by her than we have done could thus forgive and serve her to the last, we well may do what in us lies to help her now. We will go together at once, dear, to find rooms for her, and to arrange for her removal, and you may be with her in



(*Drawn by* W. SMALL.)

"Mary had turned to the window."—*p.* 779.

your efforts to influence her for good, as much as you please till the time comes for our return home."

Two days later Mary de l'Isle was seated by the side of Laura's couch, which had been drawn near the open window of a pleasant room, very different from the attic in which she had found her. The poor suffering Lorelei was already looking much better, though still excessively pale and wasted, the burning feverishness had evidently almost left her, and she seemed tranquil and at ease, though very weak. It had now, however, become strangely evident how completely her beauty had depended on her brilliant colouring and animation, for no one at this time would have called her even a pretty woman; her features had always been defective and irregular, and now that her eyes were sunken, and her cheeks wasted, there was not the slightest remains of the ephemeral loveliness that had allured so many to their fatal injury. She was much more subdued and simple in her manner, and there was a touch of real feeling in the thanks she was expressing to Mary for all she had done for her.

"I never thought the day would come when I should be a dependent on your charity, and that of Bertrand Lisle," she added, while a flush tinged her wan cheeks; "I think, in a sense, you both have your revenge in that very fact, though I know you do not do it with the intention of heaping coals of fire on my head."

"No, indeed," said Mary, warmly; "we have been giving ourselves pleasure in trying to be of use to you."

"You have saved my life; but was it worth saving, Mary? I must come back to that, though I am glad not to be called upon to face God with all my sins upon my head at this time; but you don't know with what dread I look forward to the dull monotonous existence that seems to be before me. You are going to leave me here with Mrs. Parry and this poor sickly baby, and I know that your kindness will ensure my having everything I absolutely require, but what shall I have to brighten life, or to give me happiness?"

"That which alone can give happiness to any one on earth, whatever their external existence may be—the love of God, the hope of serving through the eternal ages the Lord who suffered and died to purchase for us endless bliss."

Laura sighed. "I never was religious, you know, Mary; and although I have no doubt what you say is true, these prospects are too far off to have any reality for me; church-going used to be simply a weariness to me, as I dare say you remember."

"Yes, and I suppose even now you do not care to have such matters spoken of, though you have been very near what seems to you so far off, Laura dear."

"I do not dislike your talking of religion, Mary, because you never were either canting or self-righteous. But although it is true, no doubt, that if I had died as I expected I should have been brought into the midst of all that the Bible teaches of the unseen world, I only felt terrified at the thought of God's just anger, and my probable punishment; and I must say all that is happiness in this life seems to me very far removed from anything that religion can offer."

"I think that is just where your mistake has been, Laura. You have imagined that the gifts which this present visible world can bestow are capable of conveying happiness to the immortal beings whom God has created to find bliss only in Himself, and I think even your own experience might show you now what a fallacy it is to suppose the soul can ever be satisfied with earthly pleasures. You used to think that riches and society and amusements were all that was most desirable, did you not?"

"Yes, and I fought hard to win them."

"And you succeeded; for some months after your marriage you had all these supposed advantages, had you not? You had wealth untold, and you lived in a round of gaieties, and won a great deal of admiration and homage?"

"That is true enough," said Laura.

"Then, tell me, were you happy in the midst of it all?" and Mary fixed her dark earnest eyes on the faded face.

"Never for a single moment," answered Laura, energetically; "but there were a thousand causes to prevent it. I had rivals in society who were more courted than I was, and it worried me beyond endurance not to be able to emulate their success. Then I used to spend heaps of money in giving splendid fêtes to numbers of people, not one of whom I ever cared to see again, and I reaped nothing from them myself but disappointment and weariness. I got tired to death of the theatre when I went to it every night, and soon my state of health incapacitated me from much fatigue, and at home Mr. Brant and I were always quarrelling. Oh, I have been very wretched, but that was the result of my special circumstances, not because a life of pleasure cannot give happiness!"

"You would find that there are always circumstances to mar the enjoyments which belong to this world only; the very satiety they produce would do it, if nothing else did."

"But look at your own case, Mary; you are very happy, as well you may be—Comtesse de l'Isle, with wealth, and position, and everything you can desire."

"I am happy because I have my Bertrand," she answered, simply; "but the very love I bear him would turn to utter anguish if I had no hope beyond this life; for, think how precarious all such happiness is—at any moment death may take him from me or me from him. I do not know how I could bear the thought of all earth's changes and chances, if it were not for the prospect of the steadfast peace into which I trust we both may enter when this incomplete

existence is broken off or ending in decay. As to those other so-called advantages of which you speak, they are absolutely nothing in themselves, and altogether valueless, excepting for the power they sometimes convey of being useful to our fellow creatures."

"Then, do you mean that earth has no joys at all for any one, Mary?" asked Laura.

"No; far from it! There are many sources of happiness, pure and sweet, many tranquil pleasures which our Father in heaven gives us to cheer us in our difficult journey to our home; but they are only like the flowers growing by the wayside, which may enliven our path a little way, if we can but be sure that we ever see before us that Bright and Morning Star, the true Light of the world, which alone can really fill our hearts with joy, the perfect joy of His eternal love."

Mary seemed almost to have forgotten to whom she was speaking as she uttered these words, while her eloquent eyes were lifted up to the pure blue vault, seen through the open window, with a look which told how intense was in that moment her realisation of the great truth she was expressing.

The worldly woman at her side lay still and silent, gazing at her with mingled wonder and envy, and not daring for a time to disturb the thoughts she could so little understand.

CHAPTER LIV.

It might have made a striking and suggestive picture if Mary de l'Isle and Laura Brant could have been depicted in that moment of silence, as representatives, the one of the children of light, the other of the children of this world. Mary had turned to the window, and the full glory of an Italian sunset was streaming on her pure spiritual face and large dark eyes all luminous with the light of faith and hope, her snowy garments shining in the vivid radiance with the dazzling whiteness of an angel's robes, while Lurline lay back amid the shadows with her grey faded face and lustreless eyes, and the weary care-worn expression of one whose spirit knows no peace. She broke the stillness, and recalled Mary to herself at last by saying, with a heavy sigh, "I wish, oh how I wish, I could feel as you do! but for me it is hopelessly impossible."

In an instant Mary had turned.

"No, dear Lurline, you must not speak of hopelessness, that word has been obliterated in every spiritual sense by the cross of Christ. I came here to-day to give you a message, which I think will help you, from one who already knows the full secret of the love of God. Tell me, Laura, where do you suppose John Pemberton to be at this moment?"

"Oh, poor fellow, I am sure I do not know! living at home perhaps, or reading for orders somewhere, trying to redeem the time he wasted on me. Of all my evil deeds, Mary, my conduct to John Pemberton was that which terrified me the most, when I believed I was going then and there before the judgment-seat of Christ. I know that I did him a deadly injury by drawing him away from all his holy aspirations, and then I deceived and betrayed him after all, and sent him from me in despair. Oh, I was far more cruel to him than to Bertrand, for he loved me truly, and I do not think your husband ever really did. Wherever John is now I am sure he must be thinking of me with the bitterest hatred and contempt."

"Oh, Laura, how much you are mistaken," said Mary, softly. "Dear John is even now at the feet of his beloved Lord; in His bright immediate presence, and there, I doubt not, if he is permitted to do so, he prays for you as ardently, as incessantly, as he did while still he struggled through the shadows of this twilight world."

"Mary, what do you mean?" exclaimed Laura, starting from her reclining position; "where is John? not dead—oh, say he is not dead!"

"Dead to this mortal state, but alive unto God for evermore," said Mary, reverently.

"Then I shall never see him again, to ask him to forgive me, as I fully meant to do?" said Lurline, falling back sadly on her pillows. "Oh, Mary, I am justly punished for my cruelty towards him! I thought nothing of it at the time, when I was only straining every nerve to escape at any cost from Chiverley and the dull monotony of my unmarried life; but the sense of my unkindness to poor John Pemberton was brought home to me when I found myself the wife of a man who married me to suit his own convenience, and in the midst of persons who called themselves my friends for the sake of promoting their personal interests, and whose pretended attachment to me was as false and hollow as that with which I had mocked the devotion of his true and tender heart. I was stung with remorse concerning him even then, before I had been brought face to face with death and judgment, and I made the most earnest resolution that I would try to be a true friend to him in all the years to come. I looked forward most anxiously to meeting him again, for that very purpose; and now, all in a moment, I hear that it is for ever impossible; it may be a just decree, no doubt I have deserved it; but it is almost unendurable to feel that the one who loved me more than any one else ever did should have parted from me for the last time on earth in such exceeding bitterness."

"There was no bitterness in his feelings towards you at the last, Laura; of that I am quite certain from the manner in which he spoke to me of you a very short time before his death; but I do not believe that he ever at any time cherished an unkind thought of you, even when he was in the midst of his keenest suffering."

"He did suffer much, then, by my conduct, as I feared; tell me all you know of him from the time he left Chiverley. I never heard a word about him after that last letter he wrote to my father. Was he very unhappy, Mary? I want to know all the truth."

"I will not hide it from you, Laura, though I fear it must pain you to hear it. He was indeed almost broken-hearted then; but it was rather because he had fallen from his pure allegiance to his Saviour than from the utter loss and ruin that had fallen on his earthly love; his remorseful penitence drove him to test himself by serving God in some severe and painful way, before he dared allow himself to enter on the sacred duties of his first vocation as a clergyman; for this reason he came to Paris to work among the sick and wounded of the war, which was, of course, a task full of danger and self-sacrifice."

"To Paris! then was it there he died? and were you near him at the time? how did it happen, Mary? tell me all!" said Laura, clasping her hands tight in feverish agitation.

"I was near him; I had seen him only a few hours before; and I was the first to hear of the sudden termination to his beautiful life. He was shot down in the streets while saving a little child from the fury of some French soldiers, who were trying to kill her as a Prussian spy; she was the daughter of the people with whom I lodged, and she came flying to me at once with the terrible news, and I hurried to the spot, but too late to see him alive; he was lying under the sunset sky in the arms of death, an image of perfect peace."

"And it was thus his life was flung away!" said Laura, bitterly, "in a foreign country, in the midst of an alien struggle which had no claim on him, and a warfare in which he had no part; and he was driven to that city of death by me! It seems to me, Mary, that I am just as much responsible for his untimely fate as if I had shot him through the heart myself."

"No, Laura, I believe that he was taken in merciful response to His own intense longing for the Lord whom he loved. You were, doubtless, the cause of his leaving his native land, but good was brought out of evil, and if you had seen his smile in death you could never have regretted for a moment that his deep desire was granted, in that early passing of his soul to the bosom of the Father."

"You said he gave you a message for me before he died," said Laura, whose tears were now flowing quietly down her pale cheeks.

"Yes, he charged me with a special mission to you, and I think his prayers brought me here to fulfil it.

"What was it that he wished, Mary?" said Lurline, in a low awe-stricken voice; and the answer came in tones of deepest reverence.

"Laura, from the moment that John Pemberton left you at Chiverley, all through the siege, on the ramparts, in the night watches, by the side of the sick and dying, there was continually going up from his faithful heart an earnest prayer for you—the prayer that you might be brought into the love and peace of Christ; he knew that he never should see you on this earth again, and therefore he charged me most solemnly to seek you out and implore of you in his name to turn away from shadows and delusions to the true and only Light, to endeavour with all your heart to find that God to whom he has gone in joy unspeakable and full of glory." Mary rose, and knelt down by Laura as she spoke.

"Dear," she said, "will you listen to the voice of this your faithful friend speaking to you through my lips from the very grave? Will you turn even now to the God and Saviour who is so willing to receive you? Will you ask Him to draw you to Himself; to teach you His love; to show you in His own very being the way, the truth, the life—the fulness of joy for evermore? I know you feel yourself weak and blind and ignorant; but, Laura, He who reads the thoughts of all humanity knows what you require far better than you do yourself. He will be to you wisdom, and sanctification, and redemption; only fly to Him, cling to Him, cast yourself upon Him, wrestle with Him in the very darkness of your unbelief, tell Him you will not let Him go except He bless you, and He will dawn in your heart the Day-Star of a new existence, He will reveal Himself to you as that Deathless Love, which alone can satisfy your soul!"

Mary had clasped her hands in almost an agony of entreaty, while her voice trembled and her eyes shone through tears of deepest feeling. The effect of her earnestness was almost like the miracle of grace Bertrand had anticipated; for the hardened selfish heart of the worldly woman melted like ice-bound waters beneath the heavenly sunshine, the springs of its purer impulses were broken open, and, flinging her arms round Mary's neck, Laura exclaimed, in utterances half choked with strong emotion, "I will! I will! Oh, Mary! I will turn to God with all my heart if only you will help me, teach me, guide me; I will ask Him to give me faith, and a true sorrow for all my evil life, to show me His will, to grant me His love, to wake me out of my dead indifference and apathy, and I feel, I know John's prayers have not been all in vain, for already I have at least the wish to become a follower of Christ, and so if it be true that the very angels in heaven rejoice over the sinner that repents I think that he too—my poor lost friend—must be very glad in his home of rest this day."

She broke into hysterical weeping as she ceased to speak, and Mary would not allow her to say another word, but soothed her as if she had been a tired child, till she dropped into tranquil slumber.

(To be continued.)

"ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."

BY THOMAS ARCHER.

WITH THE PRISONER—(*concluded*).

BUT let us see what are the means adopted by the Society for helping discharged prisoners. Of course the procedure must begin with the prisoners themselves, in so far that they must express their willingness to accept the aid offered to them, and make known their decision to the governor of the prison where they are confined, and where the rules and provisions of the Society are displayed and explained.

This refers to the convict prisons, since only these are eligible, the prisoners from county gaols being assisted by other organisations; therefore, discharged convicts from Millbank, Pentonville, Portland, Portsmouth, Chatham, Parkhurst, Dartmoor, Woking, and Brixton, are able to seek help; and it is gratifying to know that, according to the prison returns, of 1,579 male prisoners discharged from these places in 1873, 796 sought aid from this and local provincial societies having the same object, the number of applicants to the London Society being 524, or nearly two-thirds of the whole. On any convict, male or female, accepting the offer of the Society, and making that decision known to the governor of the prison, the latter forwards to this office at Charing Cross a printed document, or recommendation, stating full particulars of the prisoner's age, date of conviction, number of previous convictions (if any), degree of education, religion, former trade or employment, ability to perform labour, and general character while in prison, together with the amount of good-conduct money which is to be allowed for work performed during the period of incarceration. This good-conduct money may amount to a maximum sum of £3, and the Society takes charge of it for the benefit of the prisoner, disbursing it only as it may be required, and supplementing it, when necessary, by a further grant of money, or even by advances or loans as may be deemed desirable in certain cases.

These reports from the prison governor reach the office about six weeks before the discharge of the convicts named in them, and following them come other papers, each of which contains a graphic personal description of the prisoner referred to, and a fairly-executed photograph, which is usually not without certain striking characteristics, though you will be surprised to find how often you fail to discover the lineaments which you have associated in fancy with lawlessness and crime. At the time of their discharge, the men and women are conducted hither by a plainly-clothed messenger from the prison, appointed for the purpose, and take their places in yonder back room, where they are immediately identified by means of the descriptions and photographs, and are then questioned as to their capabilities and the particular employment in which they desire to engage. It is manifestly impossible that the Society can provide them with employment in the particular trades which they may previously have followed, since there may be no openings in those industries, or they may be such as would be obviously unsuitable for persons who are still on probation.

Should the prisoner have friends or relatives able and willing to receive or assist him, they are communicated with, but should he be entirely dependent on personal exertion, the agent or secretary at once procures for him a decent outfit of clothes, and a lodging as far as possible from the scene of his former companions. A small sum of money is advanced for immediate subsistence, and he usually has employment provided for him, either in a situation, at manual labour, or by being set up in a small way at shoemaking, tailoring, or carpentering, either as journeyman, or, where possible, on his own account.

From six to twenty prisoners at a time are discharged from one or other of the convict establishments and brought to the Society's offices, and of the younger men a considerable proportion are assisted to go to sea, others—but, alas! too few—to emigrate, while a number obtain work as builders and contractors' labourers; and others again resume former occupations, as potmen, waiters, or employés in various situations, where the masters are always (if they take them on the recommendation of the Society) fully apprised of their position. A good many are set up again as costermongers, and in that case the agent of the Society quietly accompanies them to market, and advances the money for their first purchases; others go into the country and obtain work, and not a few of the better-educated or more skilled soon obtain engagements of various kinds, by personal application, and without reference to the Society, though they continue to report themselves, and to be kept in view by the agents, and, being separated from evil companionship, and feeling that they are not altogether friendless, retrieve their position and regain an honourable reputation.

Of 514 men and women who were received by

the Society last year, 180 obtained employment in London and are doing well; 156 were sent to places beyond the metropolitan district, and were placed under the supervision of the local police; 32 were sent to relatives and friends abroad; 57 obtained berths on board ship; 50 had failed to report and notify their change of address, as required by Act of Parliament; 23 had been re-convicted; 6 were not satisfactorily reported on; one had died; and 9, who had been recently discharged at the end of the year, were waiting for employment at the time of the Report. To read the Report Book, recording the visits of the agents or secretary to men employed in various avocations, and to their friends or relatives, is very encouraging, for it shows that of a large proportion, say seventy per cent., there is a good hope of reclamation by their long continuance in industrious efforts to retain their situations and to work honestly in various callings; while the reports of country cases by clergymen in the provinces is equally satisfactory, especially as they frequently record the return of the former convict to his family and friends, amidst whom he earns an honourable subsistence.

The female convicts, who are also received at the office, are, if they cannot be sent to relatives and friends, mostly taken to a Refuge which has been established by the Society at Streatham, where they find a home until situations can be obtained for them; and it is to the credit of some earnest ladies who are willing to engage these discharged prisoners as domestic servants that the result is often most favourable. A very large proportion of the women return to friends, however. Of fifty-three who left the Refuge at Streatham last year, thirty were received by friends, eighteen obtained situations, three returned to Millbank Penitentiary, one emigrated, and one died, twenty-five remaining at the Refuge at the time of the report.

In the case of these discharged female prisoners, as well as for the sake of those men who would eagerly seize an opportunity of beginning life anew in a new country, it would be most desirable if greater facilities existed for promoting and assisting the emigration of such as gave satisfactory evidence of reformation of character. The Society finds its own funds, supported by contributions from the public, barely sufficient to maintain, and insufficient largely to extend its useful work. One of the committee, a resident in Canada, has rendered invaluable assistance to emigrants recommended to his notice by the Society. The governor of Dartmoor Prison in his last Report, says:—

"I cannot too strongly again express my conviction that an emigration scheme connected with the Aid Societies would be an invaluable aid to the restoration of many casual criminals to a position of respectability and honesty. It would be especially appreciated by those (unfortunately a too numerous class) who had incurred the shorter sentences of penal servitude as punishments for breaches of trust of various kinds. These men are often cast off by their respectable friends, and, from the shortness of their sentences, are unable to earn the additional gratuity. With no lasting means of subsistence, and an overstocked market for their labour, it is not to be wondered at if such men speedily add a second conviction to their criminal career." We trust that practical steps will be taken to remove this difficulty.

SURLY BOB.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.—A NEW HOME.



BOB still lingered on where he was, but his mind now was full of pleasant thoughts of Mr. and Mrs. Deveron and Master Edgar. Their kindness had cheered and warmed his heart, whilst their words had excited bright hopes within him. And though all these agreeable reflections did not quite drive away his feeling of hunger, yet he still kept to his resolve not to part with that bright sixpence, which, after looking at it long and almost lovingly, he slipped into his pocket for safety.

Almost at that moment a gentleman on horseback came riding up, and, stopping at the door of a house opposite, looked around for some one to hold his horse. Bob sprang forward to offer his services, which were accepted; and when the gentleman again came out a few minutes afterwards, he slipped some coppers into the boy's hand before riding off.

Bob was indeed in luck to-day; and as the coppers had no special value attaching to them, like the sixpence had, he at once went off to an eating-shop, to indulge in a meal which was breakfast and dinner all in one. Then he thought it must surely be time to be starting in search of Mr. Deveron's house.

It was situated about half or three-quarters of a mile out of the town, and stood back in its own grounds, with a long carriage-drive leading up to the door. At the entrance to the drive stood a pretty Gothic lodge, all covered with ivy and creepers, which hung over the rustic porch, and climbed up the latticed windows. Evergreens grew plentifully

around, so that, though the tall trees were bare of leaves, there was something green to look upon, even in this wintry weather; whilst in the little garden a few pure white Christmas roses were rearing their lovely heads, and, in spite of all the cold ungenial weather, were expanding into beauty.

As Bob drew near a carriage passed through the gates, which were opened by a woman, who came out of the lodge on purpose. She did not immediately re-enter the house, but remained for a few moments looking about her, and then stooped to pick one of the Christmas roses.

Her face was so pleasant and kind-looking, that Bob felt encouraged to draw near and ask if this wasn't where Mr. Deveron lived.

"Yes," replied the woman, turning to look at him. "Do you want anything of him, my lad?"

"He told me to come out here this afternoon to speak to him. He thought p'raps as how he'd be able to find me some work," added Bob, with more unreserve than usual.

"Are you the boy he told me about then? The boy who stopped Master Edgar's pony?" asked the other, looking at him with interest.

Bob nodded his head.

"Come in here then, my lad," said Mrs. Heywood, leading the way in-doors. "Mr. Deveron said I was to keep you when you came; and he'd either speak to you himself, or ask my husband to see you. There, sit down," she continued, at the same time seating herself and taking up her knitting.

"And now tell me how it happened that Master Edgar's pony ran away, and you managed to stop it. I've never properly heard the rights of the story yet; but 'twas a brave thing of you, my lad! and a fortunate thing for you too: for Mr. and Mrs. Deveron will never forget it. You've made them your friends for life, if you'll only show yourself a deserving lad; for they aren't people to forget any service done them. And their hearts are bound up so in Master Edgar, that it makes me shudder whenever I think of the danger the little darling was in, with that pony of his running away. If any harm had come to him—but, there, I can't bear to think of that! only I've been giving thanks over and over again that somebody was at hand to come to his help. For he's the only child; so you may fancy how his papa and mamma dote on him; and he's such a darling, bless him, with his sweet little face and his loving ways, that we should all feel it pretty nigh as much as the parents if any harm came to him!"

Thus Mrs. Heywood talked on, as if for the purpose of setting Bob more at his ease; and her pleasant genial manner and kindly face were not without their effect upon him.

As he looked round upon the cheerful room, so neat and spotlessly clean, with a bright clear fire on the hearth before which a handsome black cat was sitting, and a pretty bay window, through the latticed panes of which the sun's rays were streaming, and reflecting themselves in the bright polish of the mahogany chest and table and comfortable Windsor chairs—as Bob looked upon all this, and then glanced at the neat figure and comely smiling face of the mistress of the house, who sat beside the fire busily knitting as she talked, he thought to himself that he had never seen any place to be compared to this pretty lodge, nor any person, except Mrs. Deveron, at all equal to his new friend.

After a little while a step was heard on the gravel outside; and Mrs. Heywood, who seemed to know in a moment whose step it was, rose to open the door.

"Is the boy come yet?" asked a man's voice.

"Yes, he's waiting here, come in," and Mrs. Heywood returned, ushering in a fine-looking man, who, Bob concluded, must be her husband.

He stood up, and pulled at his front lock of hair, by way of showing respect, whilst Mr. Heywood, looking kindly and yet searchingly at him, said, "So you are Bob Saunders, are you?"

"Yes, sir."

"And Mr. Deveron says you are wanting to find some work."

Bob nodded, and then glanced anxiously at the speaker, as if entreating him to say some work could be found.

"Well, I'm looking out for a boy to help about the garden and the grounds, and go on errands sometimes, in fact, do anything that is wanted, and make himself useful in any way. Should you like such a place?"

Bob's face expressed more than did his brief, "Aye, that I should, sir!" and Mr. Heywood, though not prepossessed with his appearance, yet remembering Mr. Deveron's wish, and moreover the part the lad had so lately acted, expressed himself willing to try him, and teach him what would be necessary for his work, provided he showed himself steady and industrious, and willing to be taught.

That settled, he told Bob he was to go up to the house, to speak to Mr. Deveron.

Bob's spirits and hopes were high, though it all seemed very unreal and like a dream, as he found himself walking along the beautifully kept and winding carriage-drive towards the great house, which, as he now caught sight of it, looked very grand and imposing. It was the finest he had ever seen; whilst the grounds, which stretched out all around, were most tastefully laid out, and in exquisite order.

It had frozen hard the night before, and the hoar frost still lay round about upon everything, marking out each blade of grass as well as each leaf of every shrub, with its own silvery touch of beauty. The sun was still shining brightly, for he had yet some distance to travel before he would be hidden from sight; and as his beams fell around, the delicate crystals of the hoar frost, which lay sprinkled on

the ground as if a fairy shower of tiny gems had descended in the night, sparkled and glistened, and seemed to rejoice when they caught his rays.

Moreover, the road under foot was hard and crisp, and the sky overhead of a deep blue, whilst the air was clear and bracing, and everything combined to make Bob feel the exhilarating influences around him. He thought he had never enjoyed a walk so much, in spite of his shyness, which made him dread the task before him of knocking at the door of that great house—even though it were only the *back* door.

But to his relief he was spared that ordeal, for Mr. Deveron, who had seen him approaching, came to meet him by another path.

"So Heywood is willing to try you, I see, by his sending you up to me," he began. "Well, my lad, I hope you will show yourself willing and industrious, and then you will always find a friend in me, and in Mr. Heywood too, I am sure. Only you must try and remember all he tells you, for he is very particular. But I can assure you, my boy, you couldn't be under a better master; for if you do your best to please him, and make the most of your opportunities, he'll turn you out a thorough good gardener; and, in time, who knows but you might rise to be what he is—head gardener to some gentleman."

Mr. Deveron's smile was reflected on Bob's face; for these words had called up such bright pictures before his mind's eye, that he could not but smile with pleasure at the mere idea of them. To think of his ever having a nice little lodge like Mr. Heywood's to bring Johnnie to, where he could grow well and strong, whilst Bob maintained him by his work! Oh, how happy they would be together! and how many pets Johnnie could have, without the fear of losing them like the poor little dove. Why, the very ideas of such delights was enough to make him feel ready to work day and night to please his new master, or masters.

Then Mr. Deveron went on to say that as he did not seem to have much of a home, and as, moreover, it was best for him to be as near his work as possible, he had, at Mrs. Deveron's suggestion, asked Mr. Heywood if they would be willing to let him live with them, as they had no children of their own, and more rooms in the lodge than they used.

"Should you like that plan, my boy?"

Like it! No possible words could have half expressed Bob's intense satisfaction at the arrangement, which was so very far beyond anything he had ever hoped, or thought of.

"You must pay something out of your weekly wages towards your board, and I will make up the rest for the present. So we may consider the matter settled, as Heywood agrees to my proposal, and I know he won't meet with any opposition from his wife. You must try to be a good boy, Bob, and not give them cause to regret having consented to take you in."

Bob tried to stammer out some words of thanks to Mr. Deveron, but altogether failed to express one-twentieth part of the grateful feelings that were stirred within him. For what a prospect was opening before him! To live in that pretty lodge which he had admired so much that he had felt half disposed to envy the cat which seemed so much at home there; to work in those beautiful grounds under such a master as Mr. Heywood; to be constantly seeing that kind Mrs. Heywood who had spoken so pleasantly to him; and, moreover, sometimes, perhaps, catch a glimpse of Mr. and Mrs. Deveron and Master Edgar, and have a word from them! it all seemed such happiness that his heart felt quite full, whilst at the same time it was difficult to believe in it all. For that very morning he had stood hungry, homeless, friendless, and now home, friends, work, had all come to him. It must have been his Heavenly Friend who had sent them all. He had heard his cry that morning, and had taken pity on him. Oh, how kind of Him! how he must love Him in return!

(*To be continued.*)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

303. Quote a passage which shows that the city of *No* was a very famous one.

304. What prophecy did Christ give as to the thorough destruction of Jerusalem?

305. What king was punished by God with a fearful sickness for two years on account of his idolatry?

306. It is a common saying, "He may run that readeth it." Where do we find this mentioned in the Bible?

307. What indignity was practised upon the servants of David whom he sent as an embassy to the King of the Ammonites?

308. In Luke xi. 12, it says, "Or if he shall ask an *egg* will he offer him a scorpion. In what way might this be possible?

309. Where is it implied that the moon has an injurious influence upon mankind?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 752.

291. Nehushtan (2 Kings xviii. 4).

292. Because St. Paul had cast out the evil spirit from a certain damsel who dwelt there, and who brought much gain to her masters by soothsaying (Acts xvi. 16—24).

293. God sent lions among them, which destroyed several of them (2 Kings xvii. 25).

294. Iddo, the Seer (2 Chronicles xii. 15).

295. "But prophesy not again any more at Bethel: for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court" (Amos vii. 13).

296. "But He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear" (Matthew iii. 11; see also Mark i. 7, and Luke xiii. 16).



(*Drawn by* M. E. EDWARDS)

COMING BACK.

HERE let me rest! the air is sweet with
clustered blossoms in their prime;
And golden arrows, bright and fleet, strike
through the shades of beech and lime;
The splendour of the sunset lights
Lies warm upon the woodland heights.

The mass has thickened on the wall; between the
chinks of crumbling stone
The burnished beetles slowly crawl. How long and
rank the grass has grown,
And how the red geraniums burn
Beside wild plumes of waving fern!

Those roses, white as angel-wings, around my
chamber-window clung,
And even now their fragrance brings thoughts of old
dreams when life was young—
Old dreams! I think that unawares,
Such dreams were often changed to prayers.

God set me in a lowly vale, but I looked upward to
the hills;
I can but climb, I said, and fail, content to fail if so
He wills;
But now, at times, methinks I stand
Too high above the sweet low land.

For when we rise, we leave below some things that
we were fain to keep;
Beyond our early hopes we go, till triumph only
makes us weep
For simple homely joys that crowned
Our path along the level ground.

Aye, I am glad to come again to this old home of
other days;
But is it bliss or is it pain I meet in these familiar ways?
Ghosts of old faces seem to rise
Between me and the sunset skies.

Old voices call from walk to walk, now far away, now
sweet and near,
Fragments of half-forgotten talk blend with the
leaves' soft music here;
Half happy, and half grieved, I see
My bygone youth come back to me.

SARAH DOUDNEY

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DIN Y HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXX.—THE WAY HOME.

"LADY FINCH, do you sing still?" Adrian Fuller asked, that evening. They formed such a silent group, for Netta was tired and worn-out, and Mrs. Woodward was sad, and Dorothy was in the far corner, trying to hide her sorrow.

"No," she said, wearily.

"Dorothy, why don't you go and play," Mr. Woodward said.

"I will if you like," she said, and went slowly over to the piano. Then Netta rose.

"No, I want to sing," she said, and took the seat at the piano. "Go and sit in your corner again," she whispered; "I know all about it, dear."

"Oh, Netta," asked Dorothy, "how did you learn to feel and to be so unselfish?"

"I learnt the first long ago in secret," she answered, almost bitterly; "and the latter you taught me to *wish* to be—not that I ever shall," she added, as she began the prelude to her old song, "Jock o' Hazeldean."

A minute later, and the same song which had charmed her hearers in that same house many a time was heard again; but oh, the difference! There was something in the sound of the broken wheezy voice that once had been so beautiful, that brought the tears into the eyes of those who listened now. Then suddenly she stopped, and would have fallen back but for Adrian Fuller, who caught her and lifted her to the sofa, and Dorothy sprang forward and saw that the Beauty's favourite white wrap was stained with blood.

They carried her up-stairs, and sent for the doctor, and telegraphed for her husband, who came in hot haste. Not that he had ever been violently in love with his wife, for he had married more from the desire to possess a wife whose beauty and grace would do him credit than for any other reason; but he came, and was kind and tender.

"Do you know, Dorothy," Netta said, faintly, in one of those last days, "I have missed so much in life. I have had perfect sympathy with no one in life but you, and you never knew it till lately, dear. Stoop down and kiss me once more, Dorothy. Things might have been so different for me; but then the 'might have beens' are the saddest things in all our lives." Dorothy read to her, and tried to teach her all that she had learnt herself when Tortoiseshell was dying, and eagerly and gratefully the Beauty tried to learn the lesson ere it was too late. And so all the old worldliness died out of Netta's life, and the beauty of holiness—that beauty which was greater than any other she had ever worn—came into it; and when, a week or two later, Dorothy knelt by her sister's grave—for she never rose again—she was able to say through her tears, "Thank God she knew the way home before she died." The way home! as Dorothy called it. It is the sweetest knowledge we can gain. Our feet learn thankfully, in infancy, first to trace their way to our earthly father's home, and there is no rest, no peace, no joy in this wide world so great as that tranquil happiness which steals over us when our weary hearts first learn the way to God.

"Dorothy, your sister made no will," Sir George Finch said, a few weeks later; "but there was a thousand pounds her grandfather left, which she asked me to settle on you. She wished it, or part of it, invested in the purchase of this house. Who is the owner?"

"I do not know; a friend of Mr. Blakesley's."

"Could you write and ask him?" She hesitated;

but eager, and glad of the excuse, she wrote, only a formal little note, making the necessary inquiries; and then she waited days, and weeks, and months for the answer, but none came, and at last Dorothy got tired of waiting, and angry and impatient. At length a message came to her through his aunts, "Tell Miss Woodward I will write soon." That was all; but still no letter came, and Adrian Fuller was always with her; and she could see, though he was silent, all he felt; and so the winter passed, and spring went by, and summer came again.

(To be continued.)

THE BUILDER OF THE TEMPLE.

BY THE REV. W. W. TULLOCH, M.A.

FOR so great a king, for so prosperous and important an empire, for so splendid a capital, great and beautiful buildings were needed. First in importance and grandeur was the Temple. This great building, with which the name of Solomon is indelibly associated, may be said to be the great work of his reign. His father had cherished the idea of building a great house to Jehovah ever since he had conquered Jebus. The new capital seemed to him the very place for it; and, with this in view, he had the ark borne to Mount Zion. Whether we believe the chronicler, when he ascribes to David the planning of the Temple to its most minute details, or not, it is quite certain that some steps towards its building had already been taken during the reign of that monarch. Its site—the threshing-floor of Araunah, on Mount Moriah, not otherwise particularly suitable, but remarkable for its sanctity in connection with the great plague—had been marked out by David. Materials for its construction had already been partially gathered in, and moneys collected in large sums. The all-essential help of Hiram, if not already employed, had been at least made secure. Besides Tyrian workmen, Solomon employed Phœnicians from the city of Gebal. Hiram, the son of a widow of the tribe of Naphtali, and of a Phœnician father, presided over the metal-work. The preliminary work was executed in Lebanon and other places, the entire force employed being reckoned at 70,000 porters, 80,000 wood and stone-cutters; over these were 3,300 overseers. Many of the workmen were "strangers"—Canaanites—whose lives were made "bitter with all hard bondage." As the work began to multiply, the forced aid of the Israelites themselves was however called in. This compelling of so many men (1 Kings v. 15; 2 Chron. ii. 17, 18) to leave their homes, and engage in this work, could hardly have been effected without a great deal of murmuring and dissatisfaction. The chief work was done in the quarries. The stones were there hewn, and fitted to one another, so that when the building was begun, there was "neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the house." The very silence in which the building was proceeded with was reverently vocal. It seemed as if it were the work of Nature—

"Like some tall palm, the noiseless fabric sprang."

The foundation stone was laid in the month Zif (May), in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, and the building was completed in the month Bul (November), in the eleventh year, about 1005 B.C., according to the received chronology. As every one knows, it was erected on the model of the Tabernacle, and when completed, it presented an appearance singularly unlike any modern building. In it were to be seen the influences of Phœnician, Assyrian, and Egyptian architecture, while "the pleasant precincts, the means of ablution, and the almost universal absence of imagery, can be found nowhere but in the sanctuaries of the only other existing Semitic religion, the mosques of Islam" (Dean Stanley).

The dedication of the Temple took place in the twelfth year of Solomon's reign, on the 14th day of the month Ethanim (October), and the ceremonies in connection with it were joined on to, or rather immediately preceded those of the great national Festival of Tabernacles; the united celebrations lasting altogether for a fortnight.

The sacred tent, the ancient brazen altar, the candlestick, the table of shewbread, the brazen serpent—how many associations would they all recall!—were borne in procession from the lofty heights of Gibeon. On Mount Zion those bearing these time-honoured relics were met by another band, carrying for the last time still older memorials of the old life of their race—the ark of acacia-wood covered with the small winged figures. As the Levites, clad in their snow-white garments bore it on their shoulders, the air was dark with clouds of incense, and the roads ran red with the blood of innumerable sacrifices. In that ark lay the two slabs of granite from Mount Sinai, upon which the Commandments were written, and no doubt it was an object of awful interest and sacred reverence to the wondering crowd. Onwards, through the people and into the Temple, it was borne, to "the place of its rest" (Ps. cxxxii. 8—14), and received under the shadow of the wings of

the golden cherubim. The sound of music was in the air, and voices, jubilant and clear, gave forth joyous bursts of song. Perhaps that noble hymn was sung—"Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in!" and we know that musicians and singers were "as one," as they burst forth with the refrain—"O praise the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever" (2 Chron. v. 13). Through all the pageantry and magnificent spectacle of that day the king was the chief spring of movement, and the chief centre of interest. On the east of the altar he sat enthroned, and watched all the proceedings. As the priests came forth from depositing the ark in its resting-place, and a thick darkness settled over the Temple, he came forth, and breaking into praise, blessed all the people as they stood before him. A mysterious awe was in his heart as he saw God in the darkness, and felt that at last a settled worship was to be the portion of his people. And now he turns to the west, and dropping on his knees in the then novel attitude of supplication, with hands stretched to heaven, and eyes gazing upward, he broke forth in prayer. Long and earnestly he prays, dwelling on the eternal incomprehensible nature of God, His infinite "far-awayness," yet ever near His people to rule and govern them, to hear their prayer, to give them all things that are good for them, and daring to hope that the "Divine mercies would be drawn down on the nation by the concentration of the national devotion." Who can doubt but that the great heart of a great man was then poured forth in words worthy even of that never-to-be-forgotten scene. Oh that he could have learned the yet higher law, that obedience is better than sacrifice! He then rose from his knees, turned toward the east, and once more gave the people his benediction. For a fortnight the services of the festivals lasted, and at the end of that time he received himself the blessing of that motley crowd of worshippers, who went back "to their tents" with songs of joy and thanksgiving on their lips, thankful "for all the good the Lord had done to David His servant, and to Solomon, and to Israel His people" (1 Kings viii. 60).

Next to the Temple perhaps the building of greatest importance was the palace. The house occupied by David seemed too poor and small for the dignity and immense treasures of Solomon. Accordingly, he built a magnificent edifice, in keeping with the grandeur of everything about him, probably upon the southern continuation of the hill on which the Temple was built. It was not completed for eight years after the dedication of the Temple, though it was begun about the same time. Like the sacred edifice, it was distinguished by the lavish use of costly ornament. The beams of its roof, the supporting pillars, the panels of its walls, were all of cedar. In its great hall stood the throne of ivory overlaid with gold, where Solomon sat in judgment, his feet resting on a golden footstool. Here he lived in royal state, surrounded by all the luxuries that could be obtained, and all the means of sumptuous pleasure which could be devised. His drinking-cups were of gold—"none were of silver." His fare was so costly and varied, his servants so numerous and so richly attired, as to excite the wonder and admiration of the Queen of Sheba. His gardens were extensive, beautiful, and fragrant, full of rare plants and splendid trees. Thither the king would drive at dawn, "the scarlet shafts of sunrise" glittering upon his splendid equipage, glossy horses of great swiftness, himself clothed in white, his magnificent retinue of attendants clad in purple, their long dark hair dusted over with gold and streaming behind them. There he loved to pass some of his leisure, and while he enjoyed to the full, as we know he did, the beauties of Nature, the noise of fresh cool water made music in his ears.

Amid all his royal magnificence, amid all the incessant superintendance which his building would require, amid all his plans for the prosperity of the nation and the welfare of his people, he had however time not only to be a sharer in the intellectual development of his age, but to a great extent to lead it and give it character. Of that golden age of commercial prosperity and of intellectual achievement, he was not only, as Dean Stanley remarks, the Augustus but the Aristotle. "God gave him wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand which is on the seashore" (1 Kings iv. 29). The nation had struggled, and had struggled manfully and well, to attain its present position, and in doing so not only had the foundations of historic, legal, and perhaps also scientific literature, been laid, but the sublimest heights of poetry been reached. But now that it has time to compose itself, to pause and regard its position from the plains of peace and prosperity, it ceases to be so intensely subjective. Thoughtful men turned their attention to the position of the nation as a nation, to themselves as individual members of it, to the daily life lived under their eyes; they began to philosophise; they had time to study the intellectual development of other nations, and even to endeavour to rival them in their special features. The divine desire to know, to discover, to "find out," took possession of them. It took possession of Solomon; and the desire in his case was united with the creative and assimilating power of genius, and fostered and stimulated by all the intellectual activities of the time in which he lived. It is difficult for us to discover how far his proverbial wisdom has been identified with the great leap that all thought took in his time, nor can we tell how much he may have owed to wise

men about him, whose names have not come down to us, but we see no reason to doubt the verdict of the inspired writer, "Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the East country and all the wisdom of Egypt, for he was wiser than all men" (1 Kings iv. 30, 31). His knowledge was so extensive and varied, his spirit of inquiry so restless, that he delighted in the propounding and answering of those "dark sayings" so much in vogue at that time, and at this kind of "Socratic dialogue" he appears to have been unequalled, and may be taken as the first possessor of that true philosophic spirit which, from that day to ours, has won such varied triumphs and achieved so much. This same eager spirit led him to become the founder of Hebrew science. "He spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes" (1 Kings iv. 33). No one can read his works without noticing what a close and acute observer he was of all things animate and inanimate. "In the brightness of his youth," too, he sang. "His songs were a thousand and five, or five thousand" (1 Kings iv. 32, Heb. and LXX.). The Song of Songs is aglow with the poetry and passion of life; in it his heart "leaps up" to the manifold beauty in the world. As we read it we seem to see the earth carpeted with the flowers of spring: we enjoy their exquisite colour, we inhale their fragrant perfume, we listen to the singing of a thousand birds, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land. Exquisite as it is as a sweet fresh pastoral, its interest is no less dramatic, for in it human passion runs its course, and human voices are heard through its shifting scenes. The 2nd, 45th, 72nd, and 127th Psalms are, by their titles or subjects, supposed to be his, and he must have done much in modelling others for the Temple service, the magnificent music of which is due to his love of the praise of God.

ENGLISH SACRED POETRY.

WITH the venerable names of Drummond, Crashaw, Donne, and Herbert, our sketch of the history of Early English sacred poetry will conclude. Not inappropriately, for with them and their contemporaries died the religious poetry of the old world. When they had passed away a new epoch commenced. With them faded away much of the massive splendour, the wealth of imagery and illustration, the brilliant rhetoric, so dazzling but at the same time so subdued and stately, the condensation, energy, and pregnant thought, which characterised the style of our earlier poetry, the ecstatic enthusiasm, the inspiration and sublime purpose which characterised its spirit. In Milton English sacred poetry found its culmination; but we have ventured to exclude him from the illustrious quartette whose names stand at the head of this paper; first, because he may be said to form an epoch by himself, as he had no immediate models and no immediate imitators; secondly, because it would be impossible to do him justice in the few lines we could devote to him here, and as most of our readers are more or less intimately acquainted with his works, we prefer to leave them free to their own opinions, and to discuss claims less popular but scarcely less worthy of consideration.

The recorded lives of most poets have been unromantic and uneventful; but the lives of Drummond and Donne have each a pathetic story attached to them. William Drummond was born on the 13th of December, 1585, and was educated at the High School, Edinburgh. Like many of his tuneful predecessors, he was intended for the law, but, like them, found the Muses more attractive. The death of his father, in 1610, put him in possession of that beautiful spot, which has always been associated with his name, Hawthornden. Its very title is redolent of poetry. Here the young poet devoted himself to literature, penned most of his graceful sonnets, and received the visits of his friends. Hither too, in 1618, Ben Jonson made his celebrated pilgrimage from London, walking the whole distance; but the two poets appear to have met each other with more affection and enthusiasm than they preserved. Ben Jonson's insolent intolerance and overbearing dogmatism disgusted the sensitive sonnetteer, and he has been accused of traducing his visitor's memory. Every poet must have his heroine, and Drummond fell in love with a very lovely girl—Mary Cuningham, daughter of the laird of Barns. She appears to have been all an idealist could picture—a beautiful face, a graceful figure, and most engaging manners, won the admiration of all who saw her; her character corresponded with her features. Drummond was fortunate enough to win her affections, and their nuptial day was fixed. But she died suddenly of a fever. This fearful calamity sunk deep into the poet's heart; he was never the same again. His poetry took a deep tinge of melancholy; he became a changed man. For several years he attempted to alleviate his sorrow by travel, and appears to have passed much of his time on the Continent. At last he returned to

Hawthornden, and, in 1632, married a woman of humble extraction; but his works show that his heart was in the grave of his first love. He died December 4th, 1649, in his sixty-fourth year. With his secular poems, which consist for the most part of sonnets, we have nothing to do. His principal sacred poems are "Urania," a series of thirteen short poems; "Flowers of Sion," a large collection all sacred; and, inserted among his posthumous verses, "Divine Poems." These latter are for the most part hymns. We would particularly invite the attention of our readers to these little works of Drummond; they are genuinely beautiful, will amply repay perusal, and are not half so well known as they ought to be. For instance, take the commencement of his Hymn of the Ascension, you might imagine you were reading a Christian Pindar:—

"Bright portals of the sky,
Embossed with sparkling stars,
Doors of Eternity,
With diamantine bars,
Your arras rich uphold,
Loose all your bolts and springs,
Ope wide your leaves of gold,
That in your roofs may come the King of kings!"

Drummond is often very happy in terse aphorisms, as:—

"Trust flattering life no more, redeem time past,
And live each day as if it were thy last."

"Wisest death makes us our errors know."

Such weighty verses as the following remind one of Shakespeare:—

"Gigantic frames held wonders rarely strange,
Like spiders' webs are made the sport of days,
All only constant is in constant change;
What done is, is undone and, when undone,
Into some other fashion doth it range:
Thus goes the floating world beneath the moon."

But having introduced Drummond, we must pass on to our next poet, Richard Crashaw. Richard Crashaw, the most eloquent and glowing of all our sacred poets, was born about 1616, was educated at the Charterhouse, elected a scholar of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, in 1632, and became a Fellow of Peterhouse, in 1637, having taken his degree in 1633. Of his subsequent life we know nothing connectedly, and very little with any certainty. He was ejected from his fellowship during the great rebellion, in 1644; and, alas! embracing the Roman Catholic religion, he betook himself to Paris. In 1646, it is said that Cowley, then secretary to Queen Henrietta Maria, found him in great destitution, and that the queen having given the unfortunate poet letters of introduction to Cardinal Palotta, at Rome, Crashaw became his secretary, and was subsequently appointed to a canonry at Loretto. He died there somewhere about 1650. Fire, splendour, and a gorgeousness of expression and imagery almost Oriental are the chief characteristics of Crashaw's genius. But delicate and tender, full of piety, zeal, and fervour, as his poems are, they are perverted by that conceited style of writing so common in his day which, originating among the Euphuists, tainted English poetry for more than half a century. Almost all Crashaw's poems are religious; the titles describe them—"Steps to the Temple," "Sacred Poems," "Epigrammata Sacra," among which is the original, of the celebrated verse about turning the water into wine.

"Lympha pudica Deum vidit et erubuit."
(The modest water saw its God and blushed.)

As the poet had become a Roman Catholic when he penned these effusions, many of them are either addressed or refer to the Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalene, or to other members of the Roman Catholic hagiology. It is impossible to do justice to Crashaw by quotations, but we submit two or three short extracts which will give an idea of his fervid highly-coloured style and marvellous music. Of the Infant Saviour he writes:—

"WELCOME.

"To many a rarely-tempered kiss,
That breathes at once both maid and mother,
She sings Thy tears asleep, and dips
Her kisses in Thy weeping eye;
She spreads the red leaves of Thy lips
That in their buds yet blushing lie."

Perhaps one of his most striking poems is the one with the title—"On a Prayer Book sent to Mrs. M. R."

"Here's a friend shall fight for you,
Hold but this book before your heart,
Let prayer alone to play his part;
Dear soul, be strong,
Mercy will come ere long,
And bring her bosom full of blessings,
Flowers of never-fading graces,
To make immortal dressings
For worthy souls."

This is how he describes the ecstacy of the soul when God's power falls on it:—

"Amorous languishments, luminous trances,
Sights which are not seen with eyes;
Spiritual and soul-piercing glances,
Whose pure and subtle lightning flies
Home to the heart, and sets the house on fire,
And melts it down in sweet desire,
Yet doth not stay
To ask the window's leave to pass that way."

His hymn on the Epiphany, and on the name of Jesus, are both splendid compositions, and will repay careful perusal. Crashaw is the minstrel of Divine ecstacy, and cannot fail to be the treasured companion of any who may share the same religious fervour and impetuous zeal for God's glory.

With Dr. Donne—the great leader of the metaphysical school of poetry, the celebrated satirist, the eloquent Dean of St. Paul's, so eccentric, that

he began life by defending suicide, and ended it by dressing himself in his winding-sheet and rehearsing his own funeral in his bed-chamber—we are most of us acquainted from Walton's life of him. As a boy he was so precocious, that in his tenth year he was sent to Oxford, where he greatly distinguished himself. From Oxford he passed to Cambridge, it being common in those days for a student to be entered at both Universities. Some time after this he travelled about on the Continent, and on his return to England became private secretary to Lord Elsemore. He did not enter the ministry till late in life, and died dean of St. Paul's, in 1631. The early life of this staid divine was marked by an interesting romance, which Walton tells with chuckling sympathy. While Donne was in the household of Lord Elsemore, he fell in love with his niece, the daughter of Sir George Moor, by whom his affection was returned. Sir George, not thinking this a suitable match, did all in his power to break it off; but the young couple, after vicissitudes enough to furnish a novel, were finally united. Shortly after the marriage, when Donne went abroad on his travels, occurred the famous ghost story, which may be found at length in Walton's "Life of Donne." Most of the dean's poetry is of the secular order; what concerns us are his "Divine Poems." These are weighty, and often eloquent, though still oftener perverted by those conceits which have made Donne's name a proverb. We would call attention especially to "La Corona." "The Litanie" also merits attention. As these poems are rare we cite one as a specimen:—

"A HYMN TO GOD THE FATHER.

I.

"Wilt Thou forgive that sin where I begun,
Which was my sin, though it were done before?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin through which I run,
And do run still, though still I do deplore?
When Thou hast done Thou hast not done,
For I have more.

II.

"Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I have won
Others to sin, and made my sins their door?
Wilt Thou forgive that sin which I did shun
A year or two, but wallow'd in a score?
When Thou hast done Thou hast not done,
For I have more.

III.

"I have a sin of fear that, when I've spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;
But swear by Thyself that at my death Thy Son
Shall shine as He shines now and heretofore;
And, having done that, Thou hast done,
I fear no more."

Holy George Herbert—who knows not him? Who has not hung over honest Izaak Walton's memoir of him, pure, sweet, and limpid as the life it describes? We most of us know the events of Herbert's comparatively uneventful life—how, after being educated at Westminster School, he went up to Cambridge, and became a Fellow of his college and orator of the University; how he then went down into the country, had a romantic marriage, and finally became Rector of Bemerton near Salisbury; and how, three years after, he died peacefully and gradually, of a consumption, aged forty years. Such a life as Herbert's is not a record of transitory incidents, it is essentially the record of a spiritual life. The few years he remained on earth sufficed to give his brother men the picture of a great, true, simple character; and the pen of Walton has preserved the picture of that character for all time. The significance of a man's life is only indirectly written in his surroundings and in the incidents which befal him on the way; his true life is the record of the influence he has on his fellow-men. It has often happened, unfortunately, that there is as much dissimilarity between the actual life of a man of letters and the spirit of his works as there is between the brightness of the day and the darkness of the night. Herbert is a happy exception. There was an exquisite harmony between his deeds and his words. Walton's truthful transcript seems to be throwing the poet's works into a concrete form. That refined piety, pristine simplicity—quaint perhaps sometimes, but charming always—that thorough unworldliness combined with the deepest sympathy with the feelings of his fellow-men, the tenderness, the purity, which characterised Herbert as a boy, as a college tutor, as a public functionary, as a country clergymen, are faithfully reflected in his "Divine Poems." These beautiful compositions, as they are the most popular, so they are the most fascinating in the whole body of our sacred literature. Without the obscurity and occasional roughness of Donne, without the fierce fervour of Crashaw, they breathe the gentleness of the bird to which the Holy Spirit loved to compare itself. They are, moreover, as various as they are excellent, not monotonously characterised by one tone, but diversified by every species of utterance: now marching along grave and stately, as in "The Church Porch" or "The Sacrifice;" now light and joyous, as in "Praise." What could be more charming than his lines on "Virtue?" beginning—

"Sweet day! so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky,
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night,
For thou must die," &c.

What more condensed, thoughtful, and happy than the poem entitled "The Pulley"? What more lovely than the verses on "Peace"? But we have no space for more allusions, and can scarcely conclude this paper more appropriately than by advising the reader who has followed us thus far to turn to Herbert and read for himself the poems to which allusion has been made. In Herbert and in many other of our early sacred poets, there is, as we have endeavoured to show, a rich spring

of the truest poetry; much that fulfils the highest purpose of song, to exhort and encourage, to charm and cheer. The beauties of these poets are not all on the surface, but need patience to discover, and reflection to enjoy. Herbert and Drummond would do honour to any literature, and, once thoroughly appreciated, will be life-long worthy companions. At a time when the separation between secular and religious poetry is so wide, and becoming, alas! every day wider, it is a blessed privilege to be able to fall back on these old poets who, for splendid genius, healthy tone, and mere literary excellence, are a match—and more than a match—for those who are so ostentatiously *not* fighting in the Lord's van.

The purpose of these imperfect sketches will be fully answered if, at their suggestion, any reader shall be induced to turn to the authors themselves.

GRANDFATHER.

GRANDFATHER sits by his cottage door—
The passionate heat of his day is o'er—
A reflex light on his sweet old face
From the nearing heaven and the crown of grace.

There is peace in his eye and calm in his breast,
From a hope on high, and a heart at rest;
His evening sky has its golden bars,
And his "gloaming of life" will be full of stars.

He has done with toil, he has done with care;
His life itself is a restful prayer;
And no dark doubt finds a resting place
In the reverent light on his aged face.

The children round him are bright at play,
He smiles with a smile as bright as they;
There's not a cloud on the first or the last,
With them 'tis to come, with him it is past.

From the noonday turmoil, when cares increase,
To look at his angel-face is peace—
Like a sweet benediction on all my pains,
And a giving of thanks that a rest remains.

I know the reason that makes him so—
He taught me the secret long ago—
Trust God and walk in the way upright,
And the evening hour will be peaceful light.

Dear old man! may the beams that shine
On his evening hour be as bright on mine;
May the light of the nearing heaven on his face
Be as calm on mine when his steps I trace.

J. H.

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

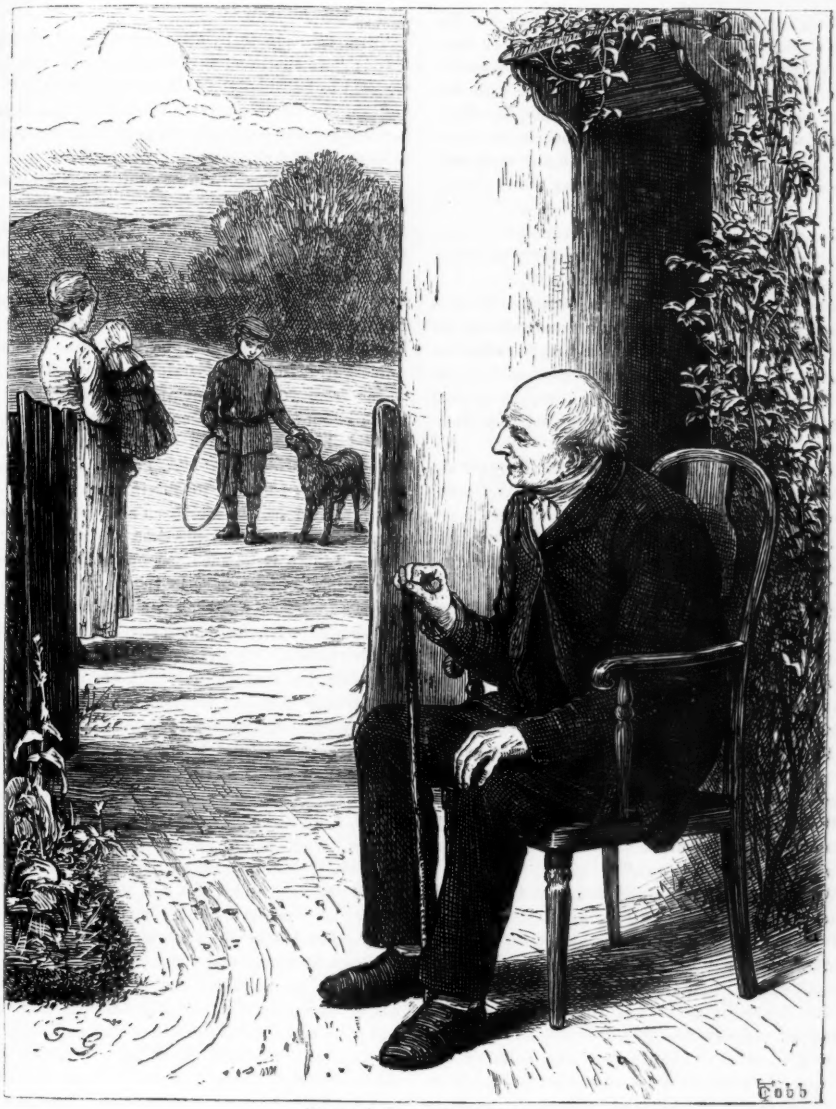
CHAPTER LV.

MARY DE L'ISLE carried out her plan of summoning nurse Parry to her aid, on behalf of Mrs. Brant, and two or three days later she and her husband drove to the railway station to meet their old friend, who had telegraphed her consent to the request.

Many of the Italians who were sauntering about in expectation of the passing excitement to be found in the arrival of the train, watched with admiring eyes the pleasant picture presented by the young couple, as they stood side by side on the platform waiting for its appearance. Bertrand had quite recovered his good looks, as well as his strength and activity; and although his bronzed complexion still bore traces of the open-air life he had led during the campaign, yet his handsome face had regained all its brightness of expression, and the somewhat massive proportions of his stalwart frame contrasted well with the grace and delicacy of the pretty figure by his side. Mary did indeed look fair and lovely as the white rose, to which his father always likened her, and his blue eyes shone with joy and pride as he turned them on her each time she spoke to him with her low soft voice.

"Oh, there she is! Look, Bertrand, does it not make you think of the old days at home to see her dear kind face again!" said Mary, as she caught sight of Mrs. Parry.

"Yes, indeed; I can recognise the little twinkling eyes behind her spectacles even at this distance," exclaimed Bertrand, and they hurried forward to meet her as the train drew up in the station, while she, with beaming countenance and incoherent ejaculations of delight, almost precipitated herself from the carriage in her eagerness to join them. No sooner, however, was she fairly landed on the platform, by the aid of Bertrand's strong arm, than the good woman fell into the wild state of perturbation and flurry which was her normal condition at a rail-



(*Drawn by* TOWNELEY GREEN.)

"Grandfather sits by his cottage door."—*p.* 792.

way station, and it was not until the De L'Isles had placed her comfortably at rest in their own rooms at the hotel that she was able to hold any rational conversation with them.

"Well, my dears!" she exclaimed, when she had made a good dinner, and was ensconced in an easy-chair in front of the sofa where they were seated, "it is an untold happiness to me to be with you again; and you look so bright and bonny, my Mary, that it does my heart good to see you; at the same time I must tell you I never came to any work with a worse will in my life, and that for more reasons than one."

"Oh, nurse, I am very sorry to hear that!" said Mary, "and surprised too, for generally you are so kind and ready to help any one who is ill."

"Yes, my darling, when it is a Christian person, and not a piece of painted falseness and selfishness; I can tell you Mrs. Laura Brant is just the very last in the world I want to nurse or be good to. I have been hearing about her. I know that she is your worst enemy, my Mary, as well as poor Mr. Pemberton's."

"Not now, dear nurse," said gentle Mary; "she is much changed, and will be very different for the future from what she has ever been before, I am sure; and, besides, she is in sorrow and suffering, so we must forget everything but that she requires our help."

"Ah, that is just like you!" said nurse Parry, nodding her head. "I don't pretend to have an angelic temper, and to be always forgiving and forgetting; but somehow you never fail to make me seem almost as sweet as yourself when there is need of kindness to be shown to any one, and I dare say it will be the same this time; but Mrs. Brant will be very much mistaken if she thinks I have come to her willingly."

"What other reason had you for not wishing to undertake this task, nurse?" asked Bertrand; "you said you had more than one."

"Well, my dear boy, I did not like leaving the Brunots, the children are still very sadly."

"I did not know that any of them were ill," said Mary, anxiously; "I would not have asked you to come if I had thought they required nursing."

"Nor do they; it is not that they need, but country air and change; they are very low and weak, one and all of them, but especially Valerie; she has never got over the shock to her nerves which she received that sad day when she witnessed Mr. Pemberton's death. She fell into such a melancholy unnatural state for a child after you went away that I really should not have been able to leave her now at all if it had not been for Mr. Davenant."

"Charlie Davenant! has he been with you?" exclaimed Bertrand.

"Yes; I have not had time to tell you about him yet," said nurse Parry, "though I am sure I have been talking as fast as I could" (which she certainly had). "He has been with us for a week, and I left him with the Brunots; but there is quite a pretty story about his first visit to the house, which you will like to hear."

"Let us have it by all means then," said Bertrand; "we shall feel as if we were the good children we used to be when you told us tales long ago."

"Ah, Mr. Bertrand," said the old woman, shaking her head, "Mary was always good, but you were as full of mischief as ever you could be."

"And so I am still, nurse; but never mind that, let us hear your story."

"Well, my dears, it was about a week ago that he came. I heard some one shown by the servant into the outer room. I went in to see who it was, and there was a pleasant-looking young Englishman, who told me his name was Charles Davenant. Then he said he was sure I must be nurse Parry, from the descriptions he had often had of me from you. I remembered having heard you speak of him, Mary, so I asked him to sit down, and he did, but he was in a great hurry to ask some question, and he said, 'Mrs. Parry, I have come all the way from England to obtain some news of Miss Trevelyan; I have never been able to hear how she passed through the terrible time of the siege.' 'Ah,' says I, 'there is no such person as Miss Trevelyan any longer,' but I was sorry the moment I had said it, for he went as white as a sheet, and caught me by the arm, crying out, 'Oh, surely, surely, it cannot be! is it possible she has really gone quite away from this weary, wicked world!' 'No, no,' says I, 'she is safe enough with her husband; but she is married now, and she has become Madame de L'Isle.' 'Married!' says he, 'and to her own true love; for I suppose you mean it is Bertrand Lisle that has got her.' Then he drew a long breath, and said, heartily, 'Well, I am right glad of it, for now I hope she'll be happy, though she can be my bright particular star no more.' 'No, indeed,' says I, 'she is nobody's star but Bertrand's, and I can tell you she is a countess now.' 'A countess!' cries he, 'she is fit to be a queen, and better than a queen. There never was anybody like her, and there never will be!' and with that he asked a great many questions about where you were going to live, and Bertrand's property and title, and I answered them all; and then, when he was quite satisfied about Mary, he said to me, 'And now, Mrs. Parry, will you tell me where I can find John Pemberton? I want to see him very much.' You may fancy it gave me quite a turn to hear him say that, without a notion of the truth, so I answered, hastily like, 'You'll have to wait till you get to heaven before you can see John Pemberton, Mr. Davenant,' and the poor young fellow gave a great cry. 'You don't mean to tell me he is dead, Mrs. Parry! after all his trial and sorrow it would be too sad!' But I was obliged to tell him it was unhappily

true, you know; and when he had heard the story of his death he fairly broke down, and sobbed like a child, till it made my heart ache to hear him. He was sitting at the table with his head laid down upon his folded arms, and he was just opposite the door of the inner room, and presently he raised himself to ask me some other question, and lifted his eyes, and there, in the doorway, stood little Valerie Brunot, in a blaze of light from the sunshine streaming down on her out of the window behind, with her dress shining white and glistening, and her hair all golden, like a glory round her head, and she was looking straight at him, with her great clear eyes, and her beautiful young face so solemn and tender; he stared at her for a minute like a man in a dream, and then whispered to me, 'What is it, Mrs. Parry? is it an angel?' but before I could answer Valerie began walking forward slowly towards him, and she came and stood in front of him as he drew his chair back from the table, and said, in her sweet clear voice, 'Did you love Mr. Pemberton, sir?' 'Oh, I did indeed,' he said, 'he was my dearest friend.' 'Then I will love you,' she said, and she put her two little hands in his, and he stooped down and kissed them.

"Then she sat down by his side, and said, 'Now I will comfort you—though I am glad you cried for my dear Mr. Pemberton; but none of us must cry for him any more now, for he is happy, happier than any of us, safe at the feet of the dear Lord Jesus," and she bowed her pretty head as she said the sacred Name. Well, my dears, Mr. Davenant kept looking at her as if he really did think she was an angel out of heaven, and from that moment those two became such friends as never was. He asked me if he could lodge in the house, and I got him a room, and there he has been ever since. He has done Valerie all the good in the world, taking up her time and attention, and making her forget her sad thoughts. They walk out together, and she helps him with his French, which is worse than mine, and that's saying a good deal, and he is ever so fond of her; he seemed delighted when I told him I left her quite in his care—for her father is out all day selling his Bibles, and her mother is but a poor creature at the best of times."

"I have no doubt he will be kind to her," said Bertrand, "since you have often told me, Mary, what a good fellow he is; but it is seldom a young man will take so much trouble about a child under any circumstances."

"I am not surprised at it when the child is Valerie Brunot; there is a peculiar charm in her character which has its effect on every one who knows her," said Mary; "but I am so glad, dear nurse, that Mr. Davenant came to take care of her just in time to set you free. You must rest here quietly to-night, and then to-morrow I hope you will come with me to Mrs. Brant."

CHAPTER LVI.

Lurline had been moved by the De L'Isles to more comfortable rooms before the arrival of Mrs. Parry, and it was therefore to a large airy apartment, where the open windows let the light fall freely upon the invalid, that Mary conducted her old nurse the morning after her arrival. True to her loyal devotion towards the De L'Isles, whom she believed Laura to have cruelly injured, the good woman grumbled at the task before her all the way from the hotel, and continued to grumble as she went up the stairs to the very door of the sick room; but the moment her eyes fell on the wan mournful face of the sufferer all her unwonted sternness gave way, and her kind heart went back with a great revulsion of feeling to its natural compassionateness and ready sympathy; and when Mary, with her usual quiet tact, placed the fragile neglected infant in her arms, the victory over her motherly instinct was complete; in an instant she was lavishing endearments on it, and tending it with an artistic skill which brought a smile even to Laura's pale lips, while she became so completely engrossed by its various requirements that she heard nothing of the conversation which was soon commenced between Mary and her friend. Two or three days had passed since that eventful evening when Lurline first heard of the death of the man whose ill-fated love for her had been indeed strong as death, and might be said to shed its light upon her even yet from the very darkness of the grave, and she had said no word to Mary of what might be passing in her mind as regarded that conversion of her own soul to love and truth for which she had promised so earnestly to strive; yet there were many indications that her thoughts were dwelling on it anxiously, and her manner was much more subdued and humble than it had ever been in all her life before. She was slowly improving in health, and it was quite plain now that she was likely to recover completely under the tender care which surrounded her; but on this morning, when Mary asked her how she had slept, Laura answered that she had passed a very restless night.

"Thinking, always thinking, Mary, till my brain reels and my heart is so weary. I seem possessed by my past life, it is continually passing in review before me, with the light from the Sun of Righteousness bringing out in hideous aspect all its wickedness and treachery and selfishness. I long, I pine, for pardon and peace, but I seem as one dead. I have no power to enter into that faith and love which John Pemberton so earnestly desired for me. I do as you told me, Mary, I appeal to the merciful Christ direct, I scarce cease to call on Him night and day; but it is with me as with the disciples of Baal, there is no voice nor any that answers, sometimes I think that even the prayers which rose from that pure heart of which I was so unworthy, cannot be heard for such as I have been."

"They have been heard," said Mary, softly, "of that I am very sure, and when it shall seem good to the Most Merciful He will answer them; do you remember how He said even to those whom He knew were about to forsake and deny Him, 'I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you?' and to you too, Laura, in an hour when you think not the Master will come."

"I trust it may be so," said Lurline, with a heavy sigh; "but, Mary, one idea has come to me on which I should like to act if you will help me with your advice; it seems to me, that perhaps I have no right to expect that I can be permitted to win even faith or hope until I have given some proof that I mean in future to try and do the will of that God whose mercy I am seeking. I seem likely to live now, and I must come to some decision as to my manner of existence in the years to come. I want you to tell me what you think it would be my duty to do."

"I can have very little doubt on that point; it seems to me perfectly clear."

"But wait, Mary!" exclaimed Laura, with a good deal of feverish anxiety in her tone, "you do not know yet what possibilities there are for me; it is certain that I cannot return to England, for my poor father is dead, and Mrs. Wyndham was left without any provision, and has gone to live with her brother and his family; but there is an opening for me here. I had a note this morning from an Italian Marchesa, who was one of my principal acquaintances, but who was absent when my misfortunes came upon me, and has only just returned. She writes to offer me a home with her if I will give her my services as lady companion; the duties would be quite nominal. I know very well why she wants me in her house; it would be a very gay pleasant life, Mary;" and Laura looked up, somewhat wistfully, at her friend.

"But would it be right?" said Mary, gently; "you have others to consider besides yourself, Laura; even in any temporary arrangement are you sure you could attend to your child in the Marchesa's house?"

"He would not be there," said Lurline, hesitatingly; "she says he should be put into the care of a nurse in some village."

"Oh, Laura! you could never consent to so wrong and unnatural a scheme. She cannot be a good friend for you, I am sure, if she could make such a suggestion."

Even in her worst days Laura had been frank and outspoken when there was nothing to be gained by being otherwise, and now she had strong motives to incite her to truthfulness, she answered, therefore, at once, while a tinge of colour rose in her white cheeks: "I will own to you, Mary, that she is not very good in any way. She is scarcely received in society now, and it is for that very reason she wishes to have me with her. She thinks that having the companionship of a lady, and especially an Englishwoman, might help her to regain her position."

"Then surely that settles the question, feeling as you now do, you cannot have entertained the idea of going to her at all seriously."

"Perhaps I hardly did, only I could not help thinking what a bright luxurious life it would have been," said Lurline, with a sigh.

"A life utterly unblest; and besides, Laura, I do not think that you ought to accept the most unexceptionable offer of a situation that could be made to you; there can be no doubt whatever that it is your duty to join your husband."

"Oh, Mary, I felt sure you would say so, and I quite dreaded to hear the words!" said Laura, turning round to bury her face in the pillow, with almost a wail of pain. "You do not know all that is involved in such a proposal; bitter humiliation certainly, and perhaps misery and want."

"Still, dear Laura, you would have God's blessing on your life, and that blessing can turn all that seems most dark to purest light."

"I have not written to Mr. Brant yet at all," said Laura, half impatiently.

"Then I think you ought to write without delay, and offer to go to him."

"It is not a question of offering," said Laura. "I must beg him to take me back; we parted on very bad terms; he was so indignant with me for refusing to go with him then, and share his misfortunes, that he declared I should never enter his doors again, unless I prayed and implored of him to receive me, and I scoffed at the very idea, and said I never would."

"But you were not then trying to do right, Laura," said Mary, very gently; "you had no wish as you have now, to find the Blessed Christ, who pleased not Himself."

"No, that is true; but I seem far enough from finding Him, and I do not suppose that humbling myself to Mr. Brant would help me in my search for Him."

"But it would, dear, most essentially; for you would be going after Him by the way of holiness, and that is the very surest path by which He may be found."

"Well, if you think so, Mary, I will do what you consider right, and ask my husband to let me go to him, bitter though it will be to do it; but from the moment that you told me of John Pemberton's life and death the whole world has seemed changed to me, and I feel as if nothing was of any consequence, except to win eternal life in the Love of God, if only it be possible to me."

"You have taken the first and surest step towards that now, dearest Laura, for you have proved your absolute sincerity, and I have the strongest hope that not only you will win the higher blessing which you seek, but that even in the very return to your husband, which you so dread, you will find more of earthly happiness than you could anywhere else."

"It is not a very bright prospect at present," said

poor Lurline, with a sad smile; "but, Mary, if I take this painful step according to your advice, I may, I think, ask you if you would help me to gratify one strong desire which I have in connection with it."

"I am sure I shall be only too glad if I can help you in any way; what is it that you wish?"

"It is that I might stand just once by the grave of John Pemberton before I leave Europe, never to return to it, which will be the case if I rejoin my husband."

"I think that might be managed with very little difficulty," said Mary. "As it happens, I had thought of proposing that, so soon as you were able for the journey, you should go to Paris with nurse Parry, for she is anxious to go back and attend to Madame Brunot's children, who are not very well, and you would be more comfortable in many ways there than you could be by remaining here."

"Oh, I am so glad it can be," said Laura, "but is there any hope that you could be there yourself, Mary? I would rather go with you than with any one else to visit that sacred grave."

"I think that too could be arranged," answered Mary, "for Bertrand has promised to take me to Paris in a few weeks to see a monument which we are having erected over John's resting-place, and we could time our journey so as to meet your wish."

"Thank you so much, dearest Mary; how good youare to me! Well, at least, I will obey you now without delay, and write that painful letter. Mr. Brant will be surprised indeed when he receives a petition from me to be taken back by him."

"Surprised and pleased," said Mary, smiling, as she kissed her, and she felt she had gained a great step in Laura's reformation.

(To be continued.)

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. SECOND SERIES. No. 14. CHRIST WITH THE YOUNG.

Chapter to be read—Mark x. (part of).

INTRODUCTION. What was the last lesson about? Who were with Christ on the mount? Now, once more, read of all the disciples. All loved Christ; liked to be with Him; sometimes made mistakes; did not like others to come to Him too much; shall see that in this story.

I. CHILDREN BLESSED. (Read x. 13—16.) The story being familiar, let the children notice the conduct of the different persons. (1) *The parents.* Whom did they bring, and why? (See Matt. xix. 13). That He might lay His hands on them and pray. This form of blessing a very ancient Jewish custom. Remind of Isaac blessing Jacob, and Jacob blessing Joseph's two sons (Gen. xlviii. 14). Parents had seen Jesus Christ's love in His miracles, and heard His gracious words; wished this holy Man to bless their children. Such prayers avail much (James v. 16). (2) *The disciples.* Who wanted to keep the children away? Why did they? Perhaps thought children would trouble Jesus; that this great Man who worked miracles could not care about children; or, perhaps, did not like other people to come too near their Master; they even rebuke the parents! (3) *Jesus.* What did Christ do? How did He feel? Many touching sights when Christ on earth—touching to see widow's son raised and given back to mother—but this perhaps most touching. Picture the scene: Jesus, loving looks on face, loving words on mouth, stooping, taking the babes one by one from mothers, handling them gently, perhaps kissing them, smiling on them, laying hands on each, and saying words of blessing, then giving them back to the mothers; disciples looking on in wonder and silence; mothers looking so pleased. What did Christ say? Yes, suffer them to come. His love boundless; will bless even unconscious babes. What did He say to the disciples? They must be like these little babes—full of faith, meekness, gentleness—or else cannot enter God's kingdom.

PRACTICAL LESSONS. (1) From the parents, the *privilege of bringing others to Christ.* How can we do so still? He still the same; always ready to bless, and will bless all who are brought to Him. (2) From the disciples, *the danger of keeping back from Christ* This the only time we read of Christ being much displeased. How can we keep children back from Him? By neglecting to pray for them, to teach them, to help them; by setting bad example; by leading them into sin; dreadful warnings to all such (Matt. xviii. 6). (3) From Jesus Christ, *His tender love.* Children need not be afraid to go to Him, to look up to Him. His love greater than a mother's, because never fails. His blessing makes happy, now and for ever.

II. THE YOUNG MAN UNBLESSED. (Read Mark x. 17—22.) Who came next to Christ? How did he show his eagerness?—by running; his respect?—by kneeling. What question did he ask? What title did he give to Christ? How did Christ answer him? Yes; but was not Christ good? Was not He God as well as man? Therefore wanted to draw out this further faith in the young man, to look to Him not only as a teacher but as God. What did He tell him next? Which commandments did He put before him? These contain the practical duties of life. What answer did he make? He had lived uprightly before men; done his duty to his neighbour. What more was wanted? Not merely must abstain from

sin, but must do good to others. What did he lack? Had been living to himself; spending his money on himself; thinking only of himself. What was wanting? Remind of lesson on Rich Man and Lazarus, as to Christ's requirements. Must live for others; regard money as stewardship, for which must give account. So what did Christ tell him to do? Part with treasures, which he loved so much. How could he do this? what reward would he receive? Whom was he to follow now? and what treasure would he have hereafter? What was result? Did he comply with Christ's requirement? He could do other things, but not this one, so he went away sad and unblessed.

PRACTICAL LESSONS. (1) *The nature of Christ's requirement.* Why was he called upon to give up his riches? Abraham, Solomon, David, were rich; why might not he be? Because, evidently, his riches came between him and God. So with us. Does anything keep us back from prayer, from doing right, from serving God, it must be given up, however dear. What was Abraham required to give up? Did he do it? What was his reward? (Gen. xxii. 2—17.) So apostles gave up all to follow Christ, who gave up his life even. (Acts vii. 58.) What are *we* giving up? (2) *The blessedness of Christ's service.* How did Christ feel towards this young man? How much more would He not have loved him had he followed Him! So we love Him because He first loves us. His ways are blessed, His paths peace, but they must be known by experience, by trying them, by giving up all inconsistent with following Christ, by taking up daily cross, doing unpleasant duties for His sake; then shall not lose reward.

Questions to be answered.

1. Describe the blessing of the little children.
2. How can children be brought to Christ now?
3. What lesson can we learn from the conduct of the disciples?
4. What was there lacking in the young man?
5. What is the nature of Christ's requirement?
6. What other lesson can we learn from the subject?

SURLY BOB.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.—WORKING FOR HIS LIVING.



T this instant little Edgar, who had come out to look for his papa, catching sight of them, came bounding towards them.

"Have you found a place for Bob, papa?"

"Yes; he is going to work under Heywood, and live with him too; so you will have frequent opportunities of seeing your new friend."

"I'm so glad!" returned Edgar, with a frank pleasant smile, as he looked towards Bob. "And if he is going to work about the garden he may help me keep mine in order, mayn't he, papa?"

"You must ask Heywood about that, he settles those matters," answered Mr. Deveron; "but I dare say he won't object to give your small piece of ground into Bob's charge."

"Then I'll show him where it is at once. He can come with me, can't he, papa?"

"Yes; Heywood won't expect him to begin work till to-morrow, so you can show him all round, and then he will feel more at home."

Edgar, all eagerness, took his companion to his favourite haunts, and even led him into the conservatory, where Bob, who had never seen anything half so beautiful before, was struck dumb with wonder and admiration.

"My word, ain't it fine!" he exclaimed, in a low tone, as if almost afraid to allow his voice to be heard in such a place. "It beats anything as *I've* ever seen!" And then, to himself, he added, "Don't I wish as Johnnie could see this 'ere place too! wouldn't he be mighty pleased!"

"It is pretty, isn't it?" said Edgar. "People say it's the prettiest conservatory anywhere round about here; and it always seems to me like fairy-land; doesn't it to you?"

"I don't know, 'cause I've never been to that 'ere country, nor ever heard tell of it neither. Where is it, Master Edgar?"

"I don't know exactly; I've only read of it in fairy tales. But come along, we'll go and see my garden."

Arrived there, Edgar discovered something that needed tying up, and asked his companion if he had a bit of string.

The latter thought he might possibly have some, and putting his hand into his pocket to search for it, came upon the body of the little dove, which had lain there since he had picked it up so tenderly and placed it there so sorrowfully in the early dawn of that very day which had been so eventful and had seemed so long, that he could scarcely fancy it was that same morning he had been feeling so miserable and so lonely.

All that had been happening had to some extent drawn off his thoughts from the little dead favourite; but now the sight of it recalled not only its loss, but the fit of passion to which he had given way on the previous day. Therefore, humbled and ashamed, he gazed down upon the bird silently and regretfully.

"Why, what's that?" exclaimed Edgar. "It's a dove, I declare! a dear little ring-dove. And it's dead! oh, what a pity! Did it belong to you, Bob?"

The latter, drawn on by Edgar's questionings, by degrees gave the whole history of the bird; which, of course, led him to talk of Johnnie as well; whilst

the other listened to all, deeply interested. But when he came to hear that Johnnie was to have his leg off, his tender little heart was so touched that the tears came into his blue eyes. And to think of his dear little bird being killed!

"Oh, Bob, how dreadfully sorry you must have been! and I should think you must have been angry too. I know I should have been; for 'twas such a horrid shame to kill a dear little dove like that! But you must bury it, Bob."

"Yes; I've only been waiting for a chance; 'cause I should like it to be somewhere as I could know just where I laid it, and, may-be, show it to Johnnie some day."

"I know what you shall do, Bob. You shall bury it here, in my own little garden, and we'll put something over it to show where it is, so that we shan't go digging it up by accident. And then when Johnnie gets well, and comes out of the hospital, you can bring him here—can't you?—and let him see what a nice little grave we've made for his dove."

Bob looked mightily pleased at the idea, though it all appeared so strange that he—"Silent Bob"—should be telling his troubles thus to another, and moreover finding another entering into them so freely, that it still seemed to him, as it had done all that day, that he must be dreaming.

"Which would be the best corner, Bob?" asked Edgar, looking round his little domain. "Oh, I know; just under my beautiful rose bush. We shall always know then just where we laid it; and in summer the rose leaves will fall down upon it, and strew it all over, and make it look so pretty!"

The boys had only just finished their task of digging a grave for Mary Jane, and placing her in it, when Edgar was summoned in-doors, and Bob, meeting Mr. Heywood at that moment, was told by the latter to go back to the lodge, where Mrs. Heywood was expecting him, and say that he would soon follow, but she need not wait tea for him.

Bob set off at a brisk pace down the long carriage-drive, and then tapped gently at the lodge door.

"Come in," said Mrs. Heywood, opening it to him; "and another time you can lift the latch yourself and come straight in; because this is to be your home now. And I hope you'll be a good lad, and try hard to please those who are set over you, and then you'll be happy, I know. And now, would you like to take a look at the little room you're to sleep in?"

Bob signified that he should like to do so extremely; whereupon Mrs. Heywood, leading the way up-stairs, opened the door of a pleasant little chamber, neat and spotlessly clean, with a latticed window looking right over the grounds, and through which he could catch a peep of the sun, just at that moment sinking in the West like a glowing ball of fire. Compared with his late quarters it seemed princely accommodation; and as he looked at the snowy sheets, and pretty patchwork counterpane of the bed, he felt he should always be obliged to keep himself very clean, or he should never be able to venture to get into it. And, moreover, there was actually a strip of carpet by the bed, whilst the boards were so white any one might have eaten off them.

And this was to be his room! He could scarcely believe it all.

Then they went down-stairs; and Mrs. Heywood, taking the tea-pot from the hob where it had been standing, bade him draw his chair to the table, whilst she poured out a cup of tea for him and another for herself.

"Come closer to the fire, my lad," she went on; for Bob still remained sitting awkwardly on the edge of a chair, as if he felt unworthy to take possession of the whole of it, at some distance from the table.

"There, take that seat," continued Mrs. Heywood, placing one for him; "and drink off your hot tea, for I'm sure you look cold enough."

Then she cut him some thick slices of bread-and-butter, and afterwards handed him a piece or two of delicious buttered toast, which she was keeping warm in front of the clear bright fire.

Very cosy they were, with puss sitting between them on the hearth, and purring loudly whenever either of them stroked or noticed her. Moreover, Mrs. Heywood's kind motherly manner soon dispelled Bob's shyness, so that he found himself, before tea was over, talking freely to her about Johnnie; the interest and sympathy she showed leading him on to be more and more communicative, until he had told all about his little brother's illness, and the operation which the doctor had told him yesterday must be performed.

"Poor little fellow! poor little dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Heywood, feelingly. "But when is to be, Bob?"

"Soon, he said. He didn't tell me what day."

"Well, I'm going into the town to-morrow, so I'll go and inquire for him, and bring you back word. For you'll be longing to know all about it, I'm sure. But it's quite true what the doctor told you, that he won't feel anything of it at the time, because they'll give him something that'll prevent his even knowing what they're doing to him; and as you say he has had to go upon crutches for a long time, that will be nothing new to him when he begins to get about."

Bob did not reply, but he looked as if Mrs. Heywood's words were comforting him a little.

CHAPTER XV.—BOB'S PROPOSAL.

A NEW life had begun for Bob now; and very different it was from the old one. The kindness shown him by all around seemed to act upon him much as the bright sunshine does upon the flowers, causing the better side of his nature to expand and unfold itself, and nourishing into fuller growth those desires and strivings after higher and holier things, which in his time of loneliness and trouble had sprung up.

And he was happy in his work. He tried hard to please Mr. Heywood, and never forgot anything he once told him; whilst Mr. Heywood on his side, though particular, and always expecting that everything should be done in the best manner possible, was kind and patient, and Bob soon learnt to look up to him with respect and regard. To win a word of approval from him, was to the lad a sufficient motive and reward for any exertion or effort.

Then the quiet talks which he and Mrs. Heywood often had together in the evenings were a great help to him. Her kind heart had opened towards the motherless boy, and she had felt a warm interest in him from the first; chiefly perhaps because he seemed so much in need of some one to take him by the hand, and draw out the latent good that was in him, which had been so overlaid by the evil which had been uppermost, that at one time it had seemed almost as if it were quite extinguished.

He was grateful for her kindness: and his gratitude soon began to show itself in the attempt to render her any little service in his power. First he began by lighting the kitchen fire in the mornings, so that when she came down she might find it burning brightly, and be able to warm herself at once. Then he bethought himself that he might always get in the coal and wood, and so provide her with a supply for the day, all ready to hand, before he went out to his work. Moreover, he took upon himself the care of the fowls, of which Mrs. Heywood had several; and he soon learnt to take the greatest interest in them.

Thus various little ways of helping her gradually occurred to him; until Mrs. Heywood declared she never had known such a useful boy, and she couldn't think how she could have managed to get on before he came; whilst Mr. Heywood would look pleased, and give an approving nod and smile to Bob when, morning after morning, he found his boots, at breakfast time, beautifully cleaned and polished, set beside the fire ready for him to put on.

"Where did you learn such thoughtful ways?" said Mrs. Heywood to him one day when they were alone. "Did your aunt teach you them? Did you use to do these things for her?"

"No," returned Bob, shortly.

"She wasn't so kind as you," he added, in explanation.

"But to have taken charge of you two boys all these years was a much kinder thing than anything I have done. I hope you always showed yourself grateful, Bob!"

The lad made no reply. He could not say that he had done so; but Mrs. Heywood's words had started a new train of thoughts, and placed things in quite a new light.

He pondered over it when he went to bed, and next day, as he went about his work, he still found himself thinking on the same subject. The result was that he came to the conclusion that he had been a very ungrateful boy. He had never done a thing of his own accord for his aunt, it had never occurred to him to do so. He had gone on errands for her when sent, but had never volunteered to render her a single service, when he might have done for her all that he now did for Mrs. Heywood.

But he hadn't loved his aunt, and he *did* love Mrs. Heywood! That, however, he was honest enough to acknowledge, was no excuse for him. He ought always to have remembered what his aunt had done in giving them a shelter, when otherwise they must have gone to the workhouse. And he had left her without a word, and hadn't ever been back since.

Well, he would try if he couldn't make up for it. The first money he received should some of it go to buy some little present for her or the baby—for the latter, perhaps, would be the better—and he would take it in, and tell her, "he knew he had always been a bad boy to her, and she had been a deal better to him than he deserved." And then, perhaps, he should find some way in which he could be of use to her, for he knew she always had her hands full with all the children, and the baby so often ill. It had certainly been very bad of him never to have tried to help her before. But when he got on, and earned more wages, he would set aside some part for her as a little return for all she had done for them.

(To be continued.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

310. What methods of catching fish are spoken of in the Old Testament?

311. In whose reign is an earthquake reported to have taken place?

312. What restriction was put upon the apostles of our Lord who had witnessed the Transfiguration?

313. We are told that Jesus dined with one who had been a leper. Who was this?

314. Quote a passage in which the withholding tithes and offerings from God is spoken of as *robbing God*.

315. What reason does Jonah give for refusing to go and preach at Nineveh as God had ordered him to do?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 768.

297. The prophet Malachi (Malachi i. 8—13).

298. In Zephaniah ii. 9.

299. "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark xvi. 17, 18).

300. In the second year of Darius (Zechariah i. 7).

301. "*Seven times* a day do I praise thee because of Thy righteous judgments" (Psalm cxix. 164).

302. "The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak" (Mark xiv. 38).



(*Drawn by* G. R. Ashton.)

NORTHWARD HO!

BLOW, breezes, blow a steady gale,
Although you bear my love from me,
And I in sorrow watch his sail
Fly like a sea-bird out to sea;

His last words, spoke in manly pride,
Were, "Duty takes me o'er the main
Dear Annie, but should good betide,
'Tis love will bring me back again."

To Arctic regions he is bound,
  One of a bold exploring band,
Whom Science, in her need, hath found
  Ready to quit this fertile land,
To wander by that heartless zone
  Where Nature speaks no word of cheer,
And Winter from his crystal throne
  Strikes blind the sun through half the year.

But pleasant memories may cling
  About twin souls, though far apart,
And sweetest consolations bring
  To touch in troublous times the heart;
And that High Power that sent the spheres
  Careering on their heavenly way,
Doth mark the simplest sorrower's tears—
  Doth heed the feeblest lips that pray.

So when the struggle 's most severe,
  May happy recollections come
To my true love, his life to cheer,
  And help him win his passage home;
And I will daily, hourly ask,
  The Arbiter of human fate,
To aid the toiler at his task,
  And, humbly trusting, watch and wait.

JOHN G. WATTS.

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," "THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON," "QUEEN MADGE," "AGAINST HERSELF," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXI.—SALLY SETTLES THE QUESTION.

"DOROTHY," Mrs. Woodward said, one day, "your father and I having been talking about you. We don't think you are treating Mr. Fuller quite rightly. He is evidently very fond of you; and you have let him shilly-shally about the place for years."

"But what can I do, dear mamma?" she asked. "I can't remark that I don't care about him, and don't mean to marry him. Besides, it is not for my sake that he hangs about the place, but because he is fond of us *all*," and Dorothy tried to think that she was speaking the truth.

"That is all nonsense," Mrs. Woodward answered; "besides, he told your father that he was very fond of you, and it is spoiling his career in life keeping him in uncertainty."

"But he need not be in any uncertainty, mamma. We should never suit each other, and he will never do any good work in the world."

"But you might spur him on to do some if you married him, and make a clever man of him; it is certainly in him to be one."

"If I could do this," thought Dorothy, that evening, "it would be a great and distinct work to offer to God, and with which to ennoble my life;" but her thoughts flew to the far-off land in which he who must be her life's hero still toiled; and the tears rushed into her eyes, and the old pain, years old now, it seemed to her, came into her heart—"If he had only cared for me as I did for him in the end!"

"I think Fuller is an awfully unlucky beggar," Tom observed that evening. "He never seems able to stir himself up, and he does nothing but hang about. I wonder he doesn't try to do something. He 's very clever, you know."

"Tom, do you think he would do better if he had some one he cared about to spur him on?" she asked, hesitatingly. She had learnt to believe in the wisdom of her sturdy brother, and to ask his advice in many things. He thought for a minute.

"No," he answered; "it would only arouse him for a little while. Laziness is only selfishness, and it smothers up an awful lot of better feelings when it has been allowed to grow so long in triumph."

"How do you know, Tom?"

"Noticed it in the beggars at the office and lots of other people." Then he was silent, for he began to think of how *his* selfishness had taken another and more distinct form in bygone days; and Dorothy, too, began to think of those same days, and of the long idle hours spent in the garden in vague dreams no future could realise.

"And that too was selfishness," she thought. "And it was a dozen other things that were wrong as well."

"What a dreadful thing laziness is, Tom!" she said at last; "and yet at first sight it does not seem a *very* great fault. It is like the weed which looks rather pretty at the beginning, but gradually chokes up the river."

"Yes," replied Tom; but he thought of the advance that had been promised him that day, and the praise he had received from his employers; and thought too that there still were greater faults than laziness, and that for all his prosperity he had to thank the girl before him, whom he felt proud and thankful to call his sister. "Doll, do you remember long ago how we used to loll about in the garden, and tell stories, and have games?" he said, musingly, after a minute; "and then you stirred yourself up and worked—what made you do it? I remember I used to spend all my money on myself till you shamed me out of it." She could hardly keep back her tears as she answered him.

"It was Mr. Blakesley, Tom;" and she told him of the conversation they had had on an evening long

since, and how, for her part and work in the world's great workshop she had tried to make the lives of those around her a little more beautiful. "I have only tried to do so, Tom dear," she added; "I dare not even hope that I have really succeeded."

"You have made *mine* a little less ugly, at any rate," and then they were silent, and watched the twilight steal over the dear old garden, as they had watched it hundreds of times before. At last Tom spoke again. "Why didn't you tell me about this before, Doll? it 's a grand idea, you know, and every one who hears it *must* long to try his hand."

"But there are other reasons too, Tom, besides its being a grand idea, why we should try to make our lives better," she said, softly, thinking of Tortoise-shell's dying words. Then Sally came down the pathway.

"Dorothy," she said, "I have been thinking of a new design for Christmas cards; some with texts intertwined, and some with bits of poetry."

"And what is your favourite quotation, Sally?" her sister asked, almost mechanically. The grave child looked up into her sister's face, and answered, "'Ye may not do evil that good shall come.'"

She sat pondering over the words after Sally and Tom and Will had gone in-doors and left her alone above Venus's grave. "No, it would not do," she thought; "and I should only be doing a great wrong to Mr. Fuller and to myself." He came out to her a little later. They had told him where to find her, and he came and sat down by her on the rickety seat on which they had sat so often. She turned and looked at him—at his clear-cut features and the broad graceful shoulders—and thought of the days, those first days of that glorious summer after his return to England before he had ever made love to Netta. "They were very happy days," she thought. "I shall always think kindly of him, and have a grateful feeling for him, because he has given me so pleasant a memory; but I could never be in love with him again; he does not seem great enough to love."

"Well, Dorothy, what are you thinking of?" he asked, at last.

"I was thinking," she answered, "that we ought to teach ourselves only to consider things beautiful according to their goodness and greatness."

"What a queer child you are, always thinking of these odd things," he said, impatiently. "I came out here to ask you something I shall never ask you again, Dorothy," he added, coldly, almost sadly.

"Ask me what?"

"Shall I keep this, or throw it away?" and he opened his pocket-book, and between two folds of silver paper showed her a faded yellow rose. She looked at it for a moment, while her thoughts went back to the day on which she had given it to him.

"Don't throw it away," she pleaded. "Our lives *must* divide here," she went on, firmly; "there is the world before you, and a career you must not lose—but our lives divide, for you must not spend so much time here; you are wasting your best days, you are indeed, but keep the rose still, Adrian. Because the winter is cold it is no reason we should forget the summer."

"And we can never be more to each other?" he said, in a low voice.

"Never," she answered, gently; "it is too late." The words were said before she knew it. He bowed his head down in his hands for a moment.

"Very well, Dorothy," he said, sadly, and put the rose tenderly back into its old place.

After that evening Adrian Fuller seldom came to Hampstead.

CHAPTER XXXII.—THE BRIDGE BETWEEN.

It was late in the summer, and the evenings were getting chill and cold. "A long summer," sighed Dorothy, as she went over to Miss Blakesley's one evening. "I think we ought to measure our age by our feelings rather than our years, and then I should have grown so old this year." Yet in spite of the sigh with which the words were said there was contentment in her heart, although, like all her feelings, it had a tinge of sadness, a strange tranquil satisfaction, gained by the knowledge that she was neither useless nor passive in the world, but that her hands and head and heart found work to do and thoughts to occupy them, and that at any rate that most precious thing, the time entrusted to her, was not wasted.

"My dear, I have a letter for you from George," Miss Blakesley said, when she appeared. "He is coming home immediately, almost as soon as his letter, he says." She hardly knew how she took it, or walked home that evening. She did not dare open it till she was safely locked in her own room, and then at last she read the few words it contained. "*My dear Dorothy*"—she was so thankful to see those first three words; she had been so afraid that he would call her "Miss Woodward." She could hardly read the rest of the short note at first, though it was merely to the effect that he was coming back immediately, and had been at the point of returning for months, or he would have answered her inquiries sooner, and that now he would do so in person, and he hoped it would be *very* soon.

Then she waited. She felt now that it was all right, that the old coldness had been swept away, and that he was coming back, not merely to England, but to her. "I won't meet him under the sycamore-tree," she thought; "I should like to be in the sitting-room when he comes, where he first told me that he cared for me." Then sometimes a doubt would creep into her heart, if after all he were only coming home to be on the merely friendly footing. "Oh, it would be dreadful," she said to herself one

evening—for she had given up all hope of seeing him that day—as she stole out of the garden gate and on to the fields beyond—the fields she had walked across the first night on which she had been engaged to George Blakesley, long ago, and had thought her fate so hard. There were the same dim shadowy trees, the same long dewy grass. It brought it all back to her memory; and the tears came into her eyes. "I did not care for him then," she said; "and oh, if when he comes back *he* does not care"—she stopped, for she heard a footstep behind her, and turning round, she saw, only a few yards from her, the face there was no mistaking. She did not move an inch forward, only stood half hesitating, half trembling, till he came nearer, then she put out her hands. He looked at her for a moment, into her face, and her clear truthful eyes flashing with a light he had never seen there before; then, putting aside her outstretched hands, he drew her to his heart.

"My dear little girl," he said, presently, "to think I have you at last. There is no mistake this time, is there, Dorothy?"

She raised her head for a moment, and answered, with a long sigh of happiness, "Oh no, none at all."

"And when did you learn to love me, Dorothy?" he asked, at last.

"Long ago," she answered; "long, long before you left England."

"If I'd only known it. I tried hard to keep away from you, my child, and only left England to be out of your reach."

"And what made you return?"

"A little note your sister Netta sent me, and another letter aunt Mildred wrote, but I was very uncertain till the last moment, till I saw the look in your eyes, Dorothy."

"And have *you* loved me all the time?" she asked.

"Yes, all the time," he answered. "You were always everything to me, my child." Then she was satisfied.

"I am so happy," she said presently, with a long sigh of relief, "and we will work on together, George?"

"You used to hate work."

"But I love it now."

They walked on silently to the garden gate, and then Dorothy pulled up. "How surprised they will be to see you," she said.

"Oh no," he answered, laughing; "I have seen them already, and Tom told me where to find you. He saw you go through the gate. I wonder if this will fit you, my child, it will at any rate till I get you another," and he drew off a ring, and put it on her finger.

"You've been spooning," Tom said, calmly, as they entered.

"Tom!"

"Well, it's nothing new, Doll, if you have, so don't be unhappy."

"But you haven't told me to whom this house belongs," she said, a few days later; "I should so like to buy it with Netta's money."

"There is no occasion, my child, it is yours already, for it was I who bought it, and I shall settle it on you."

"Oh, George, you bought it! You were so good to us, too, in our trouble"—but he stopped her mouth.

"Do you know," she said presently, "I am very glad for my own sake that all those dreary days came, they taught me so much. I look far back at the old life in the garden, and look forward to the new life with you" (it was only a week before their marriage), "but I would not have missed the days that intervened. The sorrow taught me so much, dear, and to understand so many things of which I knew nothing before: it made a road from the old life to the new—A BRIDGE BETWEEN."

TRUE LIFE.

BY THE REV. GEO. A. CHADWICK, M.A., PREBENDARY AND RECTOR OF ARMAGH.

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."—ST. JOHN x. 10.

THERE is a well-known legend of a sculptor, the beauty of whose own statue haunted him so oppressively that he prayed to heaven to animate the stone. He was heard, says the tale, and the cold loveliness of marble flushed into the loveliness of life. Let us, for one moment, suppose that the story could be true, and that we could question the awakening creature just when its pulses began to stir—just when its consciousness sprung up. We say to it, You are on the brink of a new existence—heights and depths of feeling, realities of being and solidities of service, are close to you, such as never reached before to an image chiselled out of a quarry; in another moment your destiny will be decided, but it is still in your power to recoil. Say, now, will you go forward, or go back? Will you make the glorious upward step into humanity, or sink down again into a dead cold piece of stone—beautiful stone, but lifeless for ever? It is hard to imagine that such a creature, if it understood the question,

could hesitate to answer, Yes, I will go on, I will take the burdens of life for the sake of the glories and the earnestness of being all which I have hitherto merely seemed to be. The contrary choice would be contemptible indeed.

And yet there is One who continually makes just such a proposal to us. First, by His spirit, He makes men aware of life and death, of an apathy which clings to them, and an energy which might inspire them; they know that they are dead, and they also know that they may live. Then He says, "I am come that ye may have life." Then, if they listen and accept His proposal, He adds, day after day, "I am come that ye may have it more abundantly."

And there is not one solitary plea which a man can urge for refusing to be a Christian which a stone also might not use for refusing to be alive. There is not one inducement which contents men with a poor and sluggish life towards God that would not justify the other in retaining somewhat of the marble's coldness of heart and its sloth of limb.

It is life which men refuse when they turn away from Christ; and the same excuses which they urge would equally justify them in asking to be struck dead, to be frozen into stone. Lot's wife is the very ideal of what an unchristian existence would fain be.

1. Many well-disposed persons shrink from decision, and from acts which might commit them to a decided course, even from kneeling at the Lord's Table, because they fear to fail, to fall away, to disgrace themselves. And they are right to hold it dreadful to be a recreant, terrible to put hands to the plough and turn back; better to have been never born than to have been, like Judas, a traitor under the eyes of Christ. But they are not right in thinking the shame of failure an excuse for indolence. There is a brand upon the coward's brow who turned back in the day of battle, but there is a deadly and bitter curse on the neutral, the trimmer, who came not up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty. "You may fail!" So may the merchant who embarks his substance in commerce; so may the advocate who rejoices to be entrusted with his first important brief; so may the general whose heart, nevertheless, burns to direct the storm of war. And substance, reputation, fame, will be forfeited if they are not successful. There is nothing to be won by the craven souls who imagine that nothing is to be dared. Nay, to breathe is to risk much. You need only be a little slothful, a little stupid, or vain, or easily led, and you will find out what heavy stakes are sometimes forfeited in this game of life which all must play! If you died, there would be an end of these hazards, and yet people strive hard for life.

Is it any wonder that the higher life, the divine life, also calls men to dare, to make the grand venture of Peter, who fixes his eyes on Christ, and springs from the deck of his vessel upon the abyss, into which, nevertheless, he does not sink?

A man who recedes from the new life because he fears the risk, would shrink back also from the threshold of his natural life, and prefer to be a block of stone for ever. He is false to his manhood in renouncing Christ.

2. Some do not fear personal danger so much as responsibility for others. To be a decided Christian is to be a marked man, whose errors are a scandal to the weak, a burden to the tender, and an excuse to the wicked. But the same burden is upon the shoulders of every living man; and it only presses specially upon the Christian because he has a second and a deeper life to live. There is no little child whose behaviour does not make ill-behaved children either ashamed or shameless. There is no young man or maiden whose very look has not an effect upon the words and acts of some comrade, since God has allowed the cruel frost of utter isolation to close over no human heart. The merchant influences the morality of trade; the lonely student cannot deepen the flood of thought without also cleansing or defiling it. To dread responsibility is to dread life. It is only a statue that sets no example to creatures who have hands which can help or hinder, and eyes which can flash with rage or soften into sympathy. You will not be a Christian because you shrink from danger or from responsibility? Then why have you submitted for so many years to be alive?

3. To be a Christian is to labour. A cross has to be borne, a race has to be run, there are unearthly enemies with whom to wrestle, therefore, men shrink from the din of battle and the dust of pilgrimage. But yet the sap and salt, the freshness and the vigour of our daily life, would be lost if there were no contests, no campaigns, no victories. What names are great in history? whose monuments are sacred? whose birthplaces are venerable? Those which belonged to men who scorned delights, and lived laborious days; soldiers, who slept on the ground, and hungered and bled; writers, who built the lofty line in solitary days and sleepless nights, with painful thought and deep experience; reformers, who stood alone against the world; martyrs, whom they burned. These are the men whose lives we applaud. But even the most ignoble and dishonourable life is full of labour and vexation. To refuse all toil is to groan under the hatred of strangers and the reproaches of kinsmen; to indulge every appetite is to writhe under a hundred diseases. The reveller of to-night aches and frets to-morrow. Indolence never knows the joy of bounding pulses and a well-braced system. No

man is so heavily laden as he who bears no cross; none so miserable as the man of pleasure.

And since the good things of this life can only be had by toil, what are we to think of him who refuses to endure some extra labour for enormously a greater good? If he were consistent he would certainly abjure life.

4. What most men shrink from, in all probability, is none of these—not failure, nor responsibility, nor incidental toils, but the sorrows which are part and parcel of a holy life. That they are so cannot be denied, for penitence stands at the door of conversion, and our evil nature must be persistently confessed and subdued; and Christian eyes see much in an ungodly world to lament over. It is enough for the disciple to be as his Master, and his Master is the Man of Sorrows. True; but the same chapter which calls Him by that name proclaims that His sorrows are laden with future joy—"He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied."

And what relationship of common life is free from sorrows? Friendship has partings, and misunderstandings, and bereavements; no heart ever gave itself to another heart but with this condition implied, that one should break over the other's grave. And what is more to the point, no heart ever beats with a true and unselfish love without having to reproach itself a thousand times for coldness and dulness, for defect and transgression. Really to love another, you must consent to often hate yourself.

Who is so abject as to refuse the price? But this is exactly the same price which the faith of Christ exacts: to know the evil we have done, the good we have left undone; to mark and mourn our coldness and hardness, to confess it all frankly, and to ask forgiveness, and to trust the Eternal Friend who gives it.

There is nothing here to rebel against, except on principles which would rend the world asunder, and make life impossible, or as barren as the African sands.

So, then, the objections which Nature raises against grace are met by an appeal to Nature herself, by our Lord's name for religion—Life.

But life is not made up of peril and responsibility, of toil and sorrow. These are only conditions upon which the glorious gift is offered us. The gift itself is deeper than these; the life is more than raiment.

Life is power to love; but the deepest of all fountains from which love can flow is the story of Christ crucified and enthroned—of the sacrifice and the priest.

Life is power to know; but the profoundest knowledge of all is the knowledge of eternity, and of our eternal destinies; it is to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent.

Life is power to develop; therefore, he is but half alive whose soul never grows, whose spirit is deprived for ever of the destinies and the purposes of its being, like a seed forgotten in a drawer.

Life is self-control and activity. Death is the complete absence of all self-control and energy. Christ comes to souls which are helpless and inert, as to the grave of Lazarus, and calls, and he that was dead comes forth.

So, then, while we are shrinking from religion as from a burden, or else avoiding as much as possible of what we think its exactions, Christ, who sees us with deeper eyes, knows that we are refusing to live, or to live deeply and "abundantly." "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." When one does put himself frankly into the Master's hand, his existence is changed as completely as when a pestilential swamp is covered with flashing and clear waters, in which living creatures rejoice, and on which the sunbeams dance. His dry and thirsty soul is flooded with the pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, which proceeds from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. Second Series. No. 15. A Conversation.

Chapter to be read—Mark x. (part of.)

INTRODUCTION. About whom did we read in last lesson? What was the young man told to do? How did he feel? Did he do it? What hindered him? So when he had gone Jesus began to talk to His disciples about riches, which led to a talk about many other things, as we shall see.

I. The Danger of Riches. (Read 23—27.) Imagine the Saviour walking in the road, the disciples all about Him; the rich young man going away in the distance. Christ improves the occasion. What does He say about those who have riches? How did the disciples feel? Would at once begin to think about the rich men who *had* entered God's kingdom. Was not Abraham very rich in cattle and gold? (Gen. xiii. 2) was not Joseph second only to the king? what did God give Solomon as a reward for his goodness? So they cannot make out Christ's meaning. How did He explain His words? What does trusting in riches mean? Trusting to them for happiness, for peace; making really a god of money;

making this life all. Remind of parables of Rich Fool, of Dives and Lazarus; also how Solomon's heart was turned away from God by pleasures of this world. Therefore, a rich man would find it "hard," or difficult, to enter the kingdom. What proverb does He quote? Probably a familiar one, meaning doing anything very difficult. Again, the disciples, much astonished, ask a question—what was it? Had any rich man followed Christ? Was not Matthew, one of themselves, rich, rich enough to make a great feast? (Luke v. 29). Had not Zacchæus, another rich Publican, followed Christ? Yes; but what made them do so? Who gives grace even for such self-denial? God's grace sufficient to make all things possible. Remind children that other things besides riches may keep back from God. Sometimes worldly position, love of ease, fear of shame, may be the things making it "hard" to enter the kingdom. Still, God's grace stronger than all difficulties.

II. The Reward of Service. (Read 28—31.) Who is forward with a question, as usual? Peter asks, "What shall *we* get who *have* forsaken all?" (Matt. xix. 27). Whom had they forsaken, and what? Peter left his wife, Matthew his worldly calling, John and James their father, servants, and fishing-boats. What are they to have, even in this life? So we read that godliness hath the promise of this life as well as the next; that all things needful will be given. (Matt. vi. 33.) As instances of this remind of Job, who received double (Job xlii. 10), of David promoted to be king, James becoming Bishop of Jerusalem. (Acts xv. 13.) But what was to go with these honours? Persecution seems startling among all these blessings; but what does St. Paul say about them? (Heb. xii. 6, 7). Remind how Mark, who alone put in this word, had been repelled from doing God's word by difficulties (Acts xiii. 13); also of all the persecutions of the early Christians—Peter put in prison, Stephen stoned—must be prepared for such things in this life, but what will the end be? Yet Christ adds a caution: the first may become last. Let children see here a picture of Judas, among the first, sharing all the privileges and pleasures of Christ's disciples; always hearing His words, seeing His life; but what was his disposition? Probably his covetousness made him join Christ; thought he would get on in the world. But when hears Christ talk of His death, thinks *he* will make money by it. So sells Christ, commits suicide, and becomes lost. Goes to his own place. (Acts i. 25.)

Practical Lessons. (1) *Encouragement.* Many children have to give up much for Christ. Some have difficulties at home, some at school; must expect such; but Christ's rewards are boundless. Will have happy conscience and peace of mind now, and future glory. (2) *Caution.* Let each ask, why do I wish to follow Christ? If merely (like Judas) for what we can get, great danger. Christ requires whole heart, life service; only those who give such His true disciples.

III. A Prophecy. (Read 32—34.) Now where do they set their faces towards? But how had Christ always been received in Judæa? Does this daunt Christ? For the third time He tells them of His approaching death. How do they feel? What does Christ do? Not smooth over, but boldly announce all that would happen. Notice that the two trials are plainly announced—that before chief priests, and that before Pilate, the Roman (Gentile) governor. What do the disciples do? Why still follow Him? Because love casts out fear. (1 John iv. 18.) They do love Christ, and will not leave Him. They may perhaps share in some of these persecutions, but they have learned to love Him, and will stay by Him to the last.

Practical Lesson. *Love stronger than fear.* So still: let hearts be full of love to God, and will be able to trust Him. Future may look dark, but love believes all things. Nothing can separate us from this, not even death itself. (Rom. viii. 39.) Therefore may go on our way rejoicing.

Questions to be answered.

1. What is the real danger of riches?
2. Give examples of riches proving a snare.
3. What is the reward of well-doing?
4. Give examples of advancement in this life.
5. What practical lessons may we learn?
6. What prophecy did Christ utter, and what effect did it have on the disciples?

"NULLA CRUX, NULLA CORONA."

GIVE not for self; what though a blast
Came sweeping o'er thy summer sky?
The same rude wind by others passed,
And chilled them with its wailing cry;
The storm-king's anger is not deep,
His wings soon fold in gentle sleep.

And if the noontide blaze should fall
Awhile too fiercely on thy head,
Rich fruits best ripen on a wall
Where southern sunbeams glisten red;
If thorns should pierce thee, turn and see
The rose's beauty on the tree.

When fainting pilgrims suffer thirst
In an unwatered desert-land,
How often o'er the sight will burst,
Like emeralds sown upon the sand,
Green grassy isles where fountains play,
And fan-palms veil the burning day.

Murmurer, who in the starry night,
Whilst silver radiance floats around,
With warped and undiscerning sight
Dost darkly seek the dew-cold ground,
And see but shadows lying there,
Though all things else are soft and fair,

Shake off the self-idolatry
That reigns upon thy bended brow,
The human world sends up a cry
For help to dreamers such as thou;
Pray Charity to chase thy frown—
"Take up the cross and win the crown!"

JANE DIXON.

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER LVII.

BERTRAND and his wife returned to Château de L'Isle at the time they had previously fixed, leaving nurse Parry in charge of the invalid, but it was with the understanding that the arrangement Mary had suggested to Laura should be carried out, and that they should all meet again in Paris in the course of a few weeks.

The plan proved quite successful. Mrs. Brant soon recovered sufficiently to undertake the journey, and Mrs. Parry had the satisfaction of establishing her in Madame Brunot's house, so that she could attend to her and watch over the children at the same time. Charlie Davenant vacated his apartments, in order to make room for the new-comer; but he did not leave Paris, and took up his abode in a neighbouring street, where he could still continue his daily intercourse with Valerie.

Laura's infant passed through a dangerous illness almost immediately after their arrival in Paris, in which he was saved, humanly speaking, only by Mrs. Parry's care and skill; but both mother and child had quite recovered their health before the completion of John Pemberton's monument brought the de L'Isles to Paris. They took rooms at an hotel in a different part of the town from that in which the Brunots' dwelling was situated, not only as being a locality more suited to their new position, but also because Bertrand adhered to his determination not to see Lurline again, and he was anxious to avoid any risk of a chance meeting.

Mary went to see her on the very morning after their arrival, however, and it was arranged that Bertrand was to send a carriage to bring his wife back when she had been there an hour or two, in order that they might take a drive together in the pretty Bois de Boulogne.

"You must come here to take me up, however," he had said to Mary, with a smile, as he went down to the door of the hotel to see her drive away. "I shall not risk going near that house at all," and he was ready waiting, apparently with some impatience, for his wife's return, when she came back for him, as he desired, after her visit was paid.

"Why, how bright you look, my Mary," said Bertrand, as he took his place beside her in the carriage, and they started on their way; "surely you must have some very good news to tell me."

"Oh yes, dearest, I have indeed," she replied, "and I am so happy I do not know how to be thankful enough, since all that I most desired for Laura has come to pass, and the most wonderful change has taken place in her."

"What sort of a change do you mean?"

"No words can describe it so well as those which speak of one who becomes in Christ, 'a new creature'—she does not really seem to be the same person at all; she has not only become a child of God in the truest sense of the word, but she is so humble, so earnest, so sincerely anxious to ascertain what is her duty on every point, and to do it to the best of her power, that it is hardly possible to believe she was really once the Lorelei of Chiverley."

"Why, Mary, you seem actually to have worked a miracle, after all, incredulous as I was of your power to do so on such a character as Laura's."

"It has been done by John Pemberton rather than by myself, if any human being has had a share in it; and no doubt his ceaseless prayers have largely helped in winning this great grace for her; but I think a mightier power than even his pure devotion could exercise must have been brought to bear upon her soul in order to make her what she is this day."

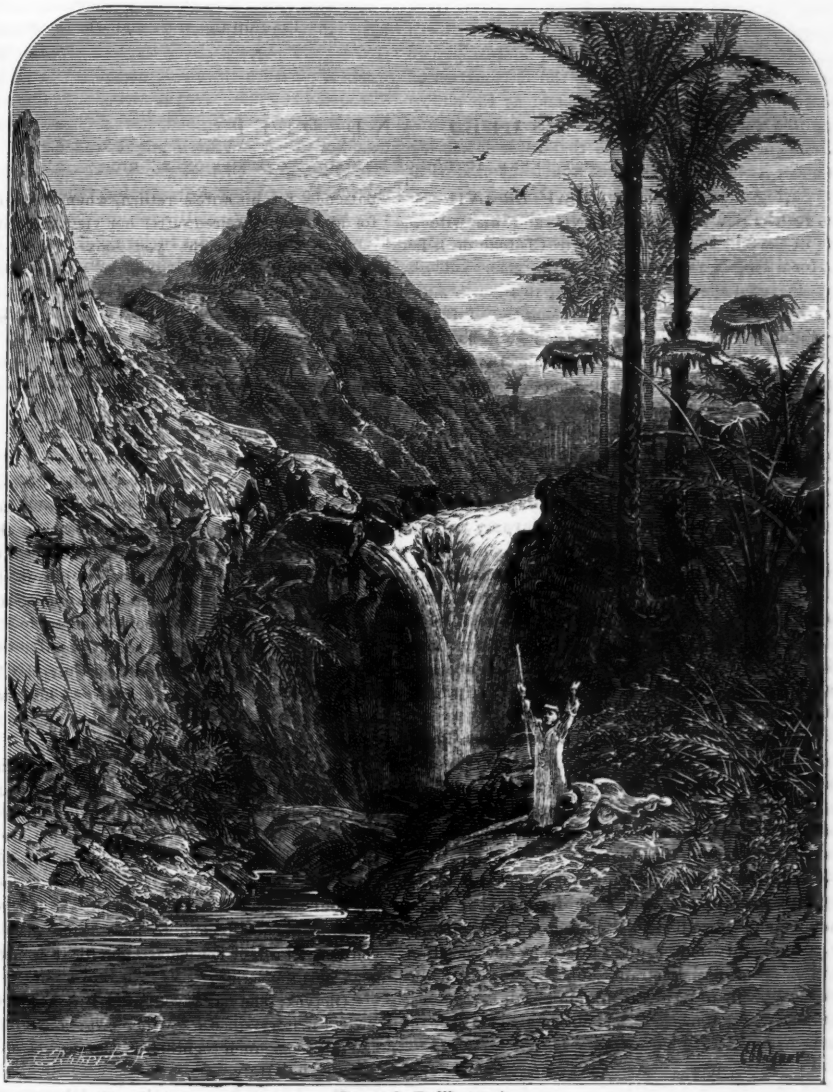
"How did it all come to pass, then? has she told you the details of her conversion, for it seems to have been nothing less."

"Oh yes; she has given me a full account of her mental history since I saw her last; as you know, we had talked so much together on the subject of religion before I left Italy."

"Yes, I know how greatly you laboured to bring her to God; but you did not seem very hopeful when you parted from her, if I remember rightly."

"No, it is true I was not, because, although poor Lurline did really try conscientiously to repent and believe, she had at that time the greatest difficulty in realising the truths of the Christian faith at all."

"And how did you overcome her scepticism? by giving her books on the subject, I suppose."



(*Drawn by* E. WAGNER.)

"Green grassy isles where fountains play,
And fan-palms veil the burning day."—*p.* 807.

"No, I did not make any attempt of that kind, because I do not think a true and living faith can be gained from external evidences, even if they can convince the intellect. I gave her but one piece of advice, Bertrand," continued Mary, in a low tone, "I begged of her to appeal to Christ Himself, to ask Him day by day, and hour by hour, unceasingly, to make Himself known to her as the Saviour whose love would be to her eternal joy, and as the sinless King who claimed her pure obedience upon earth—and she did so. She tells me that after I left her she never let an hour or scarce a moment pass without pouring out her whole soul in this one supplication, for the realisation of what she felt was her only hope in the midst of her earthly misery, and she says that for a long time it seemed all in vain, and though she persevered she felt quite in despair; then, soon after her arrival in Paris, there came the illness of her child, and although, up to that time she had thought herself quite indifferent to it, she found out how much she loved it when she believed it was going to be taken from her, so it seemed to her as if her wretchedness in this world were becoming almost more than she could bear, and she longed, with indescribable desire, for that hope and rest in the love of Christ, of which she could imagine the ineffable sweetness, even while she seemed to have no part in it; but at last there came a strange and wonderful night to her, which she described to me in language that seemed quite inspired by her rapturous gratitude. She was kneeling by the side of her child, convinced that it was surely dying, and she was repeating again and again her one ceaseless prayer, that the crucified Lord would reveal Himself to her, the same prayer that she had made through so many weary weeks, and then, suddenly, even in that hour, the long-delayed answer came, full, complete in very perfection of blissful certainty, for at that very moment as she knelt there, crushed and despairing, there passed into her soul a distinct perception that she was no more alone, that even while her lips were still repeating the same ceaseless prayer which so long had been unavailing that the crucified Lord would reveal Himself to her, there had come unto her, in real and living presence, One whose unutterable tenderness and sympathy flooded her very being with ineffable comfort—One whom she felt and knew, with a conviction as clear and undoubted as it was incomprehensible, to be her very Lord and Life, the world's Redeemer and her own. The effect on Laura of this marvellous revelation of the very Being of Christ actually present with her there, was as if a new nature had been infused into her by contact with that Divine Personality, and at once there rose within her the longing desire to give herself up wholly, at once and for ever, into His blessed hands, and she did thus resign herself to Him then and there, praying Him henceforth to show her all His will, that she might obey it, and beseeching Him from that time forth for ever more, so to deal with her as should bring her in each instant of her life nearer and nearer to Himself. She told me, Bertrand, that when she uttered this petition she made it a deep and almost awful reality to herself, by giving consent in her heart that its fulfilment should involve, if such were God's good pleasure, even the loss of the child, for whom her natural love had awakened in such great strength when she feared it was about to be removed from her. She imagined, in that strange moment, that her new-found Lord might well call on her to give it up, in token that she would trust Him even though he slew her dearest; but it proved that her very first experience of His acknowledged sovereignty over her soul was to be in love and mercy, for the child, so far from being taken from her, began to recover from that very hour; whilst the faith she gained in the climax of her sorrow has never failed her since, and if the friend who prayed for her so long and well can see her from his place of rest, he sees in her a true and devoted servant won for the Lord he served."

"It is a striking history," said Bertrand, thoughtfully, as Mary ceased to speak; "and I think we may well believe that this poor erring soul was really granted to John Pemberton's strong pleading in the first instance, at least, while many who are struggling and perplexed might take courage, could they know how her own direct appeal to our Lord Christ accomplished so much more than any amount of intellectual study could have done."

And Mary answered, softly, "You remember the words, 'If with all your hearts ye truly seek Me, ye shall ever surely find Me,' they have indeed proved true in this case as in all others."

CHAPTER LVIII.

THE wish which Laura Brant had expressed to Mary de L'Isle, while they were still in Italy, that she should, in her company, visit the grave of John Pemberton before leaving Europe altogether, had been dictated in the first instance only by remorse for her false and selfish conduct towards him, but since she had learned, in the blessed experience of her renovated nature, to believe that she owed to his devotion, under God, the very gift of that eternal life which is in Christ, the desire to make a pilgrimage to his place of rest had assumed the significance and importance of a sacred duty in her mind. She spoke of it anxiously to her friend on the occasion of their very first meeting in Paris, and it was arranged that they were to carry out their purpose on the following evening.

Mary went previously to the spot with her husband and Charlie Davenant in the early morning, in order to see the monument which had just been erected there by Bertrand's orders, but she had a particular wish that Lurline's visit to the grave should be at

the sunset hour, which was especially associated in her mind with the setting of the sun of that young life, which she so truly believed would rise again in the dawn of the everlasting day.

It was beautiful weather, and in the calm cool evening, when the two friends at last set out for Père la Chaise, the streets were crowded with the pleasure-loving Parisians, seated outside the cafés or strolling about under the trees which lined the boulevards. The whole scene was gay and pleasant, full of animation and life, so that the contrast struck Mary and Laura very forcibly, when, having alighted from their carriage, they passed through the great iron gates that admitted them into the realm of the dead.

At that late hour the vast cemetery was quite deserted, and they passed in silence up the long avenue of tombs till they reached a rising ground on the left, where they paused involuntarily for a moment, to look at the magnificent view of Paris which was there opened out before their eyes.

It seemed like the golden city of some fairy vision, as it lay beneath their feet bathed in the glory of the sunset glow; and it was hard to believe, as it shone there smiling and peaceful, with its fair gardens and its sparkling river, that so lately, in the reign of the terrible Commune, the smoke of its torment had been ascending to the heavens while its maddened children had been revelling in blood and flames.

Now all was serene and bright beneath a sky of pure pellucid blue, and Mary felt that the scene was an apt type of the life of him whose ashes they were about to visit, for his existence having closed in anguish and violence by murderous hands, had straightway passed into the peace and loveliness which for ever make glad the City of God on high.

She drew Lurline on to a solitary spot a little further up, which lay free and open to the sky at a distance from the trees and the other graves, and when they had reached it, while no word passed between them, it needed not the gentle detaining touch of Mary's hand to tell Laura Brant that she stood at last beside the sepulchre of her truest friend. It was easy to see that reverent and tender care had been bestowed on the whole arrangement of this resting-place, which made it strikingly unlike any other among the forest of tombs that surrounded it, where every variety of decoration and elaborate symbolism had been put in requisition by the somewhat meretricious taste which the French are apt to display in all that touches on religion. The narrow green mound that lay at Laura's feet had not a single wreath of everlasting flowers or other device to mar its quiet simplicity, only round it had been planted a number of violet roots, which now were blossoming again for the second time, and sending up their sweet incense through the soft still air, like the evening sacrifice; and at the head was placed the memorial, which had been executed according to Mary's direction. It consisted simply of a tall exquisitely proportioned obelisk of spotless alabaster, which shot up with its pure white shaft towards the calm and lucid sky, as if it were the very embodiment of an intense longing to reach that heavenly region. The flood of rose colour on the western horizon immediately behind it brought out in strong relief its stainless whiteness, and caused the words inscribed on it to glow as if carved in shining letters; Laura stooped to read them; first the name—which none could doubt was already written in the archives of heaven—next the date on which it was stated as a simple fact that he "gave away his life," and then below on the step that supported the obelisk was this one sentence—

"My soul is athirst for the living God."

No more; but it was enough, for it expressed all that had been the energising motive power, the very essence of John Pemberton's existence for the last and noblest year of his earthly probation. Laura stood and gazed on the fair white stone, and the green mound, and the glorious sunset beyond, from whence the pearl and opal-tinted clouds were rolling back like the gates of Paradise unfolding; and for a long time she did not break the silence, though her heaving breast and trembling lips told how deeply she was moved.

"Ah, Mary!" she said, at length, "you understood him well, and with pure and beautiful feeling you have done him honour in his grave; but think what it must be for me to know that beneath that sod lies cold and still the true heart I once trampled under foot, the heart that beat for me till it could beat no more!" and then sinking on her knees, she laid her head on the grave, and murmured, in a broken voice, "Forgive me, John, dear John, forgive, forgive me."

"Be very sure he has forgiven you long ago, dearest Laura," said Mary, softly; "and you must no more so bitterly regret the past, for all has turned out well and happily for him."

"Mary, I broke his heart; you know I did."

"Yes, dear Laura, but like a flower that gives forth its sweetest scent when crushed and bruised, that broken heart sent forth the fragrance of an undivided pure devotion to his Lord, such as he could never have offered without reserve had any mortal love retained him in its power. You see the steps by which he ascended to his Master, in the words that are inscribed on the base of the obelisk; dare we, dare even you, presume to mourn for him, when we know that his thirst is slaked now in the immediate presence of Him who is the well of Life?"

"No," said Laura, rising from her knees, "I do not indeed dare to mourn for him, but only for myself, that I so ruined the fair promise of his youth and poisoned all his earthly life. Mary, I think there is one great lesson to be drawn from his grave, which I would thankfully teach to others as it has

been taught to me, for it seems to demonstrate most clearly that the greatest crimes are not those which are recognised as such in the world and punished by the law, the murders, and thefts, and open deeds of violence; but that it is the hidden treacheries, and cruelties, and hard indifference, with which under all fair seeming one human being has power to torture another, that must cry most loudly to our God for vengeance. Surely, far more deadly than the assassin's knife is the cold betrayal that stabs with a fatal wound the love of a faithful heart, and worse than any midnight thief is the false friend that robs a life of all power of joy by unkindness or desertion. Ah, Mary, I believe that when the lightning of God's judgment flashes on the souls of men, it will not be the open notorious sinners that will feel most keenly the scathing fires of His wrath, but those that in secret dealt irreparable blows at the hopes and joys of their fellow creatures, or poisoned the springs of happiness within them at their very source."

"No doubt you are right, Laura; and the unfeeling recklessness with which human beings inflict pain one upon another is among the darkest problems of our existence; but I think there is a brighter lesson to be learnt from this peaceful grave, which may well banish from your mind all gloomy thoughts connected with it. Do you not see, dear Laura, how like those rays which the vanished sun has left to illuminate all the earth from whence he has departed, so the bright true life which has disappeared within this tomb has left a shining light behind it that falls on darkened souls, and draws them after it into the full glory of the love of God."

"Yes, it has been so with me, at least; dear John did more for me in his death than ever in all his devoted life."

"Many besides yourself will have cause to say so. Charlie Davenant was telling me, only this morning, of the wonderful effect John's example has had upon himself. The influence came to him, too, in a singular manner. The Pemberton family in England had sent him the Bible John always used, to keep as a remembrance of his early friend, and when he was looking it over, he saw some words written with great care on the fly-leaf, and signed at the end with John's name, as if they were placed there to record a vow—they were these:—'As the Lord liveth, and as my Lord the King liveth, surely in what place my Lord the King shall be, whether in life or in death, even there will Thy servant be.'"

"How beautiful!" exclaimed Laura; "he applied it, no doubt, to himself and his Saviour, Christ."

"Yes, exactly; and Charlie saw this clearly, at once, and he said this revelation of the intense love felt by John Pemberton for his Divine Master filled him with such a sense of the blessedness of union there must have been between the Saviour and the saved, that he determined to take no rest till he, too, found that blest Redeemer and claimed Him for his own."

"Another jewel added to John's bright crown," said Laura, softly; "thank you for having told me this, Mary; it will be a happy thought to take away with me."

Stooping down once more, she pressed her lips on the green sod in token of a mute farewell, and then the friends, turning homeward, left the grave to its stillness and peace beneath the blue vault of Heaven.

(*To be concluded.*)

THE GHETTO, OR THE JEWS' QUARTER IN ROME, AND ITS TESTIMONY TO THE FAITH.

BY THE REV. THOMAS JACKSON, M.A., PREBENDARY OF ST. PAUL'S, AND RECTOR OF STOKE NEWINGTON.

"Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken, and half of the city shall go forth into captivity."—ZECH. xiv. 1, 2.

WHATEVER may be the variety of opinion held concerning the election of individuals to final salvation—that is whether such election is absolute or conditional—there is no doubt as to the absolute election of individuals, families, and nations, by Divine Providence, for the maintenance and extension of revealed truth. Such was the call of Abraham, the Father of the Faithful, destined to hand down to all posterities the doctrine of the unity of the Godhead, and the necessity of atonement by sacrifice, a man the lustre of whose character was so brilliant, that there is reason to believe that he was introduced into the Oriental Pantheon, some confusing him with Orpheus, that is UR PHEU, sprung from Ur of the Chaldees. Such were the children of Israel, who were separated from the rest of the nations, and placed by God in a kind of peninsula, of which the desert represented the sea, where from age to age, notwithstanding their stiff-neckedness and shortcomings, their election was maintained. But after their wilful rejection of the Messiah they lost that election; their Temple, with its sacrificial worship, was destroyed. They had invoked upon themselves a peculiar curse, and they were driven forth into exile, to be everywhere the objects of contumely and scorn. After the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, to which reference was made in a previous paper, vast crowds

were carried to Rome in slavery. The skilled artisans among them, as well as the ruder labourers, were employed in erecting the Flavian Amphitheatre, a building which proves that they possessed great engineering and mechanical skill, a fact probably due to the training of their childhood, according to which every Hebrew boy was taught a trade, from the members of the royal family downwards—the trade of carpenter, builder, or engineer, being deemed not unworthy of a king. But though so many thousands of them were in servitude, others resided as freemen on both banks of the Tiber, and by their talents and industry obtained riches and distinction. This might partly be owing to the influence of Herod and Agrippa, and their respective households and descendants. Julius, Augustus, and Tiberius Cæsar had, before this time, welcomed the Jews to the capital. Vespasian allowed them the free exercise of their religion, but obliged them to pay a tax, which is a singular illustration of the truth of the Old Testament Scriptures. The ancient Israelites had been in the habit of paying a poll-tax of half a shekel, which, says Jennings, in his *Jewish Antiquities*, when the people were numbered in the wilderness, was levied upon every man from twenty years old and upwards, and was appointed for the service of the Tabernacle of the congregation, thus forming a kind of Jewish church-rate. Whether it was at first national, annual, and stated, or only levied to meet peculiar exigencies, appears to be a matter of doubt; it certainly became annual and stated in the later years of the commonwealth. The half shekel was, in value of our money, a little more than one shilling and twopence. Now, it is a wonderful fact that Vespasian, while he allowed the Hebrews in Rome, as we have said, the full exercise of their religion, forced each of them to contribute this one shilling and twopence, or two drachmæ, which had hitherto been paid into the Temple treasury, to the support of the great shrine of Jove on the Capitoline Hill. It was this impost that our blessed Lord wrought a miracle to discharge, for, when at Capernaum, they that received the tribute came to Peter and demanded payment, Our Saviour, who was always ready to obey every reasonable law, although, as King in Jeshurun, he was personally exempt, commanded St. Peter—"Go thou to the sea, and cast a hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up, and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money; that take, and give unto them for me and thee." The piece of money was a *stater*, worth, say some, a little less than half-a-crown, and therefore sufficient to pay the tax for both. The value of the *stater*, according to others, was larger, but that makes no difference to the argument. The curious and important fact is, that this customary payment is continued to the present day, and all the Jews in Rome go annually to the Camera Capitolina to make their contribution. Thus, a custom begun in the Sinaitic wilderness, maintained through all the changes and chances of the Jewish state to the time of our blessed Saviour, signalised and sealed with His special approbation, and deflected first to the support of heathenism, has come down to our times, and the half shekel is to this day paid to a Christian state, and thus forms a valuable illustration of the truth of the Old Testament narrative. It is a testimony to the faith.

It may be fairly questioned whether so old an impost, and one surrounded with so many religious and political sanctions, is levied in any other part of the civilised world.

The Hebrew race dwelling in Rome had for many ages a chequered and uncertain career. The seat of their original colony was not far from the present Ghetto, while several families established themselves in the quarter of the *Trastevere*, that is, the portion of the city *Trans-Tiberim*, across the Tiber. The Emperor Domitian banished them to the valley of Egeria, a spot between the present basilica of St. John Lateran and the ruined baths of Caracalla. The anti-pope Anacletus, who died 1138, was the son of a baptised Jew. Chemistry and medical science had come to Rome chiefly from Arabic sources, and the close connection of the Hebrew race with Arabia manifested itself in the skill of the Jewish physicians, who threw a sort of shield over their persecuted fellow-countrymen. Eugenius IV., who was pope from 1431 to 1439, absolutely interdicted all Catholics in his dominions from buying and selling, from sharing a house, or eating or drinking, with the devoted race. They were not allowed to walk about the more-frequented streets, to build any new places of worship, or to occupy any public appointment. Mr. Augustus Hare, in his interesting work entitled, "Walks in Rome," informs us that Paul II. increased their humiliation, by compelling them to run races during the carnival, as if they were brute beasts, amidst the hoots of the populace; this barbarous custom lasted for two hundred years. We read of the races in 1667, that the asses ran first, then the Jews, naked with the exception of a band round their loins, then the buffaloes, and then the Barbary horses. Since the time of Clement IX., in 1668, the Jews have been permitted to pay a sum, equivalent to sixty pounds sterling of our money, instead of actually racing in the Corso.

But the full weight of their judicial ignominy, and the final accomplishment of the old prophecies concerning them, did not culminate until Paul IV. shut them up within the walls of a precinct called the Ghetto. This word is derived from the Hebrew *chat*. It signifies cut down, broken, cast-off, abandoned. Another form of the word is applied by

Isaiah to Babylon: "How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations;" "Moab shall howl over Nebo; and every beard shall be cut off." The same expression is applied to Moab by Jeremiah: "The horn of Moab is cut off, and his arm is broken." Paul ordered that they should never be permitted to circulate in the streets of Rome, unless the women wore yellow veils and the men yellow hats. Yellow, as we know, in some countries is the sign of mourning, in others it is the symbol of ignominy. At any rate, the poor Jews were now driven into the confined precincts of the Ghetto, and walls were built around their prison. With their usual contempt for the rights of property, the popes virtually confiscated the estates which lay within the enclosure, giving to the Jews a sort of tenant-right of perpetual occupation, though the freehold was continued in the hands of the former proprietors. When Sixtus V. assumed the pontificate, remembering that the Jews were of the family from whom Christ came, he treated them more liberally, allowing them to open shops and build libraries and synagogues. But all this was undone by Clement VIII. and his immediate successors. In those days, about the beginning of the seventeenth century, they were debarred from all trade, except that in old clothes and iron rubbish, while they were forced to attend church once a week to hear a sermon against their peculiar tenets. Police agents made a raid in every house, and haled men, women, and children to the distasteful service. If at church they were inattentive or ill-behaved, or showed other signs of dissatisfaction, they were immediately stripped and soundly beaten with rods. These inhuman laws were not abrogated till the early years of the present pope, Pius IX. The first sign which he gave of a kindly interest in their welfare was when he bestowed a small alms on an aged and decrepit beggar, who was evidently a Hebrew of the Hebrews. "Sire," said somebody, "he is a Jew!" The pontiff (who is naturally a genial man) instantly replied, "What does that matter? he is a man."

Although the Jews are no longer absolutely compelled to reside in the Ghetto, yet in point of fact very few families have removed from the neighbourhood. This may be partly owing to the poverty of the great mass of the people; but it is at least equally due to inveterate habit and prejudice. The present number of the inhabitants is supposed to be between four and five thousand, and where they manage to stow themselves must be an almost insoluble problem. The remains of the portico of Octavia are yet to be seen in the very centre of the settlement—that splendid habitation, with its numerous courts and corridors, in which Titus was feasted as the concluding act of his triumph, when he returned from the destruction of Jerusalem. He went first to pay his vows to Capitoline Jove, leaving poor Simon, the last of the Pharisee patriots, at the foot of the hill, to be hurried into the dark dungeon of the Mamertine, and there, according to the tigerish brutality of Rome, to be put to a cruel death.

(To be concluded.)

SURLY BOB.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER XVI.—WISHES FULFILLED.

JOHNNIE bore his operation well; and, owing partly to the extreme care that was taken of him, and his own patient happy little nature, he went on favourably afterwards, and made steady progress towards recovery.

When Bob was first admitted to see him it was indeed a joyful meeting between the two brothers. Bob, for once in his life, talked quite fast, for he had so many questions to ask Johnnie about himself, and so much to tell him of all the good fortune which had befallen him since he had last seen him, whilst the little fellow lay, with a bright pleased smile upon his face, wondering at it all, yet rejoicing in it heartily.

"Dear old Bob, I *am* so glad! It must be fine to be you now!"

"Aye, I never thought as such luck would fall to my lot! I don't know what to make of it all; they're so kind, every one of 'em. You would love Master Edgar, I know; and Mr. and Mrs. Deveron are the nicest lady and gentleman as *I* ever come across. And Mrs. Heywood—don't I just like living with her! And, Johnnie, she says she'll come and see you some day, as soon as ever the doctor 'll give leave. But he said *I* was only to stay a few minutes this first time; and there's the nurse I do believe coming already to say I must be a-going. But you'll make haste and get well now, won't you, Johnnie?"

That evening, as Bob and Mrs. Heywood sat beside the fire together, Mr. Heywood being out, the two had a long talk, as they often had when they were alone like this. For Mrs. Heywood had a way of winning confidence from every one—even little Edgar used to confide all his secrets to her, whilst Bob by this time had come to feel he could tell her anything almost as well as he could Johnnie.

They had begun by having a little reading, as Mrs. Heywood, for the sake of the lad's improvement, always made him read aloud whenever there was an

opportunity, whilst Mr. Heywood used to set him copies, which Bob tried hard to write beautifully. But this evening the book was soon laid down, that they might talk about Johnnie.

Bob was in great spirits at having seen him again, and at having been assured by the nurse that he was going on well, and fairly on the road towards recovery. Without this assurance he would have been vexing himself, and fretting greatly over the pale thin little face which had looked so fragile and so delicate.

"I wonder how soon he'll be able to come out of the hospital," he was saying. "He says they've all been so kind to him there, he'll be quite sorry to leave 'em, only when I told him how dreadful bad I'd missed him, he said he'd wanted me too just as bad. But it's a puzzle to me," and Bob ran the fingers of both hands through his hair, making it in a state of wild confusion, "what he's to do when he comes out, and where he's to go."

"Won't he go back to your aunt's as before!" asked Mrs. Heywood.

"I s'pose he must," responded Bob, with a sigh.

Mrs. Heywood looked up from her work, and glanced at him.

"There's nowhere else for him to go, is there?"

"No. Not till I can earn enough to keep us both, unless ——"

"Unless what?"

"Well, I was a-thinking as p'raps—" and again Bob stopped.

"What were you thinking?" asked Mrs. Heywood, seeing that the lad had something very much at heart, but was hesitating about speaking it out. "What were you thinking?"

"Johnnie's such a little fellow; it wouldn't take more to keep him than me, would it?" was the unexpected inquiry.

"No; I should think it might take rather *less* than more," returned Mrs. Heywood with a smile.

"Then," continued Bob, making a bold plunge in a sort of desperate manner; "I've been a-wondering whether you'd let him come here in my place, and I'd pay all I earn every week for his keep."

"But what are you going to do? Where are you going?"

"Oh, I'd make shift somewhere; I shouldn't care for anything so long as I could see Johnnie every day, and know as he was happy. And oh! wouldn't he like to be here! why he'd get well and strong in this place in no time!"

"But though you seem to think you could do without a bed at nights—only I don't see how you could manage to sleep out of doors this weather——" began Mrs. Heywood, when Bob interrupted her.

"Oh, I could find some barn, or place like that, perhaps. May-be Mr. Deveron would let me sleep in his barn out there, for I wouldn't do no harm; anyhow, I could manage somehow!"

"But, supposing you could manage about the sleeping, how should you do about the rest? for if you gave all your week's wages for Johnnie, what would you have to live upon yourself? How would you get your own food?"

Bob looked puzzled for a minute. He seemed to have forgotten that he could not live entirely upon air. But he was not to be daunted. His mind was too much set upon this plan of his; and now that he had once broached it, he seemed to desire it more eagerly than ever.

"Oh, I could do upon very little; next to nothing I dare say. And p'raps I could work more hours, or do something in the evenings just to earn a crust of bread. I'm sure I could pick up that somehow; and I shouldn't want nothing else if only Johnnie could be here. Oh, he would like it so!"

Bob was looking eagerly and wistfully at Mrs. Heywood as he spoke, as if all his hopes depended upon her answer. But she did not at once give a direct one. Laying her hand kindly on the boy's arm, she said, "You're a good brother, Bob, to little Johnnie; and I'm glad to see it. It'll keep you from a deal of harm to have always one soft warm place in your heart; and as long as he is your first thought and care, and you can put yourself aside for him, I shan't fear much for you. Mr. Heywood says he never had a lad so steady and hard-working, and I expect little Johnnie is at the bottom of it. You're always looking on to being able to make a home for him, isn't that it?"

Bob nodded assent, whilst his cheeks glowed at Mrs. Heywood's words of praise. But after all, it wasn't praise for himself but permission to make that exchange with Johnnie which he wanted.

"Then may he come here in my place?" he asked, earnestly. "'Cause he'd be so miserable back at aunt's without me! He'd be worse off than he was afore. He couldn't nohow go back there all by himself!"

"Well, well, we'll consider what can be done," returned Mrs. Heywood. "But I should have thought the room and bed up-stairs was large enough for you both," she added, with a smile. "You are getting a big fellow I know, but still I should have thought you two could have managed there!"

"Do you mean——?" began Bob, with an eager look, and then stopping short.

"I mean that I'm not going to let you turn out to sleep in barns, or any such places as those you seem to have taken a fancy to. If Johnnie comes at all you must share your bed with him, unless, as I said before, you think it wouldn't be big enough for you both."

Bob smiled at the idea, as he exclaimed, "I never thought as you'd be willing to take the two of us; but Johnnie would be so good you'd scarce know he was in the house. Oh, how nice it would be!" and Bob's eyes grew bright at the thought of having his

brother with him in that pretty little room up-stairs. How snug they should be together! How different it would be from their late quarters, where they used to lie shivering with the cold in that out-house of theirs!

But nothing more could be said on the subject then, as Mr. Heywood came in at that moment, and his wife turned to speak to him.

One fine afternoon, a day or two afterwards, Bob was at work in the grounds, when he heard the sounds of carriage wheels coming up the drive, and, lifting his head for a moment, he saw that it was Mrs. Deveron and Edgar returning from a drive. He again bent over his work, whilst the carriage drew up to the front door, and then drove round to the stables.

A few minutes afterwards he heard his name called by Edgar, who came running towards him.

"Bob, mamma wants to speak to you, so make haste and come to her. There she is, walking towards us; and she has something to tell you, Bob. We've been to the hospital and seen Johnnie;" and Edgar, who could no longer keep back this piece of news, turned to see what effect it had upon the other.

The latter looked surprised and pleased enough to satisfy the eager little fellow, and by this time they had reached Mrs. Deveron, to whom Bob touched his cap, after which he waited for her to speak.

"I dare say my little boy has already told you where we have been this afternoon," she began; "and I know you will be glad to hear that Johnnie is going on well, and getting on as fast as could be expected. He is a dear little fellow, Bob."

How Bob's face lighted up at these words! No one at that moment could have said it was either heavy or unpleasing.

"And now I want to have a little talk with you about Johnnie's future prospect, and what he is to do when he is well enough to come out of the hospital; for I am quite interested in him, and so is my little boy here," and Mrs. Deveron glanced at Edgar.

"Yes," began the child, "and I want him to come and live here, because you know, Bob, you'd like to have him with you; and whatever would he do away from you!"

"Yes, it would never do to separate you two, as you stand so alone, and seem to be all in all to each other," said Mrs. Deveron; "for he told me what a good kind brother you've always been to him, Bob. Besides, he will want good fresh air and food to help him to get up his strength, so we must have him out here, at least for a time, until we see what can be done. I know Mrs. Heywood will be willing to have him, for she was talking about it this morning. But she must go and see him herself, and then she will long to bring him out here, and do all she can for him. So I shall propose her paying him a visit to-morrow."

"But if Johnnie comes," she went on, "it must be at *my* expense, for you have as much as you can manage to pay for yourself. Mrs. Heywood told me of your plan," added Mrs. Deveron, with a smile; "but we couldn't allow any one working for us to have no place to sleep in at night, or to be going about half-starved by day. But you know if you go on steadily and industriously, you will soon be able to earn higher wages, and then you can help to maintain little Johnnie, and be as independent as you like."

How happy Bob felt, when, after a few more kind pleasant words from Mrs. Deveron, he returned to his work, whilst Edgar followed him, and stood by, chattering fast, as he told him all about their visit to Johnnie, and how he had promised to go and see him again if his mamma would allow him, and then he would take him one of his picture books to amuse him.

"Perhaps mamma will let me go to-morrow with Mrs. Heywood; I'll run and ask her."

And off flew Edgar, who, young as he was, had already learnt to feel and think for others, and found no pleasure so great as that of ministering in his little way to those around him.

(To be concluded.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

316. Quote a passage showing our Lord's love to Jerusalem.

317. Where do we find Miriam, the sister of Moses, mentioned as a leader of the children of Israel?

318. In India it is stated that serpents are ofttimes found in people's houses. Quote a passage which implies that this occurred also among the Jews.

319. What words in the Old Testament correspond to those of our Lord in Matthew x. 35, 36?

320. What reason did our Lord give why He was not present at the death of Lazarus?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 784.

303. "Art thou better than populous No, that was situate among the rivers, that had the waters round about it, whose rampart was the sea, and the wall was from the sea?" (Nahum iii. 8).

304. That there should not be left one stone upon another that should not be thrown down (Mark xiii. 2).

305. Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, King of Judah (2 Chron. xxi. 18, 19).

306. Habakkuk ii. 2.

307. One half of their beards was shaven off, and their garments were cut off at the middle (2 Sam. x. 4).

308. Because the scorpion has the power of rolling itself up into a round ball similar to an egg.

309. "The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night" (Psalm cxxi. 6).



(*Drawn by* F. CARLESS.)

DESOLATION: A PICTURE.

LOOMING in shadow through the dark'ning night,
A time-worn castellated tower uprears
Its hoary frontage grey with weight of years,
Battered and crashed by many a long-past fight:
A dreary waste of sombre moor and fen
Stretches in gloomy solitude around:
Nor beaten track nor faintly-echoed sound
Tells aught of habitation there of men:

Around the walls, coarse lank grass waves its head:
Now and again the marsh-frog's croaking note
Disturbs the silence; in the empty moat
A sentry stork stands sleeping; from their bed,
'Mid crumbling stones by twining ivy wooed,
Grim night-owls gaze on Nature's solitude.

G. W.

THE GLORY OF GOD AND THE GREATNESS OF MAN.

BY THE REV. JAMES SPENCE, D.D., AUTHOR OF "HOURS WITH DANIEL," ETC. ETC.

"Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." —ISAIAH lvii. 15.

"CANST thou, by searching, find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" (Job xi. 17.) There is but one reply to this question of Zophar, the Naamathite: Man cannot by his own searching find out God. Vain is his boasted power of reason, and feeble the flights of his intellect in this grand pursuit. "The world by wisdom knew not God." Nor is man alone in his incompetence for this sublime task, for angels partake of the same inability; the Divine glory dazzles them, and they have to veil their faces with their wings in the presence of the effulgent Majesty of Jehovah.

But what neither men nor angels could do, God Himself has done. He has come forth from the chambers of His mysterious self-existence, and revealed Himself; He has come down to us, and made His glory to pass before us in the grace and gospel of His incarnate Son. Jesus Christ was the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person. But long before this personal embodiment of His character and glory in the Messiah, there were frequent revealings of Himself to holy men of old, who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Here, in most sublime language, by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah, He declares Himself, in terms which have ministered consolation and imparted hope to the children of men in every age. The ground of this declaration seems to have been the unbelief and indifference of the people of Judah. They evinced an awful hardihood, in mocking God, and practising the grossest idolatry; yet, notwithstanding their backsliding and sin, He assures them of His willingness to receive, pardon, and save the contrite and penitent. Two things are here prominently brought before us: the glory of God in the light of His condescension; and the greatness of man in the view of his imperfection.

I. *The glory of God in the light of His condescension.*—Condescension is a relative term. That which is condescension in one person in a certain station of life, might be no condescension in another occupying a different station. But here is condescension in connection with infinite glory. We may justly exclaim with the Psalmist, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" (Ps. viii. 4.)

There is the glory of position:—"The high and lofty One;" "I dwell in the high and holy place." These terms clearly express majesty and supremacy. Jehovah is King of kings and Lord of lords. Feeble is human language to convey any idea of the glory and attributes of God. We speak of the king of a country, and may be able to form some idea of the extent of his dominion, how large soever it is, but how can we estimate the dominion or illustrate the supremacy of God so as to comprehend them? Our ideas of space may grow from a parish to a county, from a county to a country, from a country to a continent; but how can we grasp the idea of illimitable space and boundless dominion—of power everywhere displayed, and presence everywhere proved? Pass in thought from the plain or prairie to the hill, from the hill to the mountain height, as of some Alpine peak, which pierces the skies, and your idea of expanse rises wonderfully. But when you pass in imagination to some point in the airy empyrean, whence the globe itself on which we dwell is only a speck amongst myriad worlds that roll in immensity, the mind seems lost in wonder and awe. Our notions of space confound us with their impressiveness and power. Yet God is supreme, above all, reigning in majesty, the high and lofty One, dwelling in the high and holy place. How ineffable His glory! Yet He dwells with men!

There is the glory of duration—"the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity"—a marvellous expression, which no human power can grasp. Here we are creatures of a day, but Jehovah is for ever and ever, from everlasting to everlasting. He inhabits eternity, and fills it too. Go step by step up the ladder of time until you reach the top, and then try to gaze forth upon a past eternity. It is, indeed, confounding to feeble and finite apprehension! Jehovah always has been. We can go back a few years in our own remembrances. In history we can go back to Calvary, and range over eighteen centuries with certainty and sure footing; yea, we can go back to a hoarier antiquity —to Sinai, to the time when the pyramids of

Egypt were still young and when the foundations of the Tower of Babel were laid, to Paradise and Eden "when the morning stars sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy." Then God was, self-existent, eternal. Modern science leads us still farther back, amid cycles of unknown ages, when mysterious changes were proceeding to make this globe fit for the habitation of man, but we get no nearer the idea of a past eternity. And God always will be, for He inhabiteth eternity. When time is no more, and the heavens shall be rolled up as a scroll, when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and all things as now seen shall have changed and passed away, then God will be, without variableness or shadow of turning. He is the King eternal, immortal, immutable. Such knowledge is too high for us; panting thought toils after it in vain. Yet this God is our God, and condescends to dwell with men. Here is the glory of the Maker and the greatness of the creature.

There is also the glory of character, described in the one designation, "holy"—"Whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place." This designation He has chosen, for His name and nature are one. In Jehovah holiness is everything, the goodness and perfection of His being, and men are summoned to give thanks at the remembrance of it. The main idea, perhaps, in relation to ourselves, is His perfect separation and infinite distance from all evil. What impurity is we know, and God is infinitely removed from that; so is He from injustice, unkindness, and every aspect and influence of moral evil—at an infinite distance from all. None but the pure in heart can see God, "Yea, the heavens are not clean in His sight." The whole economy of Moses was calculated to produce the impression of the Divine holiness; the idea of the ineffable purity of God was present in all the arrangements and requirements of the Levitical law. The grandest proof of this character of Jehovah is in the character of Jesus Christ His Incarnate Son, who was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners," and whose redemptive work was to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. The anthem of Moses at the Red Sea found its refrain in the words—"Who is like thee, O Lord, glorious in holiness?" And the anthem of the angels in heaven is—"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come" (Rev. iv. 8). The whole Church in every age is summoned to give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness. Yet this God of infinite purity condescends to dwell with men. Here is the glory—the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity, and whose name is Holy visits the contrite heart, and revives the spirit of the humble. Here, therefore, we see also—

II. *The greatness of man in view of his imperfection.*—His imperfection is suggested by the word *contrite*, for we are sinners, and have offended God, and contrition is our right position before our Maker now. Our greatness is seen in the fact that the heart, when contrite, is capable of receiving God as its guest. There is no greatness for us like this wondrous capacity of our nature. Our tendency is to find or fancy some measure of glory in association with the rich, the learned, the great; but God's presence with us is our loftiest possession and greatest honour. Wealth, learning, genius, may belong to a man, and make him great in the world's esteem, but a broken heart is by far the finest evidence of human greatness, the very thing which proves his degeneracy and imperfection, for it shows his power of resisting God and at the same time his capability of receiving Him again. The being who can oppose the Divine will, is the being who is capable of a living and loving harmony with the Almighty, because he can receive and welcome His presence. To be conscious of our imperfection, and to be contrite, is the first step towards our true greatness.

1. Contrition, then, is the condition of greatness. Now, contrition implies sin, and expresses sorrow; humility is the lowly feeling flowing, as a habit of mind, from such contrition. The one springs out of the other: the one is the blossom, while the other is the fruit. Sin shows a tremendous power—the power of opposing God—and is the casting down of our glory; hence a broken heart is the first token of a man's returning greatness; it is the first coming of the contrite prodigal son to himself, and then returning to his father. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Ps. li. 17). Are we not transgressors? Are we not sinful, prodigal children? Are we not guilty, and have need of repentance? For a man to possess true greatness is for him first to become contrite and humble, that God may come in to him. Who was the greater—the Pharisee, boasting of his good deeds, satisfied with himself, and conscious of no spiritual need; or the publican, striking on his breast, and crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner," without daring so much as to lift up his eyes to heaven? God will not come to dwell with men who are not contrite, and who do not feel their need of him. "To this man," says He, "will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Isaiah lxvi. 2). Repentance is the beginning, the point from which every man must start to reach the reality, consciousness, and joy of his own true greatness. Think of it: not intellectual eminence, but contrition; not grasp of genius, but penitence; not earthly honours, but humility; not store of worldly riches, but poverty of spirit; then the high and lofty One will come and dwell with you, to show

you His glory. This will be greatness, indeed, which, in some sense, angels themselves may envy, and it is within your reach.

2. Consider the realisation of this true greatness. The contrite spirit is the scene of the Divine presence. God manifests Himself to the humble soul as He does not to the world. The broken heart becomes, through the Divine healing, a living temple, where God unveils His glory, and where He condescends to dwell. You value the presence with you of a dear human friend, the very beaming of whose eye upon you lights up your soul with pleasure, and with whom interchange of thought gives you elevation and delight. What then must the in-dwelling of the high and lofty One be to the humble soul? "I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me"—the fellowship of the Infinite with the finite, of the perfect Father with the imperfect children. God gives, and the contrite receives; the humble one longs, and God satisfies and fills him out of His own fulness. This is a privilege which cannot be described, and which is known only to those who enjoy it. To be penitent is to be great; to be nothing, that God may come in and be everything, all that we need, and all that we can desire. The truly great men are those who are habitations of God through the Spirit, living temples of Him whose name is Holy.

The contrite spirit is the sphere of Divine operation—"to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Many are the evil influences which work in the human heart to distract it, deaden it, and accomplish its desolation and ruin. How blessed and glorious then to have God—the God who created us—working in us "to will and to do His good pleasure!" His working is for the true refreshing of the soul and its renewal of life. Thus only is it fortified against all spiritual foes, raised above the world, and bound up "in the bundle of life with the Lord God." The influence of the world is stupefying and destructive; the in-dwelling of God is quickening, cheering, purifying; it dispels darkness, dissipates doubt, casts out fear, and fills the heart with gladness and hope. Man's power may be seen, as, alas! it is often seen, in resisting God and opposing His will.

This is a tremendous human prerogative. The Almighty rules among the orbs of heaven, among the fruits, and flowers, and rocks of this earth, among the material influences of time, and meets with no resistance to His will; but man has the terrible power of resisting Him. On the other hand, man's true greatness is seen in his capacity of receiving God and in welcoming Him to reign within, so that he may be the Divine workmanship created anew in Christ Jesus, and, bear again the image of his Maker. Here, then, is greatness offered to all the sinful and guilty. The glory of the Mighty God will dwell in you if you be converted and become as little children. If you are in sorrow, mourning for sin, and broken-hearted, God Himself will visit you; Christ will live in you; and though He is King and Lord of all, He will make your souls, as His temples, radiant with the tokens of His presence, and rich in the possession of His power and beauty; only in His indwelling can you realise the true dignity, or reach the true destiny of your manhood. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Thus do we, the feeble, the finite, and the fallen, come to partake of the nature and the fulness of the Almighty and the Infinite—heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. The way to greatness is the way of humility; the way to rise to the throne is to lie lowly at the footstool.

THE GHETTO, OR THE JEWS' QUARTER IN ROME, AND ITS TESTIMONY TO THE FAITH. *(Concluded.)*

BY THE REV. THOMAS JACKSON, M.A., PREBENDARY OF ST. PAUL'S, AND RECTOR OF STOKE NEWINGTON.

THE streets of the Ghetto are lofty and narrow. On either side there branch off blind alleys, in some places not more than five or six feet in width. They seem to end in nothing, and are indescribably squalid and miserable. In some of the overcrowded lanes of Continental cities the eye and the nostril of the traveller are regaled with pots of roses and tubs of flowering myrtles and oleanders, placed on the sills of the windows or at the sides of the front door. No such pleasant signs of civilisation greet one in the Ghetto. Some of these lanes remind one irresistibly of the *Vicoli* of Pompeii, which are scarcely wide enough for two people to walk abreast. The candlestick, with its seven branches, which is figured on the arch of Titus, is often to be seen over the Jewish doorways, even in the most uninviting corners. It is said that there are elegantly furnished apartments concealed behind all this squalor, but the Jew, with characteristic timidity, buries his wealth, and enjoys his luxuries in secret. One may purchase almost anything in the quarter, but generally in a damaged condition—diamonds, rubies, and emeralds, Venetian mirrors, the laces of Seville, the embroidered and gilded leather of Morocco, the

highly-tempered blades of Toledo, and the diapered scimitars of Damascus, all are to be found here, mingled with heaps of lachrymatories, mediæval ironmongery, antiquities real and forged, coins of the Emperors, of recent manufacture but admirably imitated, and, in short, the complete contents of an old curiosity shop. A German traveller, quoted by Mr. Hare, admirably describes the crowded precinct, and at the same time adds a forcible quotation from Scripture, showing how exactly its condition is a fulfilment of inspired prophecy. "I have often seen," says he, "with a feeling of pain, the pale, stooping, starving figures laboriously plying the needle. . . . Misery stares forth from the tangled hair, and complains silently in the yellow brown faces, and no beauty of feature recalls the countenance of Rachel, Leah, or Miriam —only sometimes a glance from a deep-sunk piercing black eye, that looks up from its needle and rags, and seems to say, 'From the daughter of Zion all her beauty is departed; she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary! She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks; among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her; all her friends have dealt treacherously with her. They are become her enemies. Judah has gone into captivity, because of affliction and because of great servitude; she dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest; all her persecutors overtook her between the straits. How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger!'"

The experience of Mr. Stillman Hillard, an eminent American, corroborates that of the observant German. "On entering the enclosure," says he, "the aspect of the place and its inhabitants leaves a uniform impression of poverty, desolation, and filth. The streets are narrow, crooked, and dark; the houses, which have a look of mouldy decay, are crowded with life, so that in fine weather the occupants swarm out like bees and sit on the steps or on the pavement in front of the door, and there pursue their usual avocations. There are many shops, but usually of a humble class. The Jewish race is here seen in its saddest and lowest plight, not gilded by even a ray of its old glories. There is nothing that betokens the existence of wealth, and the power that wealth bestows. There are no dignified forms; no keen and penetrating brows; none of those beautiful children who, in other lands, remind the Hebrews of the youth of their nation; none of those superb black eyes which blend the passion of Judith, the softness of Esther, and the sadness of Rachel. The general countenance is commonplace, stamped with the impress of cares and homely occupations, touched by no sparkles of pride or hope. The complexion seems colourless, reminding one of plants that have grown in the dark, the result of meagre living, dark abodes, and imperfect ventilation. The imagination of D'Israeli would find nothing here suggestive of proud recollections or animating hopes, but only a forlorn and crushed life, which dwells in the petty wants and works of the present, and borrows no dignity from the past or the future."

The author of this paper visited Rome in the early spring of the present year, and found the Ghetto exactly as the foregoing travellers have described it. Just at the beginning you behold the small church of Santa Maria del Pianto, bearing a Hebrew and Latin inscription, which laments over the traditional hardness of heart of the Jewish race—"All day long I have stretched out my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people." Hard by is the chief synagogue, comparatively speaking a handsome and well-adorned building, its splendour forming an honourable contrast to the squalor and misery around it, and showing that the descendants of David still think more of the glory of the house of the Lord than that of their own private dwellings. Reversing the order of the builders of St. Peter's, the choir is at the west end; but opposite, on the eastern wall is the holy of holies. Unhappily, I had no opportunity of seeing the interior, so I must content myself with the accounts of others. On arriving at the Pescaria, or fish-market, the nostril is afflicted with fearful odours of fish in the last stage of putrefaction. Hard by appear the ruins of the Theatre of Marcellus, a building begun by Julius Cæsar and completed by Augustus. The twelve arches still standing on the outward wall of the auditorium harmonise with the dirty surroundings of the neighbourhood. They are occupied by tinkers and tinsmiths, and dealers in old iron and bronze. Thither go the *cognoscenti*, to try and find some old Roman key or hinge or lamp, or the fragment of a sword, or of a rare marble or mosaic, of which, it is said, the modern blacksmiths always keep a sufficient supply; while within a short walk is the ancient church (Santa Maria in Cosmedin), the portico of which contains a singular round slab of marble, probably dating from the times of the emperors, something like a human face, and containing a narrow slit in the centre. This hole, in the Middle Ages, was used as an ordeal for suspected perjurers, the mouth-like aperture being said to close upon the fingers of the perjured person. A modern traveller, on visiting the spot, placed his hand in the hole, and used words to this effect, "The Jews' quarter in Rome is the cleanest and most delicious spot upon the face of the earth;" but the *bocca della verita*, for so the disc is called, remained just the same as before.

The Ghetto is perhaps the most densely-peopled spot in any European city, and, as we have said,

it consists of streets parallel to the river, and connected by narrow lanes. The thoroughfare nearest the river itself is called *Via de' Fiumari*. Old Father Tiber is just as uncertain and inconsistent a river as he was in the days of Horace and Ovid. He overflows his banks; he sends down great quantities of dirt-coloured mud from the upper country—it is a mere pretence to call this mud yellow. The sweepings of Regent Street, in London, turned into the Regent's Canal, and well stirred up, might be favourably compared with the Tiber during a flood. The melting of the snow on the Apennine mountains generally precedes these inundations. The first bad effects of them is felt in the Jewish quarter. The street and alleys nearest the river are covered with a layer of mud, mingled with sewage filth, varying with the height and extent of the inundation. It might be presumed that such a catastrophe would be highly prejudicial to the health of the inhabitants, but in point of fact it seems to exercise no appreciable influence upon the locality. This has been attributed to various causes. First, to the frequent ablutions of the people, who are for the most part, nominally at least, Pharisees of the straitest sect. They practise the custom of washing their hands and feet before their meals—a custom so strictly commanded among the Jews at the time of our blessed Redeemer, that to neglect it was, according to Dr. Hammond, to be held guilty of a capital crime. "He that taketh meat with unwashen hands," says one of their rabbis, "is worthy of death." The same custom was observed before offering a sacrifice. It was also usual in old times to offer water to a stranger to wash his feet, and where the host wished especially to welcome a stranger, he washed that stranger's feet himself. It was a studied slight to our blessed Redeemer when the Pharisee neglected to perform this customary duty. This healthiness has also been partly attributed to their copious use of olive oil, both as a medicine and an article of diet. On this point, I regret to state, I have not been able to obtain any reliable particulars. Another cause, much more readily appreciable, is the habit they practise of whitewashing their houses on the return of their great festivals.

Should the brilliant plans of Garibaldi for the deflection of the Tiber and the formation of a new port at Fiumicino on the shore of the Mediterranean be carried into effect, the probability is that the Tiber will no longer overflow its banks, unless the works are permitted to get out of repair. The alluvial deposits of the Tiber cause the delta at its mouth to advance on an average upwards of twelve feet annually; thus any port has a tendency to silt up. The channel into the sea must be kept open by artificial means. Now, if when the snows melt on the Apennine and Alban mountains, the rising waters can be turned aside by a weir or dyke, and sent by a straight canal to Fiumicino, the hope is that the scour will keep open the mouth of the new harbour, while a sufficient quantity of water, regulated by sluices, will still remain to fill the ancient channel, and prevent any inconvenience from being felt in Rome itself. In such a case, the healthiness of the Ghetto would be materially increased. But the realisation of the plan is at present problematical, chiefly on account of the poverty of the Italian exchequer. It has been conjectured that, if only the course of the river as it passes through Rome could be dried up for a twelvemonth, the spoils to be recovered buried deep beneath its alluvial bed would amply suffice to pay the cost of the undertaking. But what capitalist would be inclined to advance money upon the contingency?

It may be naturally inquired, why should the Ghetto at Rome have been selected as an illustration of the fulfilment of inspired prophecy concerning the perpetuation of the Jews as a separate people, and the bitter wrongs they have endured from Christian and Mahomedan powers, when the same evidence might have been obtained by a short and compendious description of their adventures in many centres of population, as, for instance, London? The answer is, that just as biography is a more pointed instrument for imparting instruction than history with its impalpable generalisations, so by considering a limited precinct like the Ghetto in detail the mind of the reader is more likely to be informed and impressed. But what is to be the future of this strange and peculiar race? Standing on the Appian Way, on the very blocks of lava which St. Paul might have trodden, and musing over all that Israel lost in rejecting the Messiah, the traveller cannot help thinking that a time is shortly coming when they will look with the eye of reverent, regretful, penitential love on Him whom they formerly pierced, and, as St. Paul argues, "If the fall of them has been the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness? If the casting away of them has been the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?" Well might the eloquent apostle sum up his prediction concerning the final conversion and salvation of Israel with the magnificent apostrophe, addressed to the Christians at Rome—"Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counsellor? Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR SCHOOL AND HOME.

SCRIPTURE STORIES. Second Series. No. 16. Two Miracles.

Chapter to be read—St. Mark v. (part of).

INTRODUCTION. Children must have noticed how Christ went to all classes of people. Let them name some. Also remind of the women who were His friends, Mary Magdalene, from whom went seven devils, the two sisters of Lazarus, who were they? To-day shall read of two persons coming to Him—a ruler and a poor woman.

I. The Ruler's Daughter Raised. (Read Mark v. 22—24, 35—43.) What was ruler's name? (See Luke viii. 41). How would he know Christ? Now the people throng Him again. What had seen Him do? Were always wanting Him to do miracles. He would not do them merely to gratify curiosity, but would gladly give relief to those in distress. Now comes Jairus, one of the rulers of the synagogue; what is his request? What a sad tale—a little girl, twelve years old (see ver. 42), lying at the point of death. What was Christ asked to do? Did He ever lay His hands on people? Remind of the children being brought to Him; of His touching the leper (Matt. viii. 3); putting His hands on the blind man (John ix. 6); &c. What did Jesus do at once? He never refused such an appeal, and now all the people went with Him. What a crowd in the street; He can hardly move; we shall see presently what happened; now we follow to the ruler's house. Who are those hurrying to meet them? They are servants from the ruler's house. What is the news? Is the child better or worse? Alas! she is dead; it is no use, they say, troubling this clever doctor any more—it is all over. Never had they heard of a dead person being raised; He might have healed her if He had come in time, but it is now too late; He need not be troubled to come to the house. But what does Christ say? Only believe. Now they reach the house. Whom do they find? Hired mourners, according to the custom of the country, already assembled. To the eye of God death is only a long sleep, from which all will wake at the great day of judgment. It pleased Christ to waken this child sooner. What did the people do when they heard what He said? Why this laugh of scorn? Whom did He take into the room? The two parents, the three chosen apostles—which were they? Now picture the wondrous scene: the child lying, pale and dead, on the bed; the weeping parents; the expectant disciples; the Saviour, calm and compassionate, standing by the bed-side; He takes the child by the hand—how cold her hand would feel—He speaks, "Arise!" Now life-blood once more rushes through veins; her eyes open, looks around, sees parents, gets up, walks about the room, goes up to them. They, filled with greatest wonder, forget that she must be hungry; Christ orders some food for her, and bids them keep the news quiet, lest they should throng Him unduly.

Practical Lessons. (1) *Christ's power over death.* The ruler and his friends believed in His power while life still remained, but not afterwards. As with natural life so with spiritual life. Christ not only sustains, but *gives* life (see Eph. ii. 1). He can cause dead soul to hear His voice, and it can live. Remind of conversion of Saul, of gaoler of Philippi (Acts xvi. 31), and others. (2) *Christ's tenderness.* Notice how gentle throughout, no rebuke to father; simply says, "Only believe." Takes child by hand, lifts her up, orders food to be given. Shows was a man like ourselves. Has same tender feelings now; therefore we may go to Him still with boldness (Heb. iv. 15).

II. The Woman Healed. (Read 25—34.) Describe the crowd pressing round Christ on way to ruler's house; who wanted to get near Him? What was the matter with the woman? Notice that she had only *heard* of Christ; perhaps never seen Him do one miracle; still she believed. What did she do? What happened immediately? What did Christ say? Did not He know who touched Him? Yes, but wanted public confession of Him. What did the woman do then? Confessed, *i.e.*, told her tale, how she believed in her heart, came near, touched Him, was made whole. How did she feel? Like Peter, after draught of fishes (Luke v. 8), fearful of being in immediate presence of God. How did Christ encourage her? Bade her go in peace; be of good cheer; her faith had saved her.

Practical Lessons. (1) *The power of faith.* This woman believed after hearing of Christ. Faith cometh of hearing (Rom. x. 17). We, too, have heard all our lives—by God's word, by sermons, books, &c. Have we ever honestly sought Christ, put trust in Him, asked Him to forgive the past, and to help for the future? This is true faith. (2) *The duty of public confession of Christ.* He expected this woman to acknowledge her being made whole. So He does still (see Rom. x. 10). All healed by Christ were called upon either to follow Him or to tell others about Him. So now, cannot be secret disciples. Must publicly acknowledge Him and tell others of Him; so shall be blessed ourselves and be a blessing to others.

Questions to be answered.

1. How many people did Christ raise to life?
2. Which disciples went with Him?
3. Describe the raising the child to life.
4. What lessons does this miracle teach us?
5. Describe the conduct of the woman.
6. What two lessons may we learn?

XUM

STILL AND DEEP.

BY F. M. F. SKENE, AUTHOR OF "TRIED," "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER LIX.

THE de L'Isles did not at this time remain very long in Paris. They had already organised many duties and occupations for themselves in their own home, to which they were anxious to return, and Bertrand adhered to his determination not so much as to see Laura Brant again while he remained in her vicinity—his honourable nature had been so revolted by her former conduct that, although he had honestly forgiven her, and accepted in theory Mary's assurances of the change that had passed over her, he still was unable to think of her otherwise than as the false and dangerous Lorelei who had been the source of so much misery to John Pemberton as well as to himself and his wife. Mary felt convinced that a single interview between him and Lurline, such as she now was, would be sufficient to change his impression of her altogether; but she did not press it during their stay in Paris, for she thought there might be a better opportunity for such a meeting just before Laura's final departure from France, if it was decided that she was to rejoin her husband. She had given a real proof of her entire repentance by writing humbly to Mr. Brant to ask him to receive her back again, and she was waiting now, in great anxiety, for the answer, which she hoped would not be very long delayed. Mary could see that Lurline felt Bertrand's avoidance of her most keenly, but no words passed between them on the subject, and they parted, at last, without knowing, in the uncertainty as to Laura's future, whether they would ever meet again. Bertrand and Mary did not, however, return home alone. Charlie Davenant went with them to spend a few weeks at Château de L'Isle, and they were also accompanied by Valerie and some of her little brothers and sisters, as it was thought that a month or two in the fresh country air might do much towards the restoration of their health, which had necessarily suffered greatly during the siege.

We find the whole happy party assembled together one bright autumn day, in the flower garden at Château de L'Isle, when the warm sunshine was streaming down on the gay blossoms, which testified by their blooming appearance to the care bestowed on their cultivation by the young wife of the comte. Mary was seated there by the side of her husband, and they were watching with some amusement a merry scene which was being enacted before their eyes. A huge Newfoundland dog—the very embodiment of lazy good-nature—was being led along the grass in a most demure manner by Dorette Brunot, while her little brother Jacques, seated astride on his back, was shouting wildly to the animal in the hope of accelerating his pace; despite of the fact that his hands were firmly entwined in the shaggy hair, his position was by no means secure, partly on account of his own violent state of excitement, and partly because the good old dog every now and then manifested a strong desire to rid himself of his troublesome burden by rolling over on his back. Jacques would have made an ignominious descent from his unwilling steed more than once had he not been upheld by Charlie Davenant, who was walking gaily by his side.

On the gravel path, at a short distance from this group, the pretty little figure of Valerie Brunot was to be seen pacing slowly to and fro while she read with great earnestness from a book she held in her hand. She had at all times a charming face, from the unusual beauty of her large luminous eyes, and her rosebud mouth so full of tender expression, but on this day she seemed to look especially winning, with the sunlight falling on her long soft hair, which was drawn back from her forehead, and floated over her shoulders in shining masses. Charlie Davenant kept glancing towards her constantly while he attended to Jacques' imperative demands for assistance, and when at last the expected catastrophe occurred, and the dog finally succeeded in lying down, while the discomforted rider rolled off unhurt on the turf, he picked up the little boy with very unceremonious haste, set him on his feet, and telling Dorette that she must take care of her brother now, he darted away to Valerie's side.

Bertrand and Mary looked at each other with a smile. "Valerie is a charming little creature certainly," said Bertrand, as he watched them, "and I believe she will be really beautiful when she grows up, but in the meantime it does seem strange to see that tall fellow entirely devoted to a child so much younger than himself."

"It hardly appears so to me now," said Mary, "because I am convinced that it is really a genuine and lasting attachment which he feels for her. I quite believe that if all goes well he will fulfil his intention of coming back from Australia to marry her when she is old enough."

"If he does, my Mary, it will be in a great measure because your training and companionship have made her in some degree like yourself, he told me as much one day when he was speaking of her."

"But do you not remember nurse Parry telling us how greatly he was struck with dear Valerie the very first time he saw her?"

"Yes; undoubtedly that was the commencement of



(*Drawn by* WILLIAM SMALL.)

"She embraced Mary warmly."—*p.* 828.

his admiration; but he would never have thought of going on to contemplate marriage with her some day, if he had not found, on further acquaintance, that her mind and character really resembled yours."

"Well, the origin of his affection is not a matter of much consequence, if only he will remain constant to her till they can really be united. I think they would both have every prospect of happiness."

"But what would his people say? Valerie is hardly his equal in social position."

"I think it is just one of those rare cases, where a disadvantage of that sort would not be of the slightest practical importance. Valerie is a perfect lady both in mind and manner already, child as she is, and Charlie's relations would soon feel satisfied on that point when they came to know her; moreover, they would find, since it is quite settled that he is to be a sheep farmer in Australia, that she will be quite the most suitable and useful wife he could have. Valerie inherits from her French father and English mother the best qualities of both nations; she has all the talent and quickness in household matters which an education in France was certain to give her; while she is as steady and thoughtful and well-informed for her age as she could have been made by the most solid instruction in England."

"It certainly seems as if it might prove a really satisfactory arrangement for them some day; in the meantime I suppose we shall have a heart-rending parting between them, when he is obliged to start on his long journey, for it is plain enough that their affection is mutual."

"Oh yes; poor Valerie has given him all her little heart quite openly and honestly. She was attracted to him first because he had been a friend of Mr. Pemberton's, whose memory she reveres as a sort of saint, but very soon Charlie's kindness and tender care of her won all her love to himself. They have already decided that they are to correspond regularly for six or seven years, and then he is to come and take her back with him to Australia as his wife."

"They appear to have settled it all quite systematically," said Bertrand, laughing; "but, Mary, I can see you are very impatient for the postman to arrive by the glances you are casting along the avenue. Do you expect a decisive letter from Lurline to-day?"

"Yes, there has just been time for her now to have an answer from Mr. Brant, and if she heard from him by the last mail, this post ought to bring me tidings from her of the result of her efforts for a reconciliation."

"Do you expect his reply to be favourable?"

"I do indeed; I feel sure he will gladly accept her offer to go to him. She showed me the first letter he wrote to her from America, and it was evident that since he had got settled employment he was very anxious to establish himself respectably, and to have again a real home of his own. I am quite convinced, Bertrand, from all Mr. Brant said in that letter that he was much more merely rash and reckless than actually dishonest, and I think he may do well now in all ways, and that there is no reason why Laura should not live comfortably with him."

"It is certainly in his favour that he has accepted so humble a situation as that of a merchant's clerk, considering that he lived almost like a prince in Italy, and no doubt his talents and experience will enable him to rise to some better position ultimately; but how will Laura like the dull quiet life she must necessarily lead in such a position? I should think her wonderful conversion, such as you have described it to me, can hardly have altogether destroyed the longing for society and amusement which seemed engrained in her character."

"It has at least made her wish very much not to be exposed to the temptations which might arise from it. She told me she should prefer a quiet and retired existence now, because she should be afraid to trust herself amid the pleasures of the world, lest in any way they led her to fall back into the errors she has abjured."

"That is certainly as great a proof as she could give of the marvellous change that has been wrought in her; but there is the postman, Mary," added Bertrand, "so now you will know what Mr. Brant's answer has been."

A servant came hurrying towards them with the letters, and there, as they expected, was one for the Comtesse de L'Isle in Lurline's well-known handwriting.

"I suppose I may see it too," said Bertrand, putting his arm round Mary, and drawing her closer to him, so that they could read the closely-written pages together.

CHAPTER LX.

THE letter from Mrs. Brant proved to be one which fulfilled Mary's anxious hopes for her friend to the fullest extent; it was long, and cheerfully written, evidently under the influence of brighter prospects than poor Lurline had known for many a day. She stated that her husband's expected answer had arrived, and that he had gladly and thankfully accepted her offer of going to him, and her assurance that she would be contented with the quiet humble position which was all he could promise her in his new home; it seemed that the news of the birth of his child had been a source of the greatest delight to him, and he dwelt much in his letter on the pleasure it would be to him to feel that he now had a son to work for as well as a wife. Laura said that he assured her he would do his best to make a happy home for her, and that he was already giving all his spare time to prepare it for her reception, and that he entreated her most earnestly not to delay her arrival a day longer than she could help, as the utter

loneliness in which he was living was very trying. "In short," continued Lurline, "his whole letter is so warmly and kindly written that I have begun to believe for the first time that my husband really has had a great deal of affection for me all along, and that it has been entirely my fault that we were so miserable together during the first year of our marriage. I think it so good of him to have been able to love such a one as I was then, that my heart is quite filled with gratitude towards him; and I think when I know and understand him better, as I hope to do in future, I shall not find it difficult to feel as tenderly towards him as a true wife should, and to give him not only all the help and comfort in my power, but the affection also which will make my duties light and pleasant to myself."

Laura then went on to say that she intended to join her husband at once, and that she felt sure it was the course her wise Mary would advise. There was a ship about to sail from Marseilles in a few days, which would take her to the port nearest to Mr. Brant's new home in the Southern States of America, and she had already taken her passage in it, and would be on her way to the port by the time her letter reached Mary. Her next piece of information somewhat surprised the de L'Isles, for she announced that her good and kind nurse, Mrs. Parry, had determined to make the voyage with her, as both she and the baby were still in very delicate health; but the arrangement had only been made on the distinct understanding, that so soon as the faithful old woman had seen Laura safe into her husband's care, she was to return to France, and spend the rest of her days at Château de L'Isle, as she was fully determined that no one should be the nurse and friend of Mary's children in the years to come excepting herself. Laura ended her letter with ardent expressions of gratitude to Mary de L'Isle for all that she had done for her, affirming that she owed her more than life itself, and adding that she had one most longing wish, which, if it were possible, she prayed her to gratify, and that was, that she might see her once again before they parted for ever in this world.

"Oh, Bertrand!" exclaimed Mary, "it would pain me very much to refuse Laura this last request, after all that has passed between us in the days that are gone. I should so like to go to Marseilles to take leave of her, if there is time for us to arrive there before the vessel sails. You would not refuse to take me there I am sure."

"It seems to me that I never refuse you anything, my Mary," he said, smiling; "but let me see what date she names for her departure," he added, referring to the letter: "yes, I think we could just manage to arrive there on the morning of the day fixed for the sailing of the ship, so if you do not think the journey would fatigue you too much, my darling, you shall have your wish. I shall be glad for another reason that you should see Lurline. I do not mean her to go back empty-handed to her husband, as I think we might try to spare her that mortification at least, so we will arrange that you should entrust nurse Parry with a sum of money which she can give to Mrs. Brant as your farewell gift, when you are out of reach of any unnecessary thanks on her part; but, Mary, I wish I could take you to Marseilles without being obliged to have an interview with Laura myself. I think it might be easily managed."

"Oh no, Bertrand! I hope you will not object to meet her now for this last time; it would pain her very much if you did, and indeed she is so completely changed that when once you have seen her again, you will find her quite dissociated in your mind from any unpleasant reminiscences of the past. I want you to part on friendly terms with her, dearest; it will be so much happier for us all that everything relating to our former acquaintance with her should now be forgiven and forgotten."

"Well, Mary, I have no doubt you are right, as you generally are; and, although I do not feel even now that I could have consented to keep up an acquaintance with one who was once at least the Lorelei of Chiverley, I do not object to this one last interview, which can never be repeated, so it shall be as you desire."

"Thank you so much, dearest Bertrand; you have gratified my last remaining wish as regards poor Lurline, and now I will go at once to make arrangements for our journey."

There was just time to let Laura and Mrs. Parry know by telegram of the pleasure that awaited them, and it was found that the meeting would be best ensured if it took place on board the vessel just before it started. It proved in the end that the interview could only be of much shorter duration than Bertrand and Mary had at first intended, for the ship sailed earlier than was expected, and a few minutes was all that they were able to spend together; it was sufficient, however, to remove from the minds of all concerned the last trace of bitter or painful feeling in connection with their former acquaintance, and each one of them looked back to it long years afterwards with pleasure and thankfulness, for in this world they never met again.

The fair autumn morning was very lovely, with a bright sun and a sea smooth as crystal, when Bertrand and Mary de L'Isle put off from the port of Marseilles in a small boat, and boarded the outward-bound vessel where she lay just ready to start. They were soon on the deck, and as they passed along towards the poop where the passengers were collected, they saw nurse Parry, with the infant in her arms, standing by the side of a quietly-dressed lady-like person, in whom Bertrand completely failed to recognise the brilliant Lorelei of his recollection. With an involuntary start he paused for a moment, and looked fixedly at her before he could satisfy

himself that it was indeed Laura Wyndham he beheld. The beauty which had depended so much on her artful fascination of look and manner had almost quite disappeared, and she seemed many years older than she had appeared to be before her marriage, but she had now a thoughtful pleasing expression of countenance and a quiet grace of movement which was wholly without affectation.

Laura came forward with evident timidity and embarrassment, and though she embraced Mary warmly she seemed quite unable to raise her eyes to Bertrand's face, while a crimson flush dyed her cheek at the sight of him; any rancorous feelings which he might have retained vanished at once when he saw her so gentle and meek, and, taking her hand kindly, he told her he had come to wish her all possible happiness in her new home. Mary, with her ready tact, turned away at once to speak to nurse Parry, and then Laura looked up into Bertrand's face, and said, with much emotion, "I do not attempt to thank you, Mr. de L'Isle, for all your goodness to me, both in Italy and in Paris, but especially for your forgiveness; Mary assured me of it in your name, and it has indeed been the greatest boon you could bestow upon me, for I know—I know well—how much you had to forgive. Let me tell you now, in this last hour, when we shall never meet again, how thankful I am that you will have that darling Mary to be your guardian angel always, as she has been mine of late; it gives me bitter pain to remember the false interpretation I put upon her stillness of manner long ago, when I tried to persuade you that it meant want of feeling and not depth."

"Ah, Laura," said Bertrand, smiling, "I think we have both of us learnt now that my Mary is like that crystalline sea out there, still but deep."

There was no time for further words, the anchor was being weighed, and all visitors were hastening away; there was a hurried parting, half smiles, half tears, and then Bertrand and Mary were warned that they must leave the ship at once. Those pages in the record of their lives on which the name of Laura Brant was written had come to an end for ever. They descended into their little boat; it passed from beneath the shadow of the vessel; one glimpse they caught of the fair face of the Lorelei watching them with tear-dimmed eyes, and they waved to her their last farewell. Then, with the sunshine smiling on them, and their hands fast locked together, they glided away towards their happy home, and we see them no more.

THE END.

THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON.

NOT only was Solomon a poet, but he was a sage, a philosopher. We read he spake three thousand proverbs. "Not too great a number," says Ewald, "if we consider that each poem of the sort is very short, but must exhaust a complete thought in the magic circle of the verse." These "proverbs," or "parables," or whatever translation we give to the Hebrew word *Mashal*, are too well known for us to speak of them here. They contain the deep, sage, prudential philosophy of practical life. How marvellous is the study of character, the power of using analogy, the wise thoughtfulness, the common-sense views of life, that are displayed in them! How noble are the exhortations to lead the higher life, the life of the soul, the life that is good for time and eternity! Were aught more to be said about his wisdom, would we not find it in the Divine *imprimatur* of a "greater than Solomon?"

But he was more than poet, sage, philosopher. He was one of that band who, in all ages, have "knocked at Heaven's gate with earth-palsied arm," to whom not only the dark sayings of philosophy and practical life had an interest, but to whom the enigmas of life had a deeper interest still, and who, in all ages, have scrutinised into "the maddening riddle of the root, shell within shell, dream folded over dream." Without discussing the authorship of certain books it is not going too far to say that he found some sort of real solution of the awful mysteries of life, in the loving and cleaving to the good and the pure for the sake of goodness and purity, and this with all his own imperfect obedience. It is not going too far to say that upon his eyes, straining wistfully into the darkness, there dawned the bright rays of a future life.

It is sad to turn from the contemplation of the greatness of his wisdom to the mournful reality of his end. But the thought of God flooding the soul of a man must always be transcendently more grand than the life lived by man. So it was with Solomon, and so it must ever be.

As perhaps the chief among the causes which led to his downfall may be mentioned polygamy. Like David, he had his "burst of great heart," but, like David also, he had his "slips in sensual mire." A loose morality led to looseness in religion. The commandments of Jehovah broken in regard to moral conduct, were also broken in regard to religious faith. Under the name of liberty license became the rule. The sweet grace of toleration, so invaluable a possession in itself, was profaned; and tolerant men, as they

have often been before and since, were made half-ashamed of a creed that could lead to such practices as Solomon encouraged. Those who so profane the principles of charity and toleration have, in all ages, much to answer for. Idolatrous altars were allowed to be erected, profane rites to be indulged in within the shadow of the holy city. Sanctuaries to Astarte, the goddess of Phœnicia, to Chemosh, the war-god of Moab, and to Milcom (Molech), the "divine king" of Ammon, were erected on the southerly height of Mount Olivet, and "worshippers" invited to join in their strange, cruel, licentious rites, giving to the Mount of Olivet the title of the "Mount of Offence." It is not indeed likely that Solomon ever went so far as to join in these rites himself. On the contrary, history seems to point to his steadfastly holding to his custom of sacrificing with regal pomp at the altar which he had erected to Jehovah. But, nevertheless, this did not keep down a growing dissatisfaction on the part of many with this state of matters; and there arose two parties among his subjects—the one favouring his easy tolerant sympathy of all religious beliefs, and only, probably, too willing to taste some of their sensuous fruits; the other keeping strong by the laws of their early religion, and resolutely opposed to innovations which they saw, under their very eyes, leading to such disastrous and ruinous consequences. The murmurs of discontent grew loud and frequent. The old tribal jealousies, which had been stilled for a time, showed that their fires were only smouldering. Ephraim was again ready to dispute the supremacy with Judah.

There were other agencies at work which helped to fan the flames of discontent. The burdens laid upon the Israelites, and the taxes exacted from them, were by no means light. We have seen how many of them were taken from their homes and pressed into service at the building of the Temple. The obligations of the king were so great that he had to appoint "officers" over special districts to levy money for his use. It was often exacted in the spirit of the insolence of office. Manliness and independence could not long brook such treatment; and the Israelites showed no disposition to let Solomon trample on them further than they could bear.

The absence of the prophetical order at the court of Solomon is very striking, and is, no doubt, a marked cause of his downfall. It is not probable that Nathan survived long after the death of David, though we find his sons holding positions of honour among Solomon's courtiers. There may have been no prophet of distinction to fill his place; and in course of time it may have appeared that the king, in his marvellous wisdom, needed no such prophetic advice as David found in God and Nathan. It might appear that in the person of Solomon the offices of king and prophet were fitly joined; and so for a time they might have been had Solomon only kept a perfect ideal before him. This he could not do; and neither the monarchy nor the prophetic office were, at this time, ripe for such a union. Only a perfect religion could produce a perfect prophet; and the monarchy was far from being in the position of producing a perfect king. As it was, the time soon arrived for the representatives of the old order to raise their voice on high, to cry out against the wrong and evil tolerated everywhere around. Thus arose Ahijah of Shiloh, and Shemaiah, and Iddo, stung into speech by the conviction that "the monarchy in Israel, by its narrow aims, was degenerating into an ascendency and violence which endangered the theocracy itself, and with it the sacred and inviolable basis of Israel's whole existence." And thus it was that during the last years of his reign the voice of that God, who had marked him out for succession, who had given him the gift of wisdom, who had shown that His favour rested upon His temple, was raised up against him. While he yet lived, the prophet to whose warning voice he would not listen had pointed out his successor; and the curtain falls upon the first act of a woeful tragedy for the house of David. After reigning forty years, Solomon died and "was buried in the city of David his father."

The time has gone by in which men vex themselves about such questions as exercised the mind of the old Fathers of the Church. But we would fain get a glimpse of *the man* in these later days of his misfortunes; indeed, all throughout, we desire to get a closer view of his inner character than we ever obtain. We talk of him as being one of many who have presented a union of genius and crime; yet, as we so speak, we long to see more closely the mutual relations of these. His *personnel* is not so shadowy as that of some others, but still it is shadowy; his inner thoughts, his every-day life, are difficult to be grasped. To obtain any knowledge of what were his sentiments and feelings, as he felt the play of life was near an end, we must have recourse to a work which probably was not written by himself, but which is supposed—and not, we think, without reason—to represent his view of life as his life was hurrying to a close. We would rejoice to think it did; for, underneath all the profound melancholy, all the deep perplexity, which characterises it, there is the same wonderfully-varied experience of life which we know Solomon possessed, there are bright gleams of hope and faith, there is the wisest and most sage of counsels. It shows us that, if he did not act always upon his conclusions, yet he had found out for himself what was the best life for man to lead, that his quest after the chief good had not been in vain.

Despite the weary cry with which the book of Ecclesiastes commences, the author resolutely sets himself to discover what life is the best for man during his brief sojourn in this world. He turns to wisdom, to pleasure, to devotion, to business and public affairs, to wealth, to the "golden mean," the "modest competence;" but finds the *summum bonum* is none of these. He finds it at last in the cultivation of a noble, generous, unselfish disposition, in self-denial, in doing good without hope of return. Charity is the golden rule. He resolves to take the twin-stars of duty and charity for his guide, strong in the belief that this life is not bounded by time. And thus it comes about that the conclusion of the whole matter is this—"Fear God, and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil."

If the sentiments of Solomon inspired any later Jew to write thus, what a precious legacy he has left us! Thus has the gift of wisdom not been bestowed on him in vain.

SURLY BOB.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL," "HUGH'S HEROISM," ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.—BOB AND HIS AUNT.

AS soon as work was over that evening, Bob, whose heart seemed to be overflowing with joy and happiness, determined to delay no longer paying that visit to his aunt which he had resolved upon. Moreover, having been saving up for the purpose, he had now enough to buy some little present to take with him, though what that present should be he was still in doubt; so, before he started he took counsel with Mrs. Heywood, who suggested two or three things which she thought might be acceptable.

Bob was still pondering over the matter, and trying to decide the question, when on turning into one of the narrow back streets which led to Rope Lane, he came upon a boy groping in the gutter, as if in search of something which he was hoping to find by the light of the distant street lamp. He was crying, too, over his loss, and Bob, whose heart seemed wonderfully softened by his happiness, instead of passing him by in his trouble as if it concerned him not, paused, saying, "Well, what's the matter? You've lost something, have you? Tell me what it is, and I'll help you to hunt for it.

The boy raised his head, and as he did so Bob found he was no other than his own cousin Sam.

The looks of both expressed astonishment at this unexpected meeting, and for a moment Bob drew back, whilst a brief struggle went on within him. But it was only for one instant; the next he was helping Sam to look for the lost shilling, which was one his mother had entrusted to him for the purchase of various things needed to replenish the empty cupboard at home.

He had been told to go straight to the shop and back again; but Sam, not being of an obedient nature, had chosen to stop and play with some boys he had met on the way. When at length they went off, and he was about to proceed to the shop, he discovered that his shilling was gone. Nowhere could he find it, though he had been searching for it ever since, sobbing and crying at the same time, as he thought of the scolding he would get from his mother, who had declared this was her last coin, and the beating his father would be sure to bestow upon him when he came in and found there was nothing for supper.

Bob, who knew by experience that his fears were not exaggerated, after a little hesitation, drew forth from his pocket the shilling he had meant to expend in the present which was to be a sort of peace-offering to his aunt, and gave it to Sam, saying, "There, you can take that, and go and buy what you were sent for with it. I'd been saving it up, 'cause I wanted to do something with it; but I dare say I can save up another in time."

Sam eagerly grasped the proffered coin; but as his hand closed upon it, some feeling of compunction seemed to smite him. This conduct of Bob's was so different from anything to which he had been accustomed that he could not make it out. For it just then occurred to him that this was the first time they had met since he had killed Bob's dove; so he should have expected he would have been trying to revenge himself; instead of which he was offering to help him out of his difficulty. No one else he knew would have given him a shilling, or even offered to *lend* him one. It was strange—so strange that almost before he knew what he was saying, he had exclaimed, "You don't know then as 'twas me as killed the dove!"

"Yes I do," returned Bob. "I was sure of it."

Sam's face expressed increasing astonishment.

"And yet you gives me this!" he exclaimed, with a glance at the hand in which he was holding the shilling tightly clasped, lest even now Bob should wish to take it back. "Well, I won't never kill no more of your doves! And I wish as I hadn't touched that one!"

"Well, never mind now," answered Bob, "I've got over it by this time, so we'll let bygones be

bygones. And now you go to the shop, and I'll go in and see aunt a minute."

Mrs. Saunders gave Bob but a cool reception at first; but when she heard of the motives which had brought him back to see her—that he had not come to ask for anything, but rather to see if he could not be of some service to her, she softened towards him, and the result of this visit was the establishing of a better feeling between the two. She even went the length of declaring that she would be willing to have Bob back again, if he wanted to come, as she used to be able to trust him to go on errands, which was more than she could do by Sam, who always loitered and stayed to play on the road, until she never knew when she should see him back.

Bob steadily kept to his purpose of trying to repay to her in some measure all he and Johnnie owed her; and many a little comfort she would not otherwise have had came to her as time went on out of Bob's earnings; until at length, instead of exclaiming, as she once had done, "Thank goodness he ain't *my* son!" she was often heard to wish that Sam and her other children would take after him, as then she should have some comfort in her life.

But we have been anticipating, and must now go back to little Johnnie.

It was a bright lovely day in early spring when he first came to his new home; and very delighted he was with it. It would be difficult to say which had looked forward to the day the most eagerly, he or Bob; but when it came at last both were as happy as it was possible to be, and could scarcely believe that such good fortune could be theirs.

"Hasn't God been kind to us!" exclaimed Johnnie, when they were alone together in their little room up-stairs, which he had admired so enthusiastically that even Bob was satisfied. "Hasn't God been good! 'Cause we didn't deserve anything like this, did we, Bob?"

"*I* didn't," replied Bob, with a stress upon the pronoun, as if thoroughly convinced of his own unworthiness but unwilling to rank Johnnie with himself. "I was a dreadful bad boy in them days when we was at aunt's, afore you went to the hospital, when I never tried to please anybody, but just went my own ways, and was always a-quarrelling and a-fighting. I wouldn't go back to that 'ere time for anything; for I've found out that it 's a deal better and happier to try and please Jesus, and do what He tells me, even though 'tis dreadful hard to do what 's right sometimes. But it's all along of you, Johnnie, that I began to try."

Johnnie lifted up his little face in surprise, as he exclaimed, "Along of *me*, Bob!"

"Yes; 'twas all along of your begging of me so to forgive Tom Lane, and your talking about that Good Shepherd as you loved so much, and was your Friend. And then, when you was gone to the hospital, and I missed you so dreadful bad, and was so lonesome, I began to ask Him to be my Friend as well. And I asked Him to take care of you too, and make you well again. And He has, Johnnie; He has done all I asked Him. And I thought I'd tell you some day."

"Oh, I'm so glad, Bob—so glad!" said Johnnie, heartily. "And He has done a deal more for us than we ever thought of asking, hasn't He, Bob?"

"Aye, that He has; for 'twould never have come into my head to ask for all this."

CHAPTER XVIII.—CONCLUSION.

THE pure country air, the good wholesome food, and the happy way in which the days now passed, all did wonders for Johnnie, who seemed to gain health and strength with almost every hour, and thus did credit to the kind care which Mrs. Heywood bestowed upon him.

He speedily made his way to her heart, until she declared to her husband that she didn't think she could have loved him better if he had been her own child; certainly she could scarcely have been kinder or done more for him. But if it was upon Johnnie that her chief cares were lavished, owing to his helplessness and delicacy, she did not forget or neglect Bob, whose honest nature and true heart she had come to knew and trust so thoroughly.

"He may be a bit rough outwardly," she remarked once to her husband, "but he has the making of a fine character in him; for he is upright to the core, and as tender-hearted as any lad that ever lived."

"Aye, aye; he's a good steady lad; and he's mightily improved since he's been here," responded Mr. Heywood. "I think you've had a hand in that, wife. You've smartened him up somehow, wonderfully."

"He only wanted a friend; some one to show him a little kindness, and help him on sometimes, and I'm sure he has proved himself a grateful fellow!"

Johnnie, whose presence they seemed to have forgotten, overheard this conversation, and a proud happy look came into his little face. How different this was from the time when he had never heard Bob spoken of but as the "bad boy" of the school, as the most troublesome and quarrelsome of all the scholars; in fact, as "Surly Bob."

The next morning Johnnie was sitting out in the garden, as the weather was so warm and fine that even puss was out basking in the sunshine. The little boy found plenty of amusement in looking round upon the flowers, or in playing with the cat, or in turning over the leaves of a pretty picture-book lying on his knee, lent him by Edgar.

After a time Mrs. Heywood came out to see how he was getting on; whilst just at that moment the large gates of the drive were pushed open, and a lad passed through, evidently bent on some errand to the house, for he was carrying a basket on his arm.

Hearing voices, he turned his face in the direction of the lodge, and at the same moment exclaimed in tones of astonishment, "Johnnie Saunders!"

"Tom Lane, I declare!" cried Johnnie at the same moment. "Why, whatever brings you here?"

"I've come with something for somebody up at the house," returned Tom, "for I'm errand boy now to Mr. Cross. But where have you been all this time? and how is it *you* come to be here?"

Johnnie began to explain; but when he came to tell of Bob's stopping the run-away pony, Tom interrupted him.

"I know more about that than you do, for I saw it all," he exclaimed; "and 'twas me as told the gent Bob's name. If 't hadn't been for me he wouldn't have known it; but I spoke up, and told him where he lived."

"That was right of you, my boy," said Mrs. Heywood, who was standing listening to the conversation.

"Well, I'll tell you why it was; 'cause if you knew how Bob and me used always to be a-fighting one another afore, you'd wonder may-be as I should have troubled myself about him. But he'd done me a good turn, and I'd promised to do the same by him if I had a chance."

And then Tom, who was fond of telling a tale, especially when he had two such interested listeners, went on to relate the affair of the church tower, and the part Bob had acted, whilst Johnnie, who had not heard a word of it from his brother, looked very pleased.

"Anyhow you're happy now," exclaimed Tom. "I shouldn't mind being you to live in this 'ere place!"

When Johnnie went on to explain how it was through his being in the hospital and losing his leg, that they'd come to be so kind to him and sorry for him, and so had brought him out there to be with Bob, Tom replied, "Well, I never should have thought all that harm could have come of a tumble! I remember that day we teased you so; but I didn't knock you down a-purpose, Johnnie! I just took it into my head to have a slide that minute, and I didn't notice as you were in the way till 'twas too late to stop myself. Besides, I thought you'd take care to move off in time. But I'm real sorry you should have got hurt so."

"I'm so glad you didn't do it on purpose!" exclaimed Johnnie, with a bright smile; "I told Bob may-be you didn't mean it; but he thought you did, and he was angry at first. So 'twas real good of him to help you, when he might have taken his revenge; wasn't it now?"

Tom nodded his head; whilst Mrs. Heywood remarked, "It was indeed; it was more than many a boy would have done. But we must tell Bob how you gave Mr. Deveron his name," she added, turning to Tom; "for I don't think he knows, and I'm sure he'd like to thank you for it. You must come out here again some day, when you've a little leisure and would like a walk."

"I'll come!" said Tom, preparing to depart; "for it's no end of jolly out here; very different from our place at home!"

And now we must take leave of Bob and Johnnie, after merely saying that the latter, for an amusement, as he sat in the garden, began to take to cutting out little things in wood with Bob's pen-knife, and he soon showed such a genius for it, that it attracted Mr. Deveron's notice, who determined to have him taught the art of wood-carving. Such rapid progress did the boy make, that not only was Bob prouder of him than ever—if that were possible—but Mr. Deveron himself was highly pleased, and prophesied that he would hereafter make himself quite a name among wood-carvers. At any rate he was provided with an interesting occupation, and would always be able to earn a comfortable livelihood, whilst Bob was steadily working on towards the object of his ambition, namely to become a first-rate gardener.

THE END.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 800.

310. Angling and catching them in a small net, or a large net called a drag (Habakkuk i. 15).

311. In the reign of Uzziah, King of Judah (Amos i. 1, and Zechariah xiv. 5).

312. That they should tell the vision to no man, until the Son of Man be risen from the dead (Matt. xvii. 9).

313. Simon, of Bethany (Matthew xxvi. 6).

314. "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings" (Mal. iii. 8).

315. Because he knew that God was a gracious God, merciful, and slow to anger, and of great kindness, and would therefore forgive the people when they repented (Jonah iv. 2).

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 816.

316. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matt xxiii. 37).

317. Micah vi. 4.

318. "As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him" (Amos v. 19).

319. "The son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house" (Micah vii. 6).

320. That his disciples might believe (John xi. 15).

THE BENT BOW

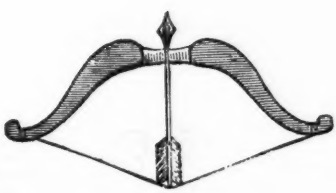
BEING

THE EXTRA PART

OF

THE QUIVER.

CHRISTMAS, 1874.



CASSELL, PETTER & GALPIN:

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XUM

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THE BENT BOW:

BEING THE

EXTRA CHRISTMAS PART OF "THE QUIVER."

THE SOUTHERN CROSS AND CHARLES'S WAIN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "POVERTY PASTURES," "EPISODES IN AN OBSCURE LIFE," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

A HOT wind was blowing—a stifling flow of arid air, like the breath of a myriad of furnaces. Lungs laboured like dry pumps. Skin seemed turning into scorched leather. The smarting eye could nowhere find repose, but ached as it turned from the blinding blue of the sky to the red earth cracked like a fever-patient's lips, and the burnished bronze of the bush, above which, here and there, showing that it was on fire, rolled sluggish wreaths of smoke; and then again to the blue lagoon, separated only by a spit of glaring sand from the bluer ocean. There was no coolness for the eye in either. From both the blazing sunbeams flashed like spears rebounding from shields of polished steel. Sunshine, sunshine, everywhere; scarce half an inch of shade. The heavens, as the Eastern despot served his victim, seemed to be choking the earth with molten gold.

It was Christmas Day, but Christmas Day in the Australian bush. On the rough-hewn door-step of a hut which looked out on the lagoon and sea sat a young man, lightly clad in an unbuttoned blue-and-white shirt, moleskin trousers, and unlaced boots. He was tall and spare and tanned—so far, like a "corn-stalk"—but he had not the deep-set eyes and other peculiarities, more easy to recognise than describe, which characterise the "native Australian"—*i.e.*, *white* native, or "currency"—physiognomy.

Fred Leicester was a young Englishman, acquiring, like many a young Englishman before his time and since, "colonial experience" which he had not anticipated. Any one might be excused for being languid on such a day, but there was an especial languor in the way in which he lolled and reluctantly lifted his limbs, and a pallor in his face beneath the brown, which showed that he had not yet completely recovered from a severe illness. Had not this been the case, a young fellow naturally so active, would not have taken such a "crawler's billet" as a hut-keeper's. His two shepherd-mates were away with their flocks, and would not be back until sun-down, when the three would begin to keep Christmas with a better supper than usual. Fred was cook, but it was "a long cry" to sun-down. Having made himself a "Jack Shea"-ful of tea to drink cold, he had stamped out the wood embers in the brick fire-place, which bulged with its chimney from one end of the hut, and now sat listlessly beneath the overlapping sheets of glistening silver-grey and brown bark which formed the roof, and were propped up with unbarked posts to form a verandah also. Beside him, in such shade as it could find, lay his dog, puffing and shaking like a high-pressure steam-engine, and showing its tongue, as if supplicating some doctor to cure it of its fever. The locusts made a shipwright-like clatter on the trees. There were plenty of trees for them to make a clatter upon. Thinly scattered about the hut, they sloped down into thick brush upon the banks of the shrunken river, which ran, or rather crept, into the lagoon. Fred's eyes, with no delighted speculation in them, roamed over the lofty gum-trees, some of them higher than the Monument, and others dropping manna; silver wattles, red cedars, tea-trees, gracefully towering cabbage-tree palms, mint-trees, musk-trees, violet-scented myall, aromatic sassafras, grass-trees, tree-ferns, giant nettles, giant fig-trees, smothered in mosses, orchids, and epiphytical ferns, and, lashed together with "bush-ropes," gracefully curling, curving, intertwining creepers.

Fred was weary of Australia, and found no beauty or grandeur in that striking scene—striking, at least, if studied in detail. His thoughts had flown away to a land in which the trees stood bare and black, unless frost and snow had turned them into white coral. How he wished himself back in England, if only he could be back, free from the disgrace of having returned a beaten man! If *that* were to be the condition of his

return, he was determined never to go back, but rather die in his land of exile, which, in spite of its sunny skies and balmy air, he had come to loathe, because he had been unlucky in it, and yet felt tied to it.

The locusts kept up their monotonous clatter —ear-torturing on such a day. Buzzing insects made their more harmonious hum; but otherwise, save for the harsh scream of an occasional flock of parrots flashing athwart the full blaze of sunshine, the fluttering of the magpies, and the croak of the crows hopping about the black jagged tree-stumps and rugged iron-bark logs, and the twitter of the diamond sparrows chasing one another in spite of the intense heat in and out of the scrub, the bush was almost dreamily still. A few butterflies flitted about noiselessly. A wasted iguana, which no amount of heat could make more wrinkled - mummy - like than it was born, solemnly writhed up a tree, putting out its hideous head now on this side and now on that of the trunk, as it watched Fred and his dog with wearily wary old eyes, that looked as if they had not winked for centuries. A few little bright-eyed lizards basked on the loose charcoal inside the tree-stumps' craters, and a black snake lay stiff as a stick, with its head in a dried-up "crab-hole," in full sight of the dog, which was too lazy to stir, although famed for his prowess as a vermin-destroyer. The harsh chuckle of a couple of laughing-jackasses, perched on a tree hard by, startled the stillness, and told the hour of noon, but Fred still sat on. It was too hot to take the trouble of going indoors for anything in the shape of dinner. What little appetite he could manage to get up he must reserve for the Christmas banquet in the evening.

Down came the laughing-jackasses, with their crests up, and pounced upon the snake, which soon wriggled off with the clumsy wide-mouthed birds, jabbering like idiots as they hopped round it, or swooping on it to give it another prod with their long, strong, sharp beaks.

This little hubbub over, Fred's thoughts again went back to England.

"Let's see," he said, "they'll soon be coming out of church now. What a fool I am!" he added; "they're not up yet. It's only two o'clock in the morning in England. Ever so much of my Christmas Day was yesterday with them. What a nuisance it is! It's worse than the distance. It makes a fellow feel as if he had drifted into another world somehow."

That he had ever been in England had begun to seem to him almost like a dream, although it was not so very many months since he had left it, and every lichen on the walls of his old home was fresh in his recollection.

It was his house no longer. Its former owner, an uncle, who had promised to make him his heir, and suffered him to grow up without a profession, died. His will was disputed. The son of a brother older than Fred's father obtained the real property, and of the personal which he had been taught to expect, Fred only secured a fraction. This he gave up for the support of his widowed mother, who had lived with him at his uncle's, and with him had been ousted from the cosy old house by his triumphant cousin. It was not a large estate; but to be owner of seven or eight hundred acres of English land, with capital enough to farm it yourself with profit, is a very pleasant position for a person with country tastes. Fred had been "somebody" in his circle so long as he was reputed to be his uncle's heir. It was a wrench to have to descend from his position and find himself almost literally penniless, with his way in the world to make, and no special training for any way of making it. But there was something harder than this to bear. He had felt himself bound in honour to give back her troth to his Helen. They had sworn unflagging mutual fidelity when they parted, and Fred had painted a glowing picture of the rapidity with which he was going to make his fortune in the Land of Gold for which he was bound; but he had at the time a keen appreciation of the chances against him. Kind though his Helen's mother tried to be when he called to say good-bye, he had noticed the marked difference in her manner towards him—her evident satisfaction at the thought that he was going to put thousands of miles of salt water between himself and Helen. He knew, too, that the cousin who had dispossessed him was an admirer of Helen's, and though he had not sufficiently lost conceit in himself to doubt for a moment that Mrs. Wilson would prefer him to Philip as a son-in-law if they competed on equal terms, yet to run penniless against Philip as master of Brock Grange would be, he knew, a heavily handicapped race for him. As for Helen, he did not believe that she would ever willingly give him up, but "they'll bother the life out of her, poor girl," he thought, "if I don't soon come back a rich man. And, after all, it would be a shame for me to spoil her chances—to keep her waiting, waiting on for ever so long."

In spite of these approaches to forebodings, however, Fred had left the London Docks as steerage passenger in good hope, which had been kept up and increased by the comically roseate anticipations of the queerly miscellaneous throng of Micawbers into which he was thrown. Every one on board his ship was going to make a sudden fortune somehow, although their notions were of the vaguest as to the first steps that should be taken towards that end.

The silent ships, deserted by their crews, that lay in thronged Hobson's Bay, raised rather than

damped Fred's spirits. Perched with a batch of shipmates on their luggage in the lighter chartered to carry it from the bay to the drays on Queen's Wharf, at rates which saddled the owners with a very considerable addition to their passage-money, Fred, like the rest, cheered lustily as they went up the winding tawny Yarra Yarra, startling the pelicans sleepily meditating on the muddy banks, and exciting the compassionate contempt of the crews of colonial craft they passed.

"Ah, cheer away, you poor critters; you'll need all your spirits," the acclimatised sailors shouted back.

Scarcely was the tent—belonging to his messmates who had invited him to take a bed in it until he could find something to do—pitched on Emerald Hill before Fred was struck down with "colonial fever," ending in dysentery. On Emerald Hill, in fœtid Canvas Town, in the swampy valley opposite, and along the then bush-bordered Sandridge Road, there were sundry doctors' brass plates incongruously attached to tents, but not a doctor would come near Fred, because he had not money enough to fee one according to the current rates for his services. The *auri sacra fames* had corrupted even doctors—as a rule the most generously self-sacrificing of men. His Scotch messmates, however—who had taken a fancy to the jolly young Englishman—nursed Fred, when they could find time, in their tent, and when at last they had managed, by engaging it before the house was finished, to rent a room in a cottage, they carried Fred thither, and at last set him on his feet sufficiently to enable him to get about and deliver his Melbourne letters of recommendation. The recipients had scarcely time to say a civil word to him. Then he applied for situations of all kinds, which the little strength he had recovered would, as he fancied, enable him to fill; but scores—in some cases hundreds—were applying for such situations, and he was always unlucky.

When he thought himself strong enough to stick on a horse again, after some fashion or other, he tried to enlist in the Gold Escort; but the kindly commandant told him, "You see, I must have some personal knowledge of the men I take; and, besides, my poor fellow, you've been awfully pulled down. You're fitter to be inside the sheets than in the saddle."

At that time the Melbourne *Argus* daily headed its columns of "Wanted" with

"Wanted, a Governor."

"I must go in for the governorship, they can't get anybody for *that*," said Fred, bitterly, when he returned from his escort application, and seated himself panting on one of the boxes which supplied the place of chairs and table in the room which he shared with his Scotch friends. "If I'd only got the pith of a cat left in me, I'd go in for the road-gangs, earn my ten shillings a day, and work my way up to the diggings; but it seems as if I wasn't fit for anything—so people say—not even the Government stroke."

"Hoot, man, dinna talk daft like," answered one of his Scotch friends.

They did not merely like him as a pleasant companion, but had a warm regard for him on account of the attention he had bestowed—sitting up in the sick bay with him, and so on—on an invalid countryman of theirs, who had died upon the voyage, and been buried in the bright blue waters just before the look-out shouted, "Land oh!" at sight of Cape Otway.

The Scotchmen took counsel together, and knowing that Fred had a bigger sheaf of letters of recommendation for Sydney, offered to lend him on his I O U money enough to take him by a sailing coaster thither, and to keep him there for a week or two.

The kindly Scotchmen accompanied him to his craft—a smart little brig moored on the left bank of the Yarra—and bade him a hearty God-speed.

Picturesque Port Jackson is a very different harbour from dreary-looking Port Phillip. As soon as you run in between the frowning Heads, and see the lovely expanse of inosculating bays, bordered by silvery sand, and rocky, wooded, villa-dotted shores, with wooded islands floating, as it were, here and there like Deloses, you take a fancy to the place; and after the raw look and mad rush of Melbourne, Fred found refreshment in the time-mellowed buildings and more leisurely pace of life in Sydney. But though Fred's Sydney letters were read more leisurely, and obtained a little more polite recognition than his Melbourne ones, practically they were as useless to him. In Sydney, as in Melbourne, there was plenty of demand for capital and for brawny muscle; but Fred had no capital, and had not recovered his brawn. He was obliged to sell almost everything he had for a mere song to support him whilst he went about right and left applying for employment. At last, his money being nearly gone, he went in desperation to a Labour Agency Office, determined to take the first situation that was offered to him, and about a week afterwards he found himself on the Coogee Coogee run, engaged as hut-keeper at an out-station for a twelvemonth.

He had held his sleepy billet for about nine months when this little story begins, and as he was recovering strength, although not very rapidly, he had begun to look forward impatiently to his release for more active employment in the following March.

"I'm making my fortune in a hurry at this rate!" he said, bitterly, as he got up to prepare the Christmas feast for himself and his mates.

On the Saturday before they had drawn raisins,

extra sugar, &c., with their usual rations from the head station store. Accordingly, Fred, first of all, concocted a "plum duff." The ordinary ration meat was put aside—salt beef, beefsteaks, and mutton chops they could get any day. In the morning Fred had been down to the lagoon, and shot a brace and a half of black ducks. Duff and duck, with milkless tea, damper with caraway-seeds in it in honour of the occasion, and a dessert of water-melon, constituted the banquet. The three bachelors might have had the use of a cow a-piece, if they would only have taken the trouble to look after them; it would have literally cost them nothing to keep pigs and poultry, and very little pains would have kept them well stocked with vegetables; whilst, if their predecessors had only been thoughtful enough to plant a few fruit stones and cuttings, the bald hut might have been smothered in green and purple clustered grape-vines, and bowered in orange, peach, and fig-trees. But, except where there is a woman, with cravings for home-cosiness, Australian bushmen lead a very rough-and-ready life, and content themselves with fewer comforts than they could get in the forecastle of a merchantman. A water-melon vine, spreading in a little patch of ground meant for a garden at the back of the hut, up which it climbed, to sprawl again upon the roof, and a prickly pear and a hacked initial-notched aloe in front, were the only botanical beauties of the hovel in which parched Fred was playing—or rather working very hard as—cook. The sun was sinking, the cooking was nearly over, and Fred went to the door to look out for his companions. A great flock of white cockatoos came screaming home to roost, making the she-oak on which they alighted suddenly burst out in big white blossom like a baobab-tree. Two clouds of red dust converging over the tree-tops from opposite quarters showed that the two flocks were coming home, and soon the sheep made their appearance, stopping now and then to crop sparse grass-blades, which looked about as succulent as tinder, with the listless shepherds and their panting dogs crawling at a funeral pace behind. Fred's dog mustered up energy enough to rise and lounge towards the two other dogs, with whom, having exchanged confidences, he returned to his master, who had sauntered to the hurdles to count in the sheep.

When they were securely folded, the banquet was served on the verandah, and partaken of "after the manner of the ancients," the revellers reclining at full length, with heads, however, often propped on both elbow-supported arms. The three dogs sat on their haunches in a row just outside the verandah, wagging their tails, and beating tattoos with them on the hot ground, snapping at the bones thrown to them, and then, after crunching them, screwing up their noses in comically coaxing silent petitions for more.

Fred's human comrades were utterly unlike him, and one another. The elder, who answered to the singular name of "Uttoxeter Uz," was an "old hand," *i.e.*, ex-convict. Uzziah—as I suppose his Jew-Christian name should be written, at full length—was a Staffordshire man, who had been "lagged" (transported) for manslaughter, close treading on the heels of murder, committed in a poaching affray. In Australia he still sometimes strolled out after birds—it was with his gun Fred had shot the ducks—but as he was free to kill as many as he liked, sport had no longer the attraction for him which it possessed when forbidden by Game Laws. The whilom ferocious poacher, moreover, had mellowed or faded into an easy-going lazy old fellow, who dawdled about after his sheep, giving offence to no one (for with all his dawdling he and his dog between them managed never to lose a sheep) during by far the greater part of the year. All that time he never touched a drop of anything stronger than tea, but as soon as he had got his year's wages, he marched off to the nearest township, entered the first public-house, and having handed over his money to the landlord, proceeded to "drink it out" personally and by proxy, "shouting," as treating is called in colonial slang, for every one who entered the "Royal," "Currency Lass," "Macquarie Arms," or whatever the name of the place might be.

When this senseless operation had been got through—the landlord being the only authority as to the extent to which the money went—the old man would shake himself, "hump the swag" (shoulder the trifle of impedimenta with which he encumbered himself), whistle for his dog, and slouch off perhaps back to the station he had left, but more probably, since he was an ingrained nomad, in search of a new situation. There used to be scores of men in Australia who led purposeless tieless, dreary-seeming lives like old Uz's.

Fred's other companion was a "new chum," dubbed Yard o' Tape by the Uttoxeter wit, because he was thin, pale, short, and had been a draper's assistant in England. He ought never to have left the home counter, being, unlike Fred, one of the men who could never by any possibility be turned into thriving colonists. It was lucky for him that such a "crawling" occupation as shepherding was open to him; but Yard o' Tape loathed shepherding, loathed everything connected with the colony, and when he could get any one to listen to him, strove to console himself under his calamity of having been fool enough to come to it by abusing it rancorously *in toto*, and indulging in the most ludicrous rigmaroles about the ease and dignity he had enjoyed in England.

Neither Uttoxeter Uz nor Yard o' Tape was a

very congenial companion to Fred, but when men are thrown together day after day for months, they must either get up some kind of sociability, or else hate one another with a virulence which makes life a burden all round. The three, stretched on the hut verandah, got on passably well together, and, after supper, smoked the evening pipe—which seems inevitable in up-country Australia—in peace.

It was too hot even to talk much, but now and then they drawlingly exchanged remarks.

"What fools English people are to come out to this beastly, beggarly place!" said Yard o' Tape; "you might as well live in an oven."

"Whoy deedst thee coom, lahd? nobbudy axed thee," answered Uz.

"I don't care for the heat now, I'm getting up my strength a bit, though it is precious hot to-night, hardly cooler than it was in the afternoon; but I can see that fortunes aren't tumbled into by anybody here all of a sudden any more than they are at home," said Fred, "unless it's up at the diggings. *That's* where I'm off to as soon as ever my time 's up here."

"Wa-ell, lahd, ah wish thee look," returned Uz. "Meap tha may do wa-ell; moor loike tha' woon't. Ah've troyed 'em. A hoonderd toimes ha-arder life than this 'tis, and then me'ap yow doan't yarn yer groob. If ah was a sma-art yoong chap loike thee, ah'd goo stockman, horse-breaker, or soomat loike that. They'd meak thee a yowverseer when they got to knaw thee, and then tha wouldst work the way oop to be a cove afore tha doyed. Tha arn't loike Ye-ard o' Tape yon. Sooch as him should stick at hoam; boot tha'lt goo hoam a rich man yet. *Ah* doan't want to goo hoam to stick, boot ah'd loike to see th' old Dove now. There's better rivers at hoam than here, and a deal better feesh. Many 's the troot ah've gotten."

Such were the old poacher's sentimental reminiscences. Yard o' Tape woke up from the mosquito-disturbed nap into which he had fallen, and growled—or rather grumbled, since his voice was not deep enough to growl—"Call this Christmas! what a fool I was to come out!"

"Tha'rt roight, lahd," assented Uttoxeter Uz, not very complimentarily, adding with equally uncourteous sincerity, "and soa tha'rt loike to be wherever tha' be."

Uz, after a fashion, had a patriotic pride in the country to which he had been sent as a punishment for his sins, and never missed an opportunity of giving "a lick with the rough side of his tongue" to any one who ran down Australia simply because he was too pluckless or shiftless to adapt himself to its circumstances. Fred's thoughts went back to the merry Christmases he had spent at Brock Grange. His mother had not been a guest there *that* Christmas, he felt sure enough—but had Helen? How was he to go home and claim her fairly if he did not speedily begin to do something far better for himself than he had yet done in Australia? It was not by any means a "merry" Christmas evening Fred spent, as he lounged on the hut-verandah in the sultry air, which brushed his face and hands like scorched feathers.

The stars had been out for some time.

"Wa-ell, lahds," said yawning Uz, "ah'm gooing to toorn in here. Yow new chooms are a loively lot. Rare spoort ah've seen at Christmas toime, boot yow two 's as loively as if yow was at a buryin'."

So having spoken, Uz turned on his back, and went to sleep upon the verandah, with his head between his hands. Yard o' Tape, whose English shopkeeper notions of "respectability" made him think that it was "low" to sleep out of a bed, went in to his rough couch in the close hut, while Fred, followed by his dog, marched off to his sentry-box beside the hurdles.

A little mob of young kangaroos that had just thrown off the maternal apron-strings bounded past him in quest of pasture, scurrying away when his dog barked at them, chattering like startled school-girls. A dingo slunk up towards the folds, but soon slunk off again, when Fred came out of his box at the bark of his vigilant fellow-watcher. Opossums jabbered at the foot of the gum-trees, and scampered up them like men-of-war's men "laying aloft" to reef. Uncouth flying-foxes floated through the gloom. A nankeen crane stalked past towards the river, looking like a ghost and croaking like a score of frogs. The sad whistle of the curlew came up from the lagoon. The huge-headed night-jar glided by on wings silent as a bat's, clamorously demanding "More pork! more pork!" Like golden-downy wing-dust the Magellan clouds were brushed upon the sky, and the kite-like Southern Cross shone faintly in the unfamiliar-looking heavens.

Thinking over the unhomelike first Christmas Day he had spent in Australia—only the second he had not spent at home—Fred at last fell asleep.

CHAPTER II.

At last the time came for Fred to leave Coogee Coogee.

"Well, mates, I'm off," he said in the calm clear March—*i.e.*, early autumn—morning, as Uttoxeter Uz and Yard o' Tape let out their flocks, and Fred came out of the hut with his bundle over his shoulder and his dog at his heels; "good-bye."

"Wal, lahd, ah wish thee look," answered Uz, and the draper-shepherd added his less hearty good wishes.

Fred's way lay at first through cedar-brush, beneath cedars, gum-trees, fig-trees, with gleaming crested pigeons shaking down their fruit. Wild vines swayed against his face, and creepers drooping fading blooms, once like cups of purple and rosy-red-stained alabaster, and here and there a gorgeous wasatah could be seen still glowing in the scrub. He took pot-luck in the bark-roofed gunyahs of the sawyers, hearty fellows, but in dress, and look, and talk, and life, almost as wild as any savages. In spite of his shepherding, Fred was not used to real rough life in Australia yet, and shuddered as he sat by the sawyers' fires at dusk, and listened to the stories which they told, as things to be boasted of and considered admirable jests—of the atrocities which they and their fellows had committed on the blacks.

He toiled over ridge and gully, and along wide plains, camping out with the star-spangled sky for his bed-curtains, when he had not been able to reach the shelter of a shepherd's hut.

At last he drew near to the extemporised little township, which did duty as the head-quarters of the particular gold-rush which had attracted him.

The road—a mere track, which to liken to a ploughed field would be a very bad compliment to the field, a rough red stretch of earth, cracked with long chasms, pitted with deep holes, ridged, rutted, blocked with jagged black tree-stumps; here and there corduroyed with a few logs—ran between bush which looked very gloomy in the lessening light.

Fred did not care for the gloom, however; he was drawing near to the end of his long tramp; was about to start in the race for wealth which, having grown sanguine again with recruited health, he felt sure would end in his return to home and Helen. A little way farther on, the road branched into two arms like a Y. Fred had gone some way along the broader arm, when he heard the sound of hoofs behind him, and looking back saw three men galloping towards him. They soon pulled up by him. Their horses seemed to be blood, well-fed and well-groomed. The eldest man of the party—a shock-headed, jungle-bearded, sullen-looking fellow—was dressed in ordinary rough bush style; but the two young men, almost youngsters, with him—slim colonial striplings—were bush dandies, wore patent leather boots beneath as well as belts over their parti-coloured moleskin trousers, gold chains, ear-rings, white linen, jauntily-tied black silk cravats, and jauntily-ribboned cabbage-tree hats. The harness of all three horses was first-rate. All three men bristled with pistols, in holster, belt, and breast. Fred had a six-shooter in the breast of his blouse, but he did not lay his hand on it. He would have stood a poor chance, even with his faithful old Shag to help him, against three men armed to the teeth, and besides, they did not look in the least disposed to stick *him* up, whatever might be their felonious purposes towards others.

"Which way did you come, mate?" said one of the young Claude Duvals. "Up country, I guess, to try your luck. You don't look as if you'd had much yet. Have a drink?" and he handed Fred his flask.

"You're right," answered Fred, as he handed it back; "I'm padding the hoof to Roper's Gully."

"Has a chap," asked the other young bush-ranger, "passed you, or struck out of the bush on the left, on a switch-tailed, high-stepping horse, a black with a white stocking and a star in the forehead—a big, square-built, heavy chap, that rides as if he wanted to break his horse's back—with a valise and a pair of big saddle-bags?"

"No," answered Fred, "I haven't long been in the road; I came a short cut. You're the only three folk I've seen since morning, except the people of the house I called at, and some troopers galloping off somewhere in a great hurry."

The two young men laughed, but the sullen one growled, with an oath, "Come along! The old rascal gave us the slip by striking off the road before he got to Cypress Swamp, I'll go bail; but we'll catch him yet if we ride fast;" and putting their heels to their horses, the three went off at racing speed.

Night had quite fallen when Fred reached a roughly-knocked-up dreary roadside public-house, which looked very much as if it were a bush-rangers' house of call, kept by "bush telegraphs." At any rate, the host and hostess were by no means anxious to secure his modest custom; and learning from them that Roper's Gully was "only an easy three mile, or less may-be," farther on, he determined to stumble on in the dark.

He had got about a mile beyond the disreputable shanty when he heard a faint cooey. It did not seem to come from any great distance, but as if it were faint through pain. Fred cooeyed back, and when he heard the voice again, struck off the road in the direction from which it came, and at last, guided by it, reached a man tied hand and foot. He had been gagged as well, but had managed to get the gag out of his mouth. He was cramped from his tying, and weak from the blood he had lost. He and Fred managed to bandage up between them, after a fashion, the fortunately not very serious wounds he had received, and then he said, "Thank 'ee, mate. I wish you'd happened to come up a bit sooner. Perhaps, then, I shouldn't have been cleaned out, if you've a barker. Gold and notes, watch, ring, pistols, horse—everything they've taken, the beggars!"

Fred proposed that he should help the wounded man to hobble back to the shanty.

"Not if I know it," answered his new acquaint-

ance, who was a well-known gold-buyer. "It was to give that as well as the Corner a wide berth I cut across the way I did this morning, but the rascals were too many for me. I'll be too many for them, however, yet, or my name's not Jack Wilkins. If you'll be a good chap, and stick to me, I'll get into Roper's Gully to-night, though it's still a good three miles off. If you don't, I must camp out, and I should like a doctor to look to my hurts before they're quite stiff."

Leaning on Fred's shoulder, now and then sitting down to rest, the gold-seller reached the top of Roper's Gully before all the lights of the higgledy-piggledy township sprawling about in it were out.

The chance fellow-travellers went down the sloping main street to the principal hotel, a building by no means imposing in looks, whatever it might be in charges. Here a doctor soon arrived, and dressed the gold-buyer's wounds. They were not so serious that he was not able, before he went to bed, to give the police, and an excited section of the general public that had been admitted, an account of his adventures.

"I've known Master Fireball before to-day," said Mr. Wilkins; "so as I'd heard that he and them two young scamps of Parkinsons that go about with him now were hanging close about here again, for all the scare they'd got when they tried to stick up the mail—only two nights ago they were at the Corncob—and I'd to leave Wattle Flat latish this evening, I thought, instead of coming round the Corner, or striking off at Cypress Swamp, as I generally do, I'd take a new cut I've found that brings you out a good bit nearer home, though it's rather rough riding. But I'd scarce got out of the scrub when up canters my gentleman, and catches hold of my coat. 'Hand over your gold quietly, and I won't hurt ye?' he says. 'Catch me giving it up, Mr. Fireball,' says I; 'I know who you are,' and I lashed at him with my whip. Off went the two horses at a fine pace. Fireball still stuck on to me, so I dropped my whip and lugged out my revolver, but one of the young Parkinsons was thundering behind, and he sings out, 'Look out, Bill, he's going to shoot!' Fireball knocked mine out of my hand with his, and fired three times, I think. The first wasn't much, but I lost my stirrups at the third, and fell off with Fireball on me. Then the three set on me, dragged me off the road, and bailed me up with a gag in my mouth, and off they went grinning, and saying that they would send word with my love to my wife. Every bit of swag I had with me they carried off. And there I might have been lying now, if it hadn't been for this young chap. He heard me cooeying, and came up, and loosed me, and got me home. I owe him one turn, and Mr. Fireball and those nice young friends of his another; and I hope, I do, I shall be be able to pay 'em both."

When Fred woke next morning he found that the township of Roper's Gully consisted of a jumble—here and there presenting the semblance of a street, but for the most part scattered "as if dropped out of a bag"—back to back, gable to front, and sloping off from one another in all kinds of directions—of tents, calico-houses, asphalted-felt houses, corrugated-iron houses, wooden houses, tilted drays, and mere bark gunyahs, arrested, as it were, in the act of sliding down to the stream at the bottom of the valley. Along this stream and the creeks running into it more queer tenements and tents were pitched beside holes shallow and deep, gaping shafts, and heaps of dirt, gravel, and stone. Here and there was a gaunt-looking rough steam-engine. In the township, at least, a good many flags were hoisted, and by way of trade-signs illustrated sheets of calico and canvas were displayed like those hung out in front of shows at fairs. Dotted about in the middle of the so-called streets tree-stumps had been left, on which passengers sat down to chat.

A curiously motley population had begun to move about—motley in costume, cut of feature, colour, dialect, language, blood. Already a little fighting might be seen; as the day grew older there was sadly too much drunkenness; but scarcely any, if any, regular work was going on, because it was Sunday. All the time Fred had been a hut-keeper he had never been able to go to church. He would scarcely have known when Sunday came round, had it not been for the fact that the week's rations arrived the day before. On Sundays, as on other days, from the time the sheep went out to the time the sheep came home, he had next to nothing to do except to move about in and round the silent hut.

But now, in this queerly crowded little city, in an intenser solitude than surrounded that dull shepherd's cot, several denominations had the opportunity of worshipping God in their own ways, and largely and reverently were the services attended, although the places in which they were held were very primitive sanctuaries; sometimes simply the arch of heaven, cathedral-columned with white gum-tree boles.

When, for the first time for months, Fred heard, morning and evening, the once-familiar words of his own Church, his heart went back to England with a leap which brought a lump into his throat.

The gold-buyer advised Fred before he started as a digger on his own account, to work for wages, in order to gain experience, and gladly gave him employment on a claim belonging to himself as a hired hand. In this way Fred supported himself, and put a little into his pocket, the first time he handled pick and shovel, whilst some men who were working for themselves earned nothing—were simply eating up their little capital, which

they saw with heart-sick, almost despairing horror, dwindling day by day; and others, by labours far greater, earned far less money than they would have been in receipt of if they had stuck to their original callings. But it was not to be a hired labourer that Fred had come to the diggings. That was not the way to make a fortune, win Helen, and give his mother a comfortable home once more.

In about a month's time he started with a mate on a prospecting expedition up the river. They had bought a horse cheap to carry their flour, tea, sugar, &c., of which they took as little as possible, trusting to supplement their commissariat with bush birds, beasts, and so on, and beyond their guns, necessary tools, and a blanket a-piece, they had scarcely any personal swag.

It was not long before they came upon signs of gold, and though they had not found it in paying quantities, the traces grew, or they fancied they grew, richer, and so the two went on merrily, especially as they had scarcely diminished any of their purchased provisions, except the tea, which they used very sparingly. They shot—not for sport, but for food, since they wished to make their powder and shot, as well as other things, go as far as possible—wallabies, wild turkeys, black swans—going in for size in their game. Fred's mate was a thorough bushman, understood black fellows' ways as well as whites', and taught his comrade not to despise snake grilled on wood-ashes when it had been killed before it had a chance of biting itself. He taught him how to find honey, and water lodged in the hollows of the bottle-tree, and what wild plants to gather for their seeds or fruits, their stems and leaves, or roots, and what to avoid, as table vegetables, and how to bake and pound and so on those that needed cooking.

But they mounted to a more sterile region, where nothing but gloomy trees seemed to grow, and from which animal life also was almost absent. Here they had to live solely on their stores, and these began to diminish at a rate which made them pull long faces. Poor old Shag, who had accompanied his master, did his best to cater for himself, but was obliged to content himself with short commons.

One morning, after camping at a water-hole in a steep rise, as they were toiling up the rest of the hill, their horse fell dead lame.

Fred's mate gave a rueful whistle. "Tell 'ee what 'tis, Fred," he said. "I'll rise the ridge, and have a look round, and when I come back I'll tell 'ee what I'm goin' to do. You stay here with the horse."

When Jem came back, he said, decisively, "Tell 'ee what it is I'm goin' to do."

"Well?" asked Fred, eagerly.

"I'm a-goin' back, *that's* what I'm goin' to do," answered Jem. "Nothin' but trees like these 'ere, goin' up an' down, up an' down, all round as far as ever you can see. Next to ne'er a sign o' water or grub. We'll turn the old horse loose; mayhap he'll manage to pick up summut for hisself, and hobble down to better feed than this when he's rested hisself a bit; anyhow, we can't afford to wait for him. There's just about left to carry us back to a livinger land than this."

But Fred wouldn't hear of returning until he too had had a look from the top of the hill. True enough, there was nothing but bush to be seen on all sides, undulating like a vast gloomy sea beneath the sunny sky, whose brightness it did not reflect. But Fred had caught sight of a gully, the trend and general look of which somehow reminded him of Roper's Gully, and when he returned to his comrade, he told him that he was resolved not to beat a retreat until he had explored this gully.

"Don't be a fool, man!" said the other.

But Fred was obstinate.

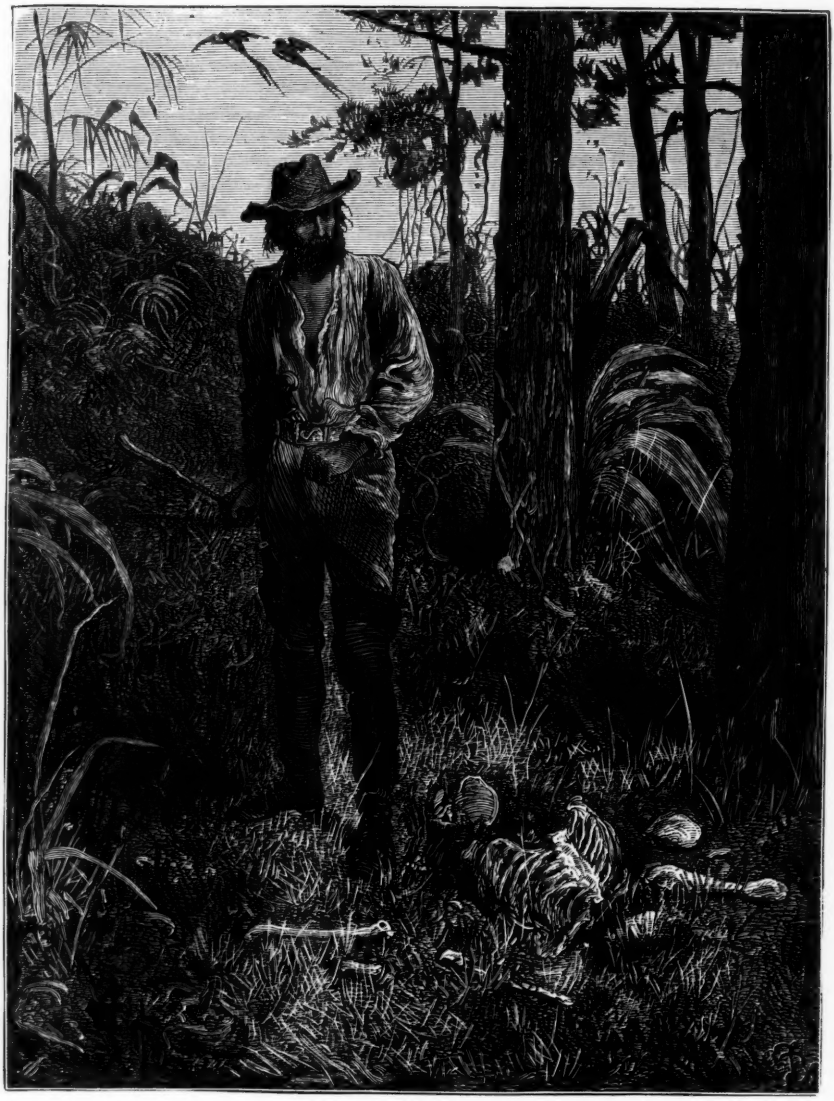
"Well, mate," then said the old bushman, "I can't take 'ee by the scruff o' the neck an' trot 'ee on afore me as I should like to do, so we'll share fair an' part friends. You shall have the bigger half, for you're like to want grub wuss than me, though we may both want it precious bad, I guess."

He took the bags off the horse, took off its halter also, and the poor thing stumbled off on three legs between the trees in search of something more succulent and satisfying than it had lately had.

When the stores had been divided, and the two men had thrown their respective shares across their shoulders, Fred's mate said to him, "Do 'ee be persuaded at last, and let's cut back together 's fast 's ever we can go. Can't be such wonderful fast goin' anyhow."

But Fred would not be persuaded; so the two shook hands and parted, Fred toiling up the hill with Shag after him, and Jem hurrying down.

When Fred had found, or thought that he had found, the gully which he had seen from the hill, he planted his stores at the foot of a tree, which he marked for a starting-point, and made excursions from it for a day or two. Having hit, as he supposed, the right track, he dug up his stores, and followed his lead, at first very hopeful; but as time passed on, his hopes died away like a failing pulse. Water was very scarce. An awful stillness brooded in the wide-spreading bush, not the hush of a dense moist English wood, but the arid silence of a seemingly limitless forest of tall trees, whose unshadowing leaves let through the sunshine to parch the bladeless ground and raise an almost chokingly dry aroma from clumps of scrub that looked as sappy as if they had been



(*Drawn by* F. BARNARD.)

"What is this?" – *p.* 9.

made of tinned iron and verdigrised copper. Fewer and fewer birds flashed across the blazing sunlight. In some places even the hum of insects could scarce be heard. Shag grew weaker and weaker, and one day did not return from his self-caterings. Fred's allowances had been getting less and less as his load lightened; he ate scarce enough to keep life in his body, for he well knew now that there was no going back for him. What he had must carry him on to some place where he could find succour, or he must die alone in that awful wilderness.

Helen, mother!—his fate would be utterly unknown to them. They would think he had forgotten them. The thought was harrowing to him in his passionate craving for sympathy.

God only would see him die; and brought thus all alone, as it were, beneath the Omniscient ken, he shuddered. What had his life been? Not so bad as scores, not worse than hundreds, perhaps, but still no better—a mere frivolous, self-seeking existence.

He was faint from lack of food, but hunger was not his most poignant pang. Thirst often maddened him, and he wandered wildly right and left in quest of the impossible water which purled in his semi-delirious ears. His life became a nightmare, through which there ran, like a ghastly fugue, a constantly recurring—"It's all real, and lonely death alone can break the spell."

One day he *felt*, so to speak, that a dog was following him. He thought that Shag had come back; but when he turned, he saw a warrigal slouching after him. He was bushman enough to know what *that* meant. The beast would never venture to attack him so long as he had life enough left in him to move a limb, but was patiently following him in quiet speculation that he would soon drop helpless.

He raised his languid arm in sudden fear and wrath, and gave an unearthly cry that scared himself. The vermin shied, and shambled off to the scrub; still ever and anon Fred saw, or fancied that he saw, the horrid dingo dogging him as, according to sailors' superstition, sharks follow fever-stricken ships.

But, oh joy! what is this? A battered powder flask, a rusty buckle; and here there are other little signs of human occupancy. Eagerly Fred ran down the tracks, and soon came to some well-picked bleached human bones, littered about in a tumbled jumble of mouldering once human-owned rubbish. He did not wait to bury the remains of the predecessor, or predecessors, who portended his own fate. He made an attempt to rush past, and then——

He remembered nothing more until he came to himself on a bed somewhere, and heard a voice that somehow seemed familiar, saying, "That's right. Now, we're quits, lad, and I'm as jolly as a sand-boy. Fireball was taken last week, and you'll soon be as right as a trivet. I grudged those two young Parkinsons getting off, but I won't, now you're coming round. They're sure to be caught sooner or later—justice 'll overtake them, I'll warrant. You're a sharp lad in some things, but never you go prospecting again on your own hook till you know the lay of the land. It was the merest chance in the world I took it into my head to rise the Barren Spur, instead of heading round it. From what I can make out of the way you started and headed, it beats me how in the name of common sense you could ever have worked round there. But there you were, going on like a mad thing. It's lucky you were next door to starved, or you'd have floored me and the two that were with me. We had to hunt you like a kangaroo, and when we'd run you down at last, you fought like an old-man with its back against a tree. But here you are, safe and sound, thank God! *I* say it, and I'm sure you ought to, lad!"

It was, of course, Mr. Wilkins who spoke. Fred was lying at the back of a building which the gold-dealer had put up, as blended gold-office, bank, and store, on a creek fifty or sixty miles from Roper's Gully, where another diggers' township was growing up.

Of course it took Fred some time to recover strength; but before Christmas he was working half-shares with his old mate of the prospecting expedition in a claim which was turning out remarkably rich. Fred had already netted a considerable sum, which his friend Mr. Wilkins had enabled him to place at the best of the high interest then procurable in the colonies. He was anticipating a good bit more with certainty. Still it was not exactly a merry Christmas which Fred spent with his good mate in their diggers' tent, where they feasted on fowl and salad that had put a price into the pocket of the industrious Chinaman who had raised them which would have made an English gardener and poultry breeder of that time open round eyes of envious wonder—and drank, "Absent Friends" in (what was paid for at any rate as) the very best champagne. The toast was not needed to remind him that it was some time since he had heard from his mother, who had once written regularly by every mail. He forgot that after the first mail or two he had been a very remiss correspondent. As soon as, in his own phrase, his luck had turned, he had written eagerly enough, but previously he had soon grown weary of writing, to quote from himself again, "merely to say, I'm still alive, and still unlucky." Nevertheless, his mother's silence made him very sore, for he hungered after news of her—and Helen.

CHAPTER III.

THE claim continued to yield remarkably. When Fred was starting for Sydney next year during the winter, *i.e.*, mid-year, rains, he said to his mate, "After the rains I shall be back. I mean to go on working with you, old fellow, until the year's out. Then I shall sell my claim, and be off home. I shall think I've made my pile—at any rate, enough to begin with, for that's what I chiefly want it for."

When Fred, however, reached Sydney he found waiting for him at the post-office, a letter, part of which ran thus :—

* * * I am sorry you have received so few of my letters, since I have written by nearly every, if not every, mail. I suppose they must have miscarried, for you wrote regularly at first, and I have received so very very few since you landed in Australia. I received two you wrote on the voyage—one you sent by a ship, and another posted at the Cape. The others, I think, must have miscarried, like mine. There have been so many alterations in the arrangements. How thankful we were to receive the one you wrote at the end of last year! But, oh, what scenes and sufferings you must have gone through! I thank God night and day for His goodness in preserving you in that wonderful way from the most awful death in that dreadful wood. Do not you feel yourself bound, my dear boy, to devote yourself especially to His service, after so mighty and marked a deliverance? And to think that my Fred should have been a mere drudge to common shepherds! Are you quite sure, my dear boy, that what you are doing now will end in anything? I should like to have you back, rich or poor, for I am growing old, and I miss my boy. I cannot help thinking that you would be quite as likely to get rich in dear old England as in an outlandish country like Australia. Of course, I should like you to come back at once rich, for your own sake. Dearest Helen, who has been a great comfort to me, is greatly tried. I believe she loves you as much as ever, but she cannot help wondering a little that all this time you have not done anything to enable you to claim her. You see, dear boy, you have been away from England three Christmases, and yet you seem just as far off as ever from doing anything in Australia, and Mr. and Mrs. Wilson declare that if you are not back by Christmas able to make Helen such an offer as an honest man like you would like to, she must give up all thoughts of you. They do not wish her to take your cousin Philip if she dislikes him, but they say that it is preposterous for her to tie herself up for ever for your sake. But I believe that, now that they cannot get you, they would very much like her to marry him. He is a respectable young man, and there cannot be a doubt that he is very fond of her. We ought not to be prejudiced, ought we, Fred dear? After all, he only took what the law gave him, and we should have done the same, shouldn't we? only perhaps in a pleasanter way. But I must confess that I should not like him to have my Helen.* * *

When he had read thus far in his mother's letter, Fred made a hasty calculation as to what he could get for his share in the claim, and added to this what he had realised from it. The two together came to a very pretty little sum indeed—enough to enable him to farm at home more land as a tenant than his cousin farmed as a landlord. Fred had all his old love of an English farmer's life, but he had come to understand that money is invested in English land not as a pecuniarily remunerative investment, but for sentiment of some kind; and the only English acres for which Fred had any particular sentiment were those he could not get, because his cousin held them. Fred marched off and offered his half-share for sale, soon found a purchaser at a trifle higher figure than he had calculated, and as soon as the purchase was completed, made his arrangements accordingly.

The first was to take his passage in the first vessel bound for London. The war had deprived the colonies of their mail steamers.

When all his preparations for the voyage had been made, when his good-bye letters and presents for his up-country friends had been despatched, when his colonial presents for his English friends had been purchased and packed, he found himself left with a fortnight on his hands, and nothing to do in it. During this time he rushed about the busy city, trying to make believe that he, too, had some business there; he lounged in the beautiful Botanic Gardens, chafing at the inactivity of the ships of war moored in Farm Cove, and the merchantmen anchored in the stream. But at last the eventful day arrived. The good ship, flying the Blue Peter at her fore-royal mast-head, had cast off her moorings from the Circular Quay, her anchor was coming up with a clink and a chorus, the tug was fussing alongside, eager to be off. The decks were crowded with passengers and passengers' friends, some of them prepared to go outside the Heads before they said good-bye. Of the cabin passengers all were well-to-do, a few exceedingly fortunate; of the intermediates, the majority the reverse—colonial failures; but regarded with eyes of envy by still greater unfortunates lingering on the quay, wishing, how bitterly, that *they* had money enough to get away from what to them had proved so deceptive a land of promise. As Fred's ship steadied on upright keel down the beautiful harbour in the wake of the panting tug, she passed a ship with a swarm of just-arrived emigrants hanging over the bulwarks. How—rejoicing at having at last reached El Dorado—they stared in utter astonishment at the excited home-passengers hurrahing with frantic joy at the thought of having got away from it.

But the ship was at sea; the tug had cast her off; valedictory friends were being conveyed to it in whale-boats, which bounded like corks on the huge billows which heave outside Port Jackson Heads.

Having gathered on the steamer's deck, they gave the ship three hearty good-bye cheers, were answered from the ship, and then she gracefully shook out her white wings, and swept off in her long ocean flight.

As Fred, though not generally sentimental, watched the Australian shore growing dimmer and dimmer, things in general grew dream-like to him. It was a dream that he had ever come to Australia, that he had ever lived in Australia; it was a dream that he was going home to England—England was a dream. The only thing that seemed real was that he was out at sea, on board a ship,

with the draught of the mainsail blowing down his neck in spite of the raised collar of his pilot jacket.

Then followed the usual sea-medley of pleasantnesses and unpleasantnesses. At first all things were at sixes and sevens; everybody was new to everything and everybody else. But folks got their sea-legs, grew used to one another, things settled down, and there dawned a premature gleam of universal brotherhood and peace. Next, parties and private friendships were formed, and broken up, and re-formed, with a considerable amount of evil-speaking and heart-burning all round. There was sometimes a good deal of wrangling on board, sometimes a good deal of fun; pretty generally a good deal of *ennui*. The general temper of a ship's company depends largely on the rate at which the ship travels and the state of the weather.

There was plenty of weather to try the temper before Fred's ship got round the Horn. On she plunged through leaden gloom, always carrying away something or other, shipping seas, or getting "pooped" by monsters that cascaded down smashed skylights, made nothing of covered hatchways, and set everything afloat in a dirty deluge, to the music of crashed crockery and jingling tin-ware. But she struggled past the purple-frowning Horn, through "the roaring Forties," up into the regions of rainbow-painted silvery spray, seas like a solution of sulphate of copper, broad-vanned albatrosses, gauzy-flashing silvery-splashing flying-fish, filmy white sails gliding by in the distance like ghosts of ships; delicious all night long on the deck, and dip into the huge, vat-like tubful of fresh-pumped salt water in the morning!

Still the voyage was growing wearisome through having been protracted, and Fred was longing to be home. On the night on which the mate told him Charles's Wain would first be visible, Fred went out on to the bowsprit to see it rise.

Wind, water, weather generally, roughened greatly as he drew near home; but he felt all the better for that. He rejoiced greatly when he got into the converging crowd of vessels which excites a London-bound voyager, who has crossed far-off, almost sailless seas, much as the rustic stage-coach traveller used to be excited when he got into the throng of vehicles which told him that in a very short time he would be in the great city, whose multitudinous lamp-lights had been growing stronger and stronger on the sky before him, "flaring like a dreary dawn." What a leap Fred's heart gave when he was fairly in the thick of the converging vessels, running up Channel by night, watching ship-lights on all sides of him, dancing over the black sea against the black sky.

On the following day his ship, having taken her pilot in the course of it, brought up for the night off Deal, whose line of shore-lights twinkled in feeble emulation of the frost-sharpened stars above; and a shore-boat having come off, Fred went back in it, and spent the first night of his return to England in a Deal hotel.

How strange it seemed to be awoke in the night by the waits, and in the morning by a knock at the door, and a musical "Here's your hot water, sir."

Fred had grown a luxuriant beard which defied such effeminate appliances.

How cosy was the clean, nicely-appointed English breakfast, before the clearly-glowing, roaring, flapping sea-coal fire in the comfortable old coffee-room. Fred, however, did not linger over it, but hurried off for London.

Leaving behind the old castles, the boatmen lounging beside their boats drawn up on the pebble sea-wall, the sunlit Downs in which some of the anchored ships had hoisted their flags as if they meant to spend their Christmas Day there, others were weighing anchor with their tugs fuming about them as if impatient to spend their Christmas Day in the Thames, and others again were quietly gliding past north and south, as if commerce took no count of holidays, he rattled behind horses whose hoofs clattered on the marble-hard turnpike-road, and behind the snorting iron horse, whose breath hung in snowy rolling wreaths in the keen air, through pleasant Kent.

"How old, how trim, how pretty, how funny, how beautiful, how jolly it all is!" he thought, as he passed ruined hospitals and hermitages, beam-and-plaster houses, leaning over to one another across the streets as if they wanted to whisper secrets, Romney Marsh sheep munching frosted turnips within iron hurdles, the Stour sparkling in the sunshine, ivy-clad Richborough Castle, Canterbury's venerable towers and countless gables, the wigwams of stacked hop-poles glittering with rime, the thatched cottages clustered round the little churches open for morning service, the red-comfortered, heavy-heeled, smockfrockkins, grinding in merry line along the black slides on the ponds and ditches.

All the holly had not been picked, its glossy leaves and coral berries gleamed and glowed here and there in the stripped hedges, over which philosophical old horses and bullocks looked down with grave wonder into the little winding lanes, whose general stillness was startled by the merriment of passing knots of holiday-making pedestrians, and carriage company crowded three in a gig. Other horses and cattle kept Christmas more comfortably, in deep-littered straw-yards, in company with pecking poultry, and pigs snoring in the sunniest corners on their sides. The ducks seemed to quack more cheerfully than usual as

they waddled down to the holes which had been broken for them in the frozen horse-ponds. The geese and turkeys kept up a cheerful gabble and gobble round the rick-surrounded farmhouses, as if they were rejoicing greatly because Christmas had come again, and yet they were alive. Even an impounded donkey had had an armful of sweet hay thrown him, and was keeping Christmas after his fashion. Rusty implements rested in the silent fields, and dim blue-and-red wagons seemed to be dozing in the old cart-lodges, whose dusty old cob-webs had been turned into strings of silver and glass beads by the frost that was melted into flashing jewels, cushioned on greenest velvet where the sunshine lay warmest on the moss-patches upon their black mouldy thatch.

Every now and then, as he was whirled through the restful and yet rejoicing country, Fred caught a glimpse or a hint of some family or friendly gathering.

"My word!" he said to himself, "this is a different Christmas Day from my last at the Creek. It 's like a dream. It 's jolly to see folks take things so easy; they lift their legs as if it didn't matter for five minutes or so when they put them down again. And how red their cheeks are! I wonder what poor old Jem is doing now? But, bless my heart! he's turned in by this time—it'll soon be to-morrow morning at the Creek. I'm glad I shan't wake there. It 's jolly to be back, and Christmas Day 's just the time to come. Only I wish I could have come a little sooner; it makes a fellow's mouth water to see all this hand-shaking and kissing, and no one to give you a welcome. However, my turn is to come, I hope."

His idea of the "jollity" of an English Christmas was not intensified as he got near the end of the first stage of his journey. Christmas spent in the cramped murky streets over which the trains rumble into the London Bridge station must be a depressing festival.

The only cheerful face he saw amongst the porters—working whilst others played—was that of the one who called his cab, and whom, not having yet learned the English tariff of douceurs, he tipped with diggers' liberality. The driver noticed the gratuity which the porter had received, and regulated Mr. Fred's cab-fare accordingly. Neither did London generally seem to Fred a particularly lively place to spend Christmas in during his rapid transit from one station to another.

However, he was soon bowling into the country again on another line. There was only another occupant of the carriage in which he sat, and Fred was much amused by the queerly mingled look with which his fellow-traveller regarded him, half of deep sympathy, ready to be proffered at a moment's notice, half of profound distrust.

When, during the latter part of their journey, the ice was sufficiently broken to allow of a little chat between the two, Fred's travelling companion anxiously seized, or rather made an opportunity of explaining, that *he* was travelling on "imperatively urgent business, which could not be postponed even at this festive season."

To the average respectable Englishman, for any one to be taking a railway journey of any length on Christmas Day who is not hurrying, a belated guest, to some home, or hospitable friend's, or who is not suddenly summoned from Christmas festivities by some such call as, say, the impending death of a very near relative, is, *per se*, sufficient proof of the traveller's utter disrespectability, inasmuch as it shows that he has nowhere to go to—belongs to nobody.

When Fred had explained his Christmas travelling by saying that he had just come off a long voyage, his interlocutor's manner relaxed.

"Going far down the line?" he asked.

"To Parcham," answered Fred; "but then, unless I can hire a trap of some kind to go faster—and I suppose that will be hard at Christmas-time—I shall have a long ten miles' ride by omnibus."

"*Omnibus*, my dear sir! There is no omnibus at Parcham except the one that runs to the station from the 'George.' May I ask where you want to get to?"

"Restington."

"Oh, then, you oughtn't to have taken your ticket to Parcham. You must have been abroad some little time. The Restington 'bus was taken off quite two years ago. You should have booked to Ponder's Road. That's a little station they've opened between this and Parcham. That's where you must get out, but you will have to leave your luggage and walk. There's no trap to be got there. Pretty little place, Restington."

"Very, to my fancy," answered Fred

"I've a slight acquaintance with Mr. Philip Leicester, of Brock Grange; do you know him?"

"I've heard the name," said Fred.

"Highly respectable man. He's to be married in the spring, I'm told. Time he was; and it isn't the fault of his wife that-is-to-be that he was not married ever so long ago. She has been throwing herself at his head until he's tired, and so he has given in. He must be a brave man—rather it was him than me. None but the brave deserve the fair. She's pretty, I've heard, though she's getting oldish—and not a penny. Watson, or Wilson, or some such name. There was a cousin of this Philip's, as rich as herself, who wanted to have her, but, of course, Miss was too wide-awake for that, and then the young fool went and drowned himself, or took to drinking, or ran away to Australia or somewhere, when he'd robbed his poor old mother of the last penny she had left."

Such are the veracious histories which a man travelling incognito may hear of himself and his friends.

"Ah, here's Ponder's Road!" added the male gossip, as the train pulled up in a little station. "Sorry to lose the pleasure of your company. Good evening."

"Why should I?" asked amused Fred, who had not yet recovered the English sense of graduated social proprieties.

"Oh, if it's all the same to you, old John will be glad enough of the job," answered the porter, with diminished respect; and Fred started for Restington, seated beside John, in his ramshackle little



"For this my son was dead, and is alive again."—p. 15.

"Good evening. Thank you for your *information*," said Fred, drily, as he stepped upon the already star-lit little platform.

"You're lucky, sir," when the train was gone, said the station-master, who was also porter and general factotum of the little place. "Old John Bines of Restington is here with his pony, waiting for a box that ought to have come yesterday. He'll take your luggage, and you too, sir, and glad, if you don't mind riding in a light cart."

pony-cart. Old John had not recognised him at once, as Fred had expected, and so he did not say who he was. He had plenty to occupy his thoughts without the old man's chat, as the pony trotted merrily along the hard road, with Charles's Wain spread broadly brightly golden on the sky.

"Beats the Southern Cross out and out!" Fred muttered to himself; "you've to look for *that*."

Old John was shy, and therefore had not ventured to begin a conversation with his strange

passenger from town; but old John was also inquisitive, and therefore listened curiously to his queer talking to himself.

"Ah, there's the old Drewry Barn!" said Fred presently, noting another landmark which showed him he was nearing his goal. Old John pricked up his ears.

Soon afterwards Fred muttered, "And there's the 'Fox under the Hill.'" This was too much for old John to bear in silence. He was driving with whip and reins in one hand, the other for warmth's sake being thrust deep into his pocket. Raising reins, whip, and forefinger all together, he made an attempt to touch the brim of his Jem Crow hat, and—still not venturing to express his conviction affirmatively—inquired, "Been in these parts afore, sir?"

"Once upon a time—ever so long ago."

"Well," continued old John, not satisfied, "I was born and bred in these parts, and man and boy I've lived in 'em pretty nigh as long as anybody, but I can't recollect 'ee, sir; though that aint so wonderful, if you was only staying somewheres for a bit, or passing through as a stranger like, as you might be now. But if you ever lived as you might say, sir—downright lived here—it beats me as I shouldn't recollect 'ee, it do."

"Let me see, now," said Fred, for fun, "isn't your name Ephraim?"

"I knew I was right!" triumphantly exclaimed the old man. "Anybody who knew anything about these parts, would know as I'm old John Bines."

"Well, I didn't say your name wasn't Bines."

"Ah, but you said as it was *Ephraim*, sir," chuckled old John.

As they drew nearer to the village Fred pointed to a house in the distance, the windows of which were almost all lighted up, and asked what place that was.

Again the old man chuckled. "I knowed as you couldn't ha' lived long in these parts," he said. "Why, that's Brock Grange, sir."

"And what of that?"

"Why, sir!" exclaimed the astonished and somewhat scandalised old man, "that's the grandest house we've got in the parish: we haven't got no real squires."

"Who lives there?"

"Leicesters, as long as ever I can remember, and my father afore me. Mr. Philip 's got it now, and it aint for me to say a word agin' him, but a better man had it afore him, and that was his uncle; and though the lor give it to Mr. Philip, there was another nevvy the old gentleman had brought up to look for it, but the lor went agin him. He was a nice young chap, full o' sport, and not a mite o' pride. Many 's the game he 's played me when he was a boy. Run off with my cart, he would, and hide, when I'd left it standin' outside a place. But the lor went agin' him, and he went abroad, and most like he's dead now, poor chap, for his mother never talks to me about him now, though she's main fond of him, and used to talk about him fast enough when he fust went. They say he give up to the old lady all the lor had left him afore he went. But here's the Grange, sir. What a sight o' company there must be, sure-ly! You can see 'm bobbin' back'ards and for'ards on the blinds."

"Is Mr.—Mr.—Lincoln, didn't you call him?—married?"

"No, Mr. Philip aint—Leicester's the name, sir—but they say he's like to be, come Easter, and to a young lady that's main good to me, and as that poor Master Fred I was telling 'ee about was main fond on, and it's my belief she liked him too; but now, they say, she's took up with Mr. Philip. There's no accounting for women's taste, sir, as I used to say to my old 'ooman; but she'd take me up and say, 'No, there *aint*, or else I should never ha' had you, John.' Mayhap, the young lady's going to take Mr. Philip, but she looks at him, to my thinking, much as if he was a toäd as she wouldn't touch with a pair o' tongs. But where shall I put 'ee down, sir? There's only one inn here where such as you would like to sleep."

"No, John," said Fred, suddenly; "don't take me to the 'Woolpack'—drive me to mother's place."

The old man almost bounded from the cart. "You've give me such a start, sir," he said. "Yes, you're Master Fred fast enough. That's your own nateral voice. But how on earth was I to know 'ee wi' all that hair about your face like a fuzz bush? I'm main glad to see 'ee back. I hope you've done well in furrin' parts, sir."

"I might have done worse," answered Fred, and he gave the old man a sovereign for his fare. John soon put down Fred most reverentially at his mother's, and then tottered about to disseminate the startling news of which the old carrier had the first-hand monopoly.

Mrs. Leicester was not alone—Helen was with her. As she had been "a good girl," and consented, in case Fred should not make his appearance as required that Christmas, to comply with her parents' wishes—at least to the extent of giving him up—she had been allowed to decline her invitation to the Christmas party at Brock Grange, and to pay what was supposed to be a kind of farewell visit to her old friend, Mrs. Leicester.

They had spent a very sad pensive Christmas Day together, the chief comfort of it being their liking for one another, and the tie of common affection which connected them.

In spite of his beard, they knew Fred at once. The widow caught her truant in her arms, and

pressed him to her breast and lips, but could say nothing until she had fallen upon her knees, and then all that she could utter articulately was, "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."

The lovers' greetings may be imagined. It seems to me to take the bloom off such pretty scenes to describe them in print.

News spreads like wildfire in a village. Long before Mr. Philip Leicester's party broke up all his guests had heard that Mr. Frederick had come back from Australia. Mr. and Mrs. Wilson, therefore, were not startled at seeing him when they called for Helen, but they were greatly astonished by his news.

The five stopped up talking late into the night, and when they parted, Fred was once more Helen's accepted suitor.

Old Mr. Wilson at first seemed a little vexed when he could no longer even pretend to be sceptical as to the reality of Fred's success; but his tone soon changed, and he summed up matters by saying:—

"Well, I'm glad my girl will have her whim; it went against our hearts to cross her, and you know, Fred, we always liked you better than the other. I only wish you'd got the Grange, then you'd have no rent to pay. After all, though, it's better to earn your money than to heir it; you're a deal likelier to make more of it."

Philip did not break his heart, but rapidly transferred his tepid affections to another young lady; and when Fred was settled, with his wife and mother, on a first-rate farm in the neighbourhood, known throughout the country-side as "a very warm man, sir; a fine, pushing fellow, for he made his money in a month, they say, with his own pick and shovel, out at the Gold Diggings," Mrs. Philip Leicester was very fond of inviting Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Leicester to Brock Grange, for some reason taking scrupulous care never to omit her address in her notes of invitation.

"WHERE IS THE PROMISE OF HIS COMING?"

BY THE RIGHT REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL.

2 Peter iii. 4.

AMONG the serious questions which the great festival of the Lord's first coming brings with it, none perhaps at this particular time is felt more—felt, though not always expressed—than this which forms the text of these meditations. He has come once, even as ancient prophecy foretold; will He return again, as He Himself promised? Is this a real promise? Will it be verified truly and completely, or have the words to be taken at less than their literal meaning? and is mere vague expectation, if even that, to take the place of the sure and certain hope that "He that cometh will come, and will not tarry"?

These are days when such questions are asked with increasing depth of interest; and it is well at times to try and answer them. So let us, at this holy and happy season, when we look back on a holy past, look forward to the blessed future, and turn to the thoughts which such a truly searching question must at once awaken in the heart of every thinking man among us.

"Where is the promise of His coming?"

O serious and, in some respects, dreadful question!—question strange and incongruous at all times! Strange indeed in those early days, when some were yet living who could have answered with all the fervour of an assured soul and spirit—"The promise? Where? Why, heard we it not ofttimes from His own blessed lips? on the wayside as we walked with Him; on Olivet as we sat with Him; in the upper room ere we sang with Him our last hymn? Yea, heard we it not from angels' lips when the cloud that shall bear him back again was receiving Him out of our sight?"

But what of the answer of our own days? God be praised, my dear readers, that as yet the bulk of the Christian community would answer readily and heartily such a question as that of our text if solemnly addressed to them. If the words of these mockers of the past were now to be directed to a Christian congregation, I will not believe that there would be much hesitation about the reply. If it were now said to us, "Where is the promise of Christ's coming?" would not our answer be promptly and eagerly given—"Where? Why, everywhere! In the blessed Word of God; in the prophecies of the Old Testament, and in the revelations of the New Testament; in the deep anticipatory longings of the human heart; in the signs of the times; in present developments; in the hopes of the future, in the fears of the future; in the very course and current of all human things, written word and

unwritten presage alike bearing their mystic witness that He that cometh will come, and will not tarry."

Such I doubt not would as yet be the answer of this and every Christian congregation gathered together in our land on Christmas Day. But will there be this loyal response always?—nay, more, are there not many now who might outwardly answer with a conventional affirmation, and yet be conscious of a doubting hesitating heart within that could not shake off its secret uneasiness at the coarse yet plausible reference to experience which gives force to the scoffer's question?

Let us proceed to consider the question in connection with the reasons, secret or avowed, for its being put forward. Why did these scoffers put such a question, and on what did they found it? The question is worth answering.

First, who were they?

Some knowledge of their principles may be of use to us in estimating the force of their tacit objections, and in forewarning us, if it should indeed appear that the scoffers of the days of St. Peter present some outlines of resemblance to the doubters of our own times; and if similarly mixed motives and principles are apparently to be discerned in those who, whether in earlier or later days, deem that the promise of the Lord's coming is out of harmony with the course of his own providence. Who were these scoffers of the last days, and what were their principles?

Perhaps the question cannot be answered with complete precision. Learned men, as probably many of us know, have identified these doubters with early sects connected with the many varying forms of Gnostic errors.

Some have seen in the description of St. Peter the characteristics of the corrupt class that associated themselves with the name of Carpocrates; some have thought that the error of the Sadducee had won for itself some supporters even in the Christian community; some have thought that the licentious Nicolaitan of the Apocalypse is here more especially designated and condemned. Such attempts to identify these scoffers with known classes of early heretics may be more or less plausible, but with such things we need not now concern ourselves. The Apostle has clearly delineated the principles of those evil men, and it is these principles and not the mere name with which they might have been associated, that it is now our object to consider. These principles, as I have said, are clearly defined. They involved evil both in its *practical* and in its *speculative* form. The hapless men that are represented as putting the question, were, on the one hand, lawless and corrupt in life and practice, and on the other, doubters in fundamental truths and impugners the most consolatory article of the Christian's creed—the return of the Lord who died for us. *So* this powerful epistle depicts these men; such in principle were they from whom the question emanated—corrupt and lawless in life and practice, perverted in faith, and doubters in first principles.

Oh, my brethren, what a hint, what a significant hint is there in this union between corrupt life and false faith! How warningly this Epistle reminds us that speculative misbelief is often the direct issue and outcoming of fleshly sin, and that sensuality and worldliness often form the dreary background of what, on the first view, may seem only to be doctrinal or speculative error! What teaching there is for the present in this simple delineation of the past! What a strange and even dreadful light it seems to throw on the apparently marked increase in crime, and especially in sins of the flesh, of which we seem to have now so much melancholy evidence, and in the apparently equally marked development of novel and dangerous opinions, claiming—just as the opinions condemned in the Epistle claimed—a sort of justification in the result of so-called philosophical observation and inquiry. "Where is the promise of His coming? Where? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." In other words, "Experience is a safer guide than the revelation of God."

Verily there is a teaching in these errors of the past to which we of the present shall indeed be wise to attend; there are combinations now which present to us such striking reproductions of all that the apostles denounced long ago, that no wise and sober man can fail to regard them with the deepest anxiety and disquietude. The same evil principles, the same union of evil principles, though apparently standing in no natural connection; the same confident appeal to experimental knowledge; the same reliance on intuitions rather than on revealed truth; the same disinclination to admit the change or suspension of apparently known laws; the same hapless issue in the

denial of the most holy and most consolatory truths.

Let us follow further this instructive line of thought.

We have spoken of the principles of these men, and we begin to feel the inward and secret reason of their scoffing question, "Where is the promise of His coming?" *Could they wish Him to come?* Could they, who walked (as the Apostle specifies) in the lust of uncleanness, desire to behold the Lord of the holy and the pure? Could they, who vaunted of liberty, and were the slaves of corruption, bear, even in fleeting fancy, the thought of the return of Him who cometh quickly, and whose reward is with Him to give to every man as his work shall be. No! the whole course of their life and practice made them dread that coming, and dread of that coming led them to doubt that coming, and doubt expressed itself and shaped itself in the sort of outwardly avowed reason on which the doubt is assumed to rest. But observe that the real reason, though it may be the scarcely realised reason, lies in the background. The doubt assumes the outward form of the words immediately following the text; it makes its appeal to experience; it alludes perhaps to their current speculation; and as it appears before us it wears the garb of semi-philosophical deduction; it asks, as if in the tone of honest and anxious inquiry, "What can be the meaning of a promise that stands in such complete opposition to the ordinary course of things?" All seems outwardly fair and specious, but doubt and the reasoning on which that doubt expresses itself, both really come from an inward corruption of heart—either from proud self-will or from some of the many forms of sensuality that are alluded to in earlier portions of the Epistle. St. Peter, in one clause, lays bare the true and inner reason of the doubting question. One clause tells all. "Scoffers," he says, "shall come in the last days"—scoffers, *walking after their own lusts*, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? *Walking after their own lusts!* Ah, there lies the real ground of all doubt and query! That godless walk leads to the godless question. Self and selfishness either in some more refined or some coarser form, gives the first impulse to the inward scepticism. It is most worthy of notice that St. Jude especially marks the same characteristic in the mockers against whom his short but powerful epistle is mainly directed. Nay, more, he refers to it as forming part of the solemn declaration made years before by the Lord's Apostles as being that which men on whom the Holy Ghost had visibly descended, and by whose tongues He vouchsafed to speak, had specified as the concomitant of all spiritual error. "Beloved," says St. Jude, "remember ye the words which were spoken before of the Apostles of Our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, *who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.*" Yea, my brethren, this is the real though unwelcome truth; earthly desires and selfishness in some felt form or other are the associates if not the propagators of the worst forms of doubt. The startling question of the text is here set forth to us in its true light, as the outcoming of an inward consciousness of sin, and as the outward expression of a secret dread of its chastisement. Such things, my brethren, are not unworthy of our most serious thought. Such disclosures may well serve as beacons and warnings in these anxious days of specious doubt. Most gravely may they remind us that much that may claim to be considered philosophical investigation and may ground itself on appeals to so-called critical or scientific principles, may yet be only the natural issue of intellectual pride, self-will, and all that is included in the comprehensive terms specified by two inspired Apostles—man's own ungodly lusts.

Let us, however, not forget to observe as a natural sequel to these meditations, that the holy Apostle has not only supplied us with the clue which we have hitherto followed, but has been moved to record, for the sake of those whose doubts and anxieties may be of a less selfish and less corrupt form, the true answer to the question of the text whenever it presents itself, as it often does, *in the way of a temptation*. When the poor heart says—Where *is* the promise? Will He *ever* come? suns rise and set, moons wax and wane; years fleet onward; generations pass away; centuries are silently added to the long centuries that have elapsed since the promise was uttered—and yet He comes not. All things seem subordinated to order and to law—will there be, can there be, such an infraction of the order of things, such a sudden termination of the whole world's history, as must needs be implied in a literal and visible advent? When the heart in its doubt and disquietude puts to itself such questions, what answer has the Holy

Spirit of God enabled it to minister to its own anxieties? What answers stand recorded in the inspired pages of the Book of Life to the question which forms our text?

Two, dear reader, both deeply comforting and reassuring, both carrying with them conviction to every honest though anxious spirit. First, that the history of the Flood supplies us with an exact parallel—a sudden and judicial termination of the then order of things. Secondly, that what seems to us lengthened delay is not really so; that a thousand years are with God as one fleeting day, and that though we, according to our own human estimate of time, may deem the promise long in being realised, yet that with our heavenly Father it is far far otherwise; nay, more, that what seems delay is but another proof of His boundless mercy, and that He (as the Apostle declares) is "long suffering to us ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." These are the two great answers to the text. These, properly considered, and faithfully estimated, will, with God's grace, minister reassurance to every anxious and inquiring spirit among us. In hours of doubt recall them; in seasons of faintheartedness or of impatience, bear them well in mind. Remember, in the first place, that the reality, the suddenness, and the attendant circumstances of the Lord's coming, are vouched for by another event in the world's history, equally real, sudden, and judicial, of which not only the inspired Word gives a full account, but of which every nation of the world, civilised or uncivilised, has some traditions and some traces. Remember in the second place that the seeming delay is to be accounted for, on the one hand, by man's limited conceptions of duration, and on the other, by the enduring mercy of his Maker, who prolongs the season of probation and repentance.

Such are the answers of an inspired Apostle to all faint or doubting hearts.

Such the answers,—God grant that we may all be enabled savingly to apply them to ourselves. Nay, rather, God grant that we may never need them; that we may be of the happier number of those who neither inquire nor doubt. Yea, God grant that our belief in the Lord's literal and visible advent may ever remain fixed and loyal, and that each day that He vouchsafes to us may be spent in preparation for that which the lapse of every day brings *nearer and yet nearer*. How near it may be we know not. Signs there are, many and mysterious, that might lead us to think that it is not far distant. Strangely increased knowledge, unrest, sanguinary wars, mysterious aggregations, the increasing goodness of the good, and deepening badness of the bad, artificial civilisations thinly covering systematic depravities, frightful and now constantly recurring crimes, and, last of all, and most ominous of all, a gradually declining faith in the miraculous and supernatural, and an increasing unwillingness to accept the Holy Scripture as the blessed Book of final appeal. All these things may well call up strange longings and expectancy in the hearts of the faithful. Yet other things there are, which, calmly considered, must greatly tend to modify excited hopes, and to restrain unauthorised speculations. One thought of the wide realms of heathenism, one minute of reflection on the still hardened heart of Judaism, may well dispose us to think of those times and seasons which the Father has put in His own power with reverential awe and most guarded and most solemn reserve. We may hope, and we may pray; yea, we may behold the developing signs of the times with an increasing glow of blessed expectation and with the quickened pulses of a deepening love—a love that seems to whisper that the time is short—but of anything like defined prognostication of the approach or otherwise of that hour that no man nor angel knoweth, nay, not even the Son of Man in His humanity, we must most carefully and most solemnly beware. It is to the promise itself that we must cleave—the blessed cheering promise—not to mere anticipations of the time or the season when that promise is to be fulfilled. We must show the working and realisation of that promise in our hearts and lives; we must see Him ever as though nigh; we must feel His holy presence as ever ready to be manifested; we must look forward more and more as seeing Him who is invisible. This is our true attitude in a time of failing and endangered faith; the tranquil eye of love fixed on the heavens from which will come the descending King; the heart and conversation there long ago; the treasure there eternally. The tenor of a life then becomes the practical answer to the question. The blessed promise of His coming is seen reflected in daily acts; the deep deep hope breathes in daily words, and burns in daily prayers. We ourselves answer the question as the Coming One would have us answer it: we

answer it by our faith, we answer it by our hope, we answer it by our love. Oh, most of all by our love! It is love for Him that makes what it longs for seem nigh; it is love that by its blessed sympathy makes others feel as we feel; it is love that imparts the holy glow of our own deep longings even to the cold and the careworn; it is love that unites us with all the true and the faithful here below; it is love that binds us in one blessed bond with the waiting saints in the Paradise of God.

THE FIFTH P.

BY THE REV. P. B. POWER, M.A., AUTHOR OF "THE OILED FEATHER," "DINAH'S FIDDLESTICK," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

"THIS here marrying is a serious business," said Mr. Joseph Peggins to his nephew by the mother's side, Mr. Robert, or, as he was commonly called, Bob Ryecroft.

At the time of delivering this sentiment, Mr. Joseph Peggins was standing in front of a young man who was sitting down with a small pot of paint between his knees, which paint he was stirring about with a little piece of stick. It was quite fit that Mr. Joseph Peggins should find his nephew at this work, for painting was his line of business, and the young man aspired some day to be a "Plumber, Painter, and Glazier, with general repairs neatly executed at the shortest notice, and on the most reasonable terms." So far, so good; Mr. Peggins—who had rather a shaky view of young men in general—was pleased to find his nephew Bob at his work; it argued that there might be some hope of him yet. Under the circumstances this was not to be despised; for "when a man was married he was done for," so thought the worthy old gentleman; and because he himself would not be done for by any person, or for any consideration, he had remained single, and desired that his nephew Bob, on whom all his affections were fixed, should do the same.

Mr. Joseph Peggins had been fished for by many hooks, and he had cruelly and basely eaten off many baits, and then swam right away; and had there been any such wholesome institution in the country as a matrimonial police, Mr. Peggins, in the estimation of several ladies of various ages, would not have been allowed to remain at large a single day, but would have had first six months' solitary confinement, and then six months on the treadmill, and then six months of some other general disagreeabilities, it did not exactly matter what.

He had been fished for with mince-pies at Christmas, and roast goose at Michaelmas, and ducks and green peas in the early spring. One cunning single lady had tried to catch him as in a net with an antimacassar, but he swam through the meshes of it as if he were merely the tail of a tadpole. The effect of a teapot on him was most unexpected; to escape all dangers from such a quarter henceforth and for ever, he gave up tea and took to cocoa. As the cocoa agreed with Mr. Peggins remarkably well, he accepted this as a further proof that bachelorhood was the proper thing for man, and that matrimony was altogether a mistake. As to the argument once pressed upon him that the world could not go on unless people married, and that it must come to an end, he replied he was sorry to say there would always be fools enough to keep the world turning, and that if the worst came to the worst, it was business good enough for the world to take care of itself. When a certain Miss Stuff thought to pin him in a corner, and asked him, in a decided tone of voice, one day, "Mr. Joseph Peggins, how *can* you remain single?" she felt as if she had run against a stone wall when she got the freezing answer, "You see, ma'am, I can."

The reader will not wonder that, such being the opinions of Bob Ryecroft's uncle, that gentleman now stood opposite his nephew with a very determined air. He had come to give him a bit of his mind, and he meant to do it.

Now, the reason why Mr. Peggins came at this particular time was that it had come to his ears, beyond any further possibility of doubt, that his only nephew was about to get married.

For some time there had been rumours to this effect, but the worthy man contented himself with disbelieving them, and by way of precaution lifting up his stick, and uttering the one word "Beware!" when he met his nephew in the street. Speak to him upon the subject he would not, for fear of putting such a thing into his head, when perhaps it was not there at all; but should it unhappily be there, then the young man's own conscience would tell him what that serious word meant.

And in truth Bob Ryecroft had frequently been startled and puzzled by this eccentric conduct of his uncle. If the old man and he espied each other at a distance, Bob always saw the stick arise in a menacing attitude, and thus approach him, from even half a quarter of a mile off; and before the uncle said "Good day," he said "Beware!" or perhaps simply said "Beware!" and passed on. Suddenly, round a corner, or under any other circumstance or place, up went the stick; so that now it was quite a relief to the young man to find

out the meaning of all this, as his uncle said, "This here marrying business is serious—"Beware!"

"Oh, it's all about Rhoda Garnsey," said Bob, as he stirred the paint round somewhat hurriedly, as though he was annoyed; "that's what uncle is on."

As Bob said nothing out loud, the old gentleman, seeing he would not be drawn out of his shell, determined to pull him out of it there and then. Accordingly, like a ready-boiled periwinkle, he looked his nephew straight in the face, and said, "Robert Ryecroft, are you going to be married?"

"Some day, uncle," said Bob.

"Then, sir," said Mr. Peggins, lifting his hand, "beware!" and with a mingled look of indignation, sorrow, surprise, and vexation, the worthy man turned on his heel and made for the door.

Short, however, as was the distance he had to travel, a multitude of thoughts seemed to rush into his mind, of which he felt it absolutely necessary to get rid before he left the premises.

"Joseph," said he, "marriage means rent and taxes, and rates, and repairs, and painting, and papering, and white-washing, and food and drink for two or perhaps twenty-two, and ribbons and laces, and flies, and a certificate, and babies, and doctors, and schooling, and the measles, and vaccination, and the chicken-pox, and cutting teeth, and bibs, and being asked questions, and having to walk the room all night with a baby, and nobody knows what. Beware!" and the old gentleman vanished through the door.

On looking out of the window, Bob Ryecroft saw him walking rapidly and in an excited manner down the street, with his stick held up in a menacing attitude, which must have seemed, to say the least of it, slightly peculiar to the passers-by.



"Beware!"—p. 20.

CHAPTER II.

Up to forty-five years of age Mr. Joseph Peggins had lived in a baronet's family. He had been butler, and seen good living, and enjoyed the large slice thereof which fell to his own share. On this he had thriven and grown fat; and he could not understand how it was that any one could live or rather waddle through life—for this had been the manner of his own existence—without good living. When Sir Charles Trenchard died, Mr. Peggins found himself the possessor of £100 a year for life. Moreover, his own father died very much about the same time, and left him a house which was calculated to be worth £30 a year more.

With these two sums, and savings which made the income up to £150, the worthy man determined to withdraw from anything in the way of public life; to trouble himself no more with dinner-parties and the like, but to retire into lodgings, and be his own master.

One fixed idea the former butler took with him into private life, and that was, that there could be no happiness in wedded life without *plenty* of money. Sir Charles had always spent lavishly, and Mr. Peggins could not understand how a house could be kept up without *lots* of money. It was true every one could not have a mansion; still, to keep house involved lots of money, according to the condition of life in which a man was. "Pooh! pooh! don't tell me of moderate means. I'm well off in lodgings with £150 a year, but even in a four-roomed house I should be badly off with double the money. Folk have no right to marry until they can keep good houses." And as he



"That was a turning point in the young painter's life."—p. 22.

reflected on these things in his own mind, as he sat before the fire on his return home, for want of his stick he seized the poker, and holding it out threateningly, cried, apparently to some one up the chimney, "Beware!"

That very night Mr. Peggins determined to bring matters to a point, and if his nephew were indeed meditating matrimony, to put an end to the idea if he could; so he sat down, and, after much thought, composed the following letter:—

"Mr. Robert Ryecroft. 'Sir' (that is 'my nephew'—according to which way you take this letter), I am told you are going to get married. If you are, I'm not going to leave you a three-penny piece. More people marry than keep good houses. 'Beware!' If you are 'my nephew' I say 'Beware!' and if you were nothing, only a plain 'sir,' I should say 'Beware!' 'Beware!' is the last word of your affectionate uncle, or your obedient servant, as you take this letter, JOSEPH PEGGINS.
"P.S.—In either case 'Beware!' N.B.—'Beware!!'"

It is quite true, good reader, that Bob Ryecroft was going to be married some day to Rhoda Garnsey.

Rhoda was the daughter of the schoolmaster of the parish where Bob lived. Indeed, Bob had been taught by him, and had been his favourite pupil. A man to reverence and love was that old man; and it was Bob's pride that he should ever have been thought worthy of his daughter.

And Rhoda herself was some one to be proud of. Well brought up—taught that poverty may be adorned with beauty—that work was wealth—that house should be home—that there was a nobility far above the titles of earth—that true love was neither to be bought nor sold—that God had put on woman great responsibility and honour in life, if only she lived up to the position in which He had placed her—all that was really noble was Rhoda Garnsey, and all this Bob Ryecroft knew, and upon him all this had its effect. For Bob had ever, as it were, a model before him, and he would have been ashamed to act in a manner unworthy of such a girl.

All these good things of which I have spoken were to be read in Rhoda's dark hazel eyes. They were those wonderful deep-set eyes from which the soul seems to look out; and when, from time to time, Rhoda seemed a trifle absent, Bob knew well, by the look of her eyes, that she was thinking, and that something good and practical would surely come of it, for Rhoda was not the woman to dream any part of life away.

And Rhoda had cast in her lot with Bob Ryecroft; and Bob, as I have said, was much the better for it. He would have been ashamed not to do his best, when he knew that she would look at his work, and when she was sure to say to work badly done, "Bob, that's no noble man's work, but a poor hireling's; that's not done to God but man." Once Rhoda had said that, and that once was enough. Bob, I say, was much the better for it in a general way; and, indeed, I might say always, though one day he made a sad slip, and as that slip has much to do with the present state of things, I shall relate it here. Bob Ryecroft felt that dreadful day, as Rhoda stood opposite a door he had just grained, and uttered those words, for all the world as if she had breathed out some scorching wind upon him, that shrivelled him up and half made a cinder of him; and the little that was left of him seemed to sink down into his boots—down at Rhoda's feet, and even that seemed too good a place for such a common fellow as he. If you had offered Bob Ryecroft two-pence halfpenny, ready money, for himself at that particular moment, he would not have considered himself worth the odd coin, so good-for-nothing did he seem in his own eyes.

"Bob," said Rhoda, as she looked him full in the face, "it is what God thinks of our work that is of most consequence;" and, seeing how her lover blanched before her deep, real eyes, she said, "Bob, we must be true to all—true to our employers and ourselves, true to our God, true to one another, true to our home;" and then those hazel eyes sent forth from their deep settings such a soft stream of light, such breathing looks of love, that Bob Ryecroft felt music running all over his nerves—little vibrations and shakings, so gentle as to be scarce vibrations and shakings at all, thrilling all over him, just as if all his bones were funny-bones and had been touched half an hour ago, and the sensation was only now dying finally away. For a moment or two he seemed to hesitate as to which Rhoda was—a saint or a witch, for one or other of the two she certainly must be. I don't know what passed in his mind, but probably he settled she was half-way between the two, for Rhoda, true to the wound-binding instincts of her sex, kissed her lover, and with that laying aside of self wherewith woman so often conquers, whispered, "Bob, you will be always what a 'man' should be; *and I will always try to be worthy of you.*"

For two minutes Bob Ryecroft stood opposite the door like a man in a dream; then he deliberately dipped a brush in some red paint, and walking up to his ill-done work, dabbed it over as if it had the small-pox, and that in the worst possible form, so that there was no chance of its recovery; and the sooner it was removed to the hospital for fear of infection the better.

That was a turning-point in the young painter's life. Henceforth he determined that, come what would, he would be true—true to his God, true to himself, true to Rhoda, true to home, and true to his fellow-man. Had Rhoda not poured oil into the wound which she had made, she might have excited her lover's anger and done him no good; but she knew that the reproof in which there is no love is often of little use, and like the One she

served, she was ready, when a wound had done its work, to pour in a soothing balm.

"Faithful are the wounds of a friend." Most faithful of all wounds are those of the Lover of our souls. Fear *them* not, fear *Him* not; let Him say what He will, let Him do what He will.

"Love's wounds, O blessed Lord, I feel,"
"Those wounds," says Jesus Christ, "I heal."

CHAPTER III.

Don't you think, good reader, that because Rhoda Garnsey's hazel eyes were so full of deep realities, they were not also full of human tendernesses and love, and that they could not be full of merriment too. The same still deep blue lake that reflects in its depths the high mountains, and the very stars, can ripple in the sunshine with sportive little waves, which chase each other as though they were not playing on the surface of great depths at all. And now Rhoda laughed heartily as Bob said he'd given the door the small-pox, and Rhoda should see it again some day if ever it recovered. And as Rhoda had kissed Bob, it was but fair and just, and being quits, and a thing that no lover of fair play could object to, that Bob should kiss Rhoda. This he did after a fashion of his own, for he was very enthusiastic; and that fashion was putting three, and as near as possible four, kisses into one, which after all was an economical kind of way of doing the thing, leaving it to his intended wife to separate them at her leisure, and if she could not succeed, to come to him to help her, and show her how it was to be done; or, if on reflection she thought he had given too many, then she might return what she did not want to keep, and no harm would be done.

This little performance ended to the satisfaction of both parties, and Rhoda, having taken her departure, Bob Ryecroft sat down opposite the spotted door, and did what it would do us all good to do a little more—he began to talk with himself, and that pretty seriously, too. Bob was tackling himself pretty tightly, and he didn't mean to let himself off without going into this matter pretty thoroughly. You see, good reader, that kiss which Rhoda had so wisely given him, and that sweet look which she had so sweetly fixed on him, prevented his going into matters in a sour and melancholy spirit, in which spirit a man seldom does anything right.

"Aye," he said, "she's right; that door is not up to the mark. Rhoda won't have anything but what's up to the mark. Well, I'm not up to the mark myself, by long odds," said Bob, smitten somewhat by his conscience; "but a man may try to be, if he isn't; and here goes. I'll begin upon that door. Now, first-class work, if you please, for me for the future; or if people won't pay for first-class work, they shall have second-class if they like; but they shall know it—first quality so much, second quality so much, but every man shall know what he's getting, and every man shall get what he pays for. I'm paid first price here, and it must be first-rate work; aye, as good as if I were doing it for my own little house. House—house—Rhoda wouldn't let me talk about 'house.' Well, our own little *home*. No bad work there. Let me tell you," said Bob, "that the graining there shall be fit for an exhibition." So saying, he took up a cloth and rubbed the door clean, and went home.

CHAPTER IV.

There were two old gentlemen much concerned at this particular time in the affairs of Mr. Robert Ryecroft and his intended wife Rhoda Garnsey. One of these was Mr. Joseph Peggins, the other was Rhoda's father, Mr. Garnsey, or, as he was commonly called, "the Doctor."

These two individuals looked at the future of these young people in different lights. Mr. Joseph Peggins, as we have seen, was going in for the chicken-pox, measles, vaccination, together with rent and taxes, and eventually the bailiff; while the Doctor was forecasting much happiness for his daughter and her intended husband, thinking of how many of the elements of true happiness were independent of money. The one was thinking of a *house*, the other of a *home*.

Not that the Doctor scorned the idea of chicken-pox, teething, measles, vaccination, and rent and taxes, and bread-and-butter, and meat, and milk; he expected all these things; he had met them all himself bravely with Rhoda's mother, and come well through them all too; but he felt that, as long as the world was, these things must be, and that God had given men the means of meeting them.

The Doctor would not have let Rhoda do anything rash, even if she had been inclined so to do; but there was too much purpose and thought in those deep-set eyes for anything of the kind; and Mr. Bob was to "paper, and paint, and execute all repairs at the shortest notice, and on the most reasonable terms," for some time before he was to be allowed to have Rhoda, or begin housekeeping or making a home. Meanwhile, he had not to peep at Rhoda over a hedge, or lounge about in the twilight like a cat prowling after a mouse or a bird, but he went in and out of the Doctor's house like an honest man upon his lawful business, as indeed his courtship of Rhoda really was.

Rhoda Garnsey wore no fine clothes, but she contrived always somehow to be very attractive in Bob Ryecroft's eyes, and, for the matter of that, in other people's too; for what she had, though plain, was tasteful, well chosen, and well made. And

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then she always wore those wonderful eyes; and as to new fashions, there were looks of all kinds out of those eyes, and smiles of all kinds played from time to time round the corners of her mouth, and over her countenance; and give me the freshness of these above and before all the queer Frenchified cuts and shapes, and no-shapes at all, promised a most delightful tea, when a knock was heard at the door—a sufficiently unusual occurrence to startle the little party.

"I'll go to the door," said the Doctor. 'Tis Willie Kennedy come to tell me whether his sister is better;" and accordingly the good man went.



"A room was ready, and a welcome too."—*p.* 28.

I call some of them, which come from the other side of the water. Bob Ryecroft, too, was very tidy, as he took his seat at the Doctor's table. Even if Rhoda had on two pair of green spectacles, he could have imagined how those eyes would have looked behind them, at his appearance in dirty things all smelling of paint in her home.

The fire was burning brightly on the hearth, and the Doctor had just commenced the crisp piece of toast which Rhoda had laid for him, and all

Great was his surprise to see, instead of little Willie, the dim figure of a portly man; for the light was not strong enough to reveal that it was Mr. Peggins in the flesh.

"Is a misguided young man of the name of Ryecroft here?" asked a decided voice.

"Robert Ryecroft the painter is here, if it is him you want," answered the Doctor, quietly.

"If that misguided and going-to-ruin young man is here tell him that he is wanted."

"Who shall I say wants him?" said the Doctor.

"Some one that would save him from ruin."

"Indeed!" said the Doctor, somewhat startled; but before he could ask for further information (for in a moment all sorts of terrible thoughts about Rhoda's future happiness shot across his mind), Bob himself, recognising his uncle's voice, came to the door.

"Well, uncle!" said Bob.

"Young man—misguided young man—beware!" was all Mr. Peggins vouchsafed in reply; and with one hand lifting his stick threateningly, and with the other thrusting the letter he had recently written into his nephew's hands, Mr. Peggins disappeared almost as quickly and mysteriously as he had come.

The little party at the Doctor's tea-table had not to wait long to know the contents of the letter. Bob Ryecroft read it out, and when he had done so, laid it down on the table, and said, "What is to be done?" His first thought was to pursue the old gentleman, and bring him back, and reason with him. But the night was dark; perhaps he might not have gone home at all; and even if he could be found, he was of that impracticable nature on the subject of matrimony and house-keeping, that there would be but little use in catching him, always supposing that he could be caught.

"What's to be done?" said Rhoda Garnsey, echoing her lover's words. "Why, nothing is to be done, and everything is to be done. We must not depend on others. If your uncle, Bob,



"He saw that their faith was a real thing."—p. 23.

chooses not to give us the money, let us remember that you might have had no uncle at all; and you are no worse now than you would have been then. I don't think we can do anything about him, but we can do a good deal ourselves. You can work and carry out all those P's, and then we shall have a "home," Bob, and a home together, which is better than lodging by oneself."

"What are the P's?" asked Rhoda's father; "there seems to be something between you two about them; and they seem to make you very independent of Mr. Peggins. I don't want to know every little secret between you two," said the Doctor, "but if 'tis anything that's going to help you along, as it appears to be, I should like to know it, if I may."

"Well, father," said Rhoda, "if Bob likes, he may tell you."

Bob Ryecroft could not get married just yet, but it seemed to bring him somewhat nearer to the honourable estate of matrimony if he called the Doctor, "father." So he said, "Well, father, 'tis just a little thing between Rhoda and me. My uncle Peggins has been and let out at me for thinking of marrying Rhoda, or any girl at all. He says I shall be ruined; and I've been talking to Rhoda, and she says she's not afraid, if we're P-patient and P-persevering, and if we look before us—that she says is another P-preparation—and she points to my new watch-guard here—though it didn't cost much—and says, '*P-prudence, Patience, Perseverance, and Preparation.* Bob, I'm not afraid of facing the world if you have these to face it with.'"

"I believe, father, there's a fortune in those P's. Now, I spoiled a door to-day just for want of those P's. If I had prepared my paint properly, and had patience with my work, and persevered, I dare say I should have done it all right. I don't know exactly how to work in the Prudence, but no doubt it comes in somewhere."

"Well, 'tis plain enough where it comes," said the Doctor. "Nothing can be more imprudent for a tradesman than to do bad work; it will lose him his custom, and give him a bad name, and the want of it in any of the affairs of life is enough to ruin a man, or at any rate to prevent him from getting on. But, Bob, there's another P that I have found work well in life, though too many don't care about it now-a-days; and, indeed, whatever jibes and jeers they have they keep for that. Now, guess what that 'P' is."

"Oh, father, I'd never make it out," said Bob. "I never could have put anything on to these P's; it was Rhoda who did it. You know you have made a great scholar of her, and she knows no end of words; and these are very good ones, and I mean to stick to them when I'm married."

"Well, you must guess."

Hereupon Bob Ryecroft first put his two elbows on the table, and buried his head in them, and began to mutter—"P, P, P, P, P-pears, P-pence, P-pipes, P, P;" and Bob changed his position, and, folding his arms, looked up to the ceiling, as though he hoped to find what he wanted there. "P-plenty, P-paint, P-price, P-piecework, P, P, P——"

Meanwhile, a serious expression had been stealing over Rhoda Garnsey's face; and the Doctor was surveying his former pupil and intended son-in-law with a face full of interest and earnestness.

"P, P, P," continued Bob, still looking at the ceiling, and finally turning to the right and left, as if by some lucky chance he might find it there.

A little turn of Bob's head to one side, and a slight movement of Rhoda's bringing her's nearer to his, and a little whisper from her half-parted lips, and Bob blurted out in a moment, like a shot out of a gun, "P-piety!"

"That's it," said Mr. Garnsey, quietly. So long as Bob had the idea, the Doctor did not particularly care where he got it from; but he was too well up to prompting in class not to suspect that Rhoda had supplied the word, and got her lover out of his difficulty.

"Piety," said the Doctor, "is sneered at, and no doubt many people professing to be pious have so behaved themselves as to bring discredit on the word; but, after all, that is not just, Bob. They have merely shown that they were not pious; but the real thing, Bob! ah, that will do wonders for a man! Believe me, nothing will make a man's home happier—nothing will make himself happier—than a daily walk with God. Piety works in with all those other P's; with Patience, and Preparation, and Prudence, and Perseverance. Who was the most pious person that ever lived, and, if you read the Gospels, who was so much given to all these, as Christ? Mind, Bob, when the world laughs at piety, either they know nothing at all about it or they have got hold of the wrong kind. Get the genuine thing. If your Saviour died for you, why, accept Him as freely as He offers Himself, and then live always, and in all things, as you think He would like; and that is real piety."

"I wish, Rhoda," said Bob, as she came to the door to see him off (for you see if she hadn't helped him to find his hat, there's no knowing how long he might have been getting it, considering how long he was even with her help), "I wish I had known of this fifth P when I wrote to uncle after you went this morning, and told him what you said. I think he must have written the letter he brought here to-night before he got mine; perhaps he'll feel differently when he sees we're going to be careful."

And Bob Ryecroft, having at last found his hat, was off.

CHAPTER V.

THERE never was such a hall-door painted in all the neighbourhood round as that which Bob Ryecroft turned out a week or so after this conversation with his intended father-in-law. The fact was, Bob put religion and piety into that door—aye, and there they were on that piece of wood, just as truly as if they had been put into the finest church that ever was built. To begin with, Bob put great *preparation* into smoothing the door and mixing the paint; then he put *prudence* into his work, by giving every coat time to dry, and by keeping off every particle of dust; then he gave *patience* to it, not hurrying over any of the finer part of the work; and he *persevered* at every knot and swirl of the wood, until at last he produced one of the finest pieces of oak graining that could be seen.

At first Bob was somewhat amused at the idea of P-*iety* (which was a very good thing in its place) being brought into his daily common work; and then he was somewhat annoyed, "because," said he, "if it comes into this door it must come into all doors, and into window-sashes, and everything else;" but when he found himself saying, "Now, I wonder, if our Lord had been a painter, instead of a carpenter, how He would have done this door?" he somehow or other always took more interest in his work, and gave it a great many little touches of grace and beauty he never would have thought of giving otherwise.

Very wonderful, under these circumstances, was a good deal of the work which our friend Bob Ryecroft turned out; so much so that his custom increased to quite an unexpected extent, and his prospects of marriage became brighter.

Indeed, the happy day grew nearer by several months than had appeared likely. Folk were sure of Bob Ryecroft's work; they knew he did not need looking after; what he said he'd do, he would do; he always let folk know exactly what they were agreeing to have, and the consequence was his little home with Rhoda was coming full in view.

How Bob would have got on in what some of his jeering friends called "the pious line" I don't know had it not been for his intended father-in-law the Doctor. That good man had planted that evening, with his fifth P, the good seed in the young man's heart; and he felt himself bound to look after it, and water it, and train it up for God. The Doctor put Bob on the right foundation. You can't walk about upon your head in the spiritual world any more than you can in the natural; nor can you make a cart draw a horse, any more in the things of the soul than of the body. The first thing must be put first, and the second thing must be put second, and so right on.

The Doctor told Bob not only to do his work as he thought Christ would have him do it, but he told him, moreover, to look in certain parts of the Scriptures, and see what work the Lord came to do; and when Bob did this, the whole thing came out as clear before him as if it had been painted with a brush, that what the Lord came for was to save men from the guilt, and punishment, and power of their sins; and when he got hold of the great truth that Jesus was honest in all He said, and meant it, and that when He said that a man who believed should be saved, then Bob took Him at His word. There were no roundabouts in the matter at all. If He said it He meant it, and if I take Him I mean it; and that was how it was done.

CHAPTER VI.

MR. PEGGINS had mysteriously disappeared from the town the day after he left the letter for his nephew. He did not mean to leave him a single sixpence; and he did not want to be living amongst people who might be expecting something from him, though the thought had crossed his mind whether it would not be better so to continue living, in order that they might be more disappointed in the end.

Mr. Joseph Peggins being a single man, and consequently not having much luggage, had little more to do than pay his bill, pack up a portmanteau and carpet-bag, and be off. I am free to confess that here single men have an advantage. Far be it from me to grudge them their little all.

The course of life on which Mr. Joseph Peggins entered when he settled down in Smallford was not conducive to health, wealth, or length of life. The last that had been seen of Mr. Peggins was his portly figure on the top of the coach, with his stick well held up before him, and the last word he had been heard to utter was "Beware!" though what it referred to none of the bystanders could exactly ascertain.

However, it would have been well for him if he had followed his own advice, for, putting up at the inn at Smallford, there he remained, taking much more port than was good for him, and finally marrying the landlady.

The reader is quite warranted in demanding an explanation of this circumstance, and requiring to know how it came about. Well, Mr. Peggins did it just to have some one to leave his money to, for not a penny should Bob Ryecroft have, and he had no other relation in the world.

But Mr. Peggins's matrimonial joys or sorrows, whichever they were, did not last long, as Mrs. Peggins died in about two years, leaving Peggins in the hotel alone. She left no will, and her husband came in for all.

What good, however, was the "all" to him? Gouty and really friendless, he was likely to become a prey to those around him. There was not much for him here, and there was nothing hereafter.

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It was while gloomy thoughts of this kind were preying on his mind, one dull October night, and he was sitting up by the fireside, propped up in an easy chair, that the minister dropped in upon him, and, after some talk on things of another world, gave him some advice about this.

On enquiring into what relatives the sick man had, the only one he could hear of was a ne'er-do-well, ruined, spendthrift nephew, named Ryecroft, who had been married, but would not beware, and, if not hanged or transported, was doubtless in some jail, or, anyhow, could give no home to him. "Sir," said Mr. Peggins, "I warned him, and he would not beware."

The minister, however, was a man who liked to go into things, so he wrote to the clergyman of the town where the wicked nephew lived, and received back for answer, that there was a young man of the required name, in highly flourishing circumstances, with an admirable wife, a comfortable home, and one baby just weaned and beginning to crawl. Moreover, the baby's name was Joseph Peggins Ryecroft, which name it had been called at the special request of Mrs. Ryecroft's father, as a memento of an uncle, now probably dead, but who had paid for the young man's education in early life.

"Write," said Mr. Joseph Peggins to the clergyman, "and ask if the young man has a young wart behind his left ear, and a younger one, about the size of a pin's head, in the corner of his right eye, for nothing but those marks would persuade me he 's the man."

An answer soon came back that the warts were there all right.

"Now, take my advice," said the clergyman; "you can't be long here, and if this young man will have you to live with him, go; and he and his good wife will nurse you to the end. They'll do you good for the little time you have to be in this world, and help you on to a better one hereafter."

"But they won't have me; I know they won't! When they married they set up with four P's. They've thriven with them it seems, but what good is that to me?"

"What are the four P's?" asked the minister.

With great difficulty Mr. Peggins wriggled to a desk in the corner of the room, and took out his nephew's letter, and said to the clergyman, "There they are."

"'P-*patience*.' You'll want a deal of bearing with, Mr. Peggins; why, there is the very thing for you; and 'P-*perseverance*.' They'll often have to try to please you; but you see they'll persevere and stick to it. 'P-*preparation*.' There you are again, as if it was made for you. An arm-chair in the chimney corner, your bed warmed at night, your toast not burned; and 'P-*prudence*.'"

"Ah, they haven't much of that," said the sick man, "if they take me in." Then he buried his head in his hands for a few minutes, and at last looked up and said, "Write and say I'll go to them if they'll have me, but that I don't think they will. Oh dear! oh dear! I remember when I got that letter from my nephew, I said 'Stuff and nonsense! P-pickles, P-port, P-pastry, and P-plenty of them;' but his P's have the best of it now."

The next post brought a letter, to say that a room was ready, and a welcome too; and that Bob Ryecroft himself would come with his own spring van, which would hold a bed if necessary, to fetch his uncle, and share with him his home.

And the old man went, and he sat in the chimney corner, and thought, and lay down in his warmed bed, and thought; and at last, feeling that he must become quite bewildered if he continued thus to work his brain, he determined not to think any more. But in spite of himself, the P's would keep uppermost in his mind, and he would keep counting them up on his four fingers, saying "P, P, P, P" 'tisn't any of them brings me here." "I say, Bob, shouted out Mr. Joseph Peggins one evening, suddenly, so loud as to startle both his nephew and his wife, "what brings an unworthy Peggins here? Why has he this chair, and bed, and board, and a baby to play with, all complete, when he deserves nothing? Which P of the four has done all this?"

"None, uncle," said the young man, "'tis a fifth P that Rhoda put in, called Piety. We know our Lord would like it, and so we do it, and like to do it too."

"That's good," said the old man. "You can teach me all about that P too; if 'tis good for you 'tis good for me."

And so, in his old days, Mr. Peggins gave up all his four P's—his pickles, and port, and pastry, and plenty of them. What had they or such things done for him? And the fifth P became his joy.

It used to be the delight of Rhoda to sit by his bedside or easy chair, and answer all his questions as to what this fifth P of theirs really meant. And in his humble way he took it all in. He saw that their faith was a real thing, filling and influencing their daily life. The old man died with a hand in each of his children's, as he called them, one in Bob's, another in Rhoda's, and little Joseph Peggins, his namesake, calmly sleeping at the bottom of the bed.

And when the Ryecrofts rose in the world on all their uncle left them, they never deserted old friends—the four P's which had done so much for them in life, and the fifth, which was better than all.

"BY RIGHT OF LOVE."

BY GEORGE BARNETT SMITH, AUTHOR OF "ALDEN OF ALDENHOLME."

CHAPTER I.

GRANBY is a little straggling village in Wintershire. You scarcely know when you really come upon it, for at each extremity the houses are scattered, and few and far between, whilst those you do discover are almost embowered in trees. There is a heart to the village, however, and many important people live in it—important, that is, when regarded from the point of view assumed by themselves. Imperial and national concerns are discussed there three days after they have agitated the public mind in London, and if no real solution is afforded to any matter of profound interest, we will venture to affirm that everything is reviewed in a more original and striking manner than is the case in the House of Commons. Why, when the member for the county was recently unseated for bribery, the inhabitants of Granby met in their might to tender him their sympathy. They declared by solemn resolution, proposed by the principal innkeeper in the village, seconded by the leading baker, and supported by the master-sweep, that they repudiated the charges brought against the constituency of which they were an important section, and expressed their belief in the immaculate purity of their late member. Everybody felt that when Granby said this honour had been satisfied. The unfortunate member would of course, have preferred his seat to the resolution of sympathy, but even *he* must have been consoled to think that "public opinion" had thus emphatically condemned the Judge's decision.

It will easily be perceived, from this illustration of the public spirit of Granby, that whatever might take place within their own borders could not fail to awaken the utmost interest in the villagers generally. Accordingly, events of importance to individuals, but of none whatever to the State, were discussed with a fulness and a freedom which, however amusing or engrossing to the gossip-mongers, were sometimes very painful to the persons concerned. Singular is the deep solicitude which one man will take in another's business; it moves him sometimes even more than his own. He will not rest till he fathoms everything which he considers bears an air of mystery upon it; and the further removed the matter may be from any right of interference on his part, the more eager is his desire for an explanation or a solution. At any rate, in Granby twenty-four hours was a period quite long enough for the knowledge of any event to spread to the utmost limits of the village, and to be discussed over every tea-table and in every tap-room.

At the time of the opening of our story a small party of friends was assembled at Granby Hall, the residence of Squire Vincent, the lord of the manor. Mr. Vincent, to do him justice, was one of the most hospitable men alive; in addition to which, he was a kind landlord, and a model employer of labour. No wonder, therefore, that he should be exceedingly popular. Not an old man who touched his hat to the Squire, as he went to church on the Sunday morning, but really honoured him for his philanthropic heart, and would have been sorely grieved if the slightest harm had befallen him. The manners of modern society, had, nevertheless, produced little effect upon his nature, which was bluff in the extreme; and his deportment was of the most rough-and-ready description. He cared more about the pleasures of the field than of Lady Lisp's last "drum," and rarely came up to the metropolis to be bored with London dinners and engagements. He always replied to invitations, that he never went from home, but that if his friends cared to enjoy the fresh air at Granby, they were welcome to bed and board with him. The Squire's daughter, Lucy, was the exact contrast to her father. Elegant, and rather tall in figure, there was a softness, a delicacy, about her, which touched all who saw her for the first time with a strange surprise and fascination. She was very beautiful; but whether it was on account of her beauty or her father's well-known riches, that she had so many suitors, we are unable to say. Further, we do not know whether we ought to tell the secrets of Granby Hall; but at this present moment there were two persons staying with the Squire who were dying to win her hand. These were Captain Hawkins of the Blues, and Lord Durnston the eldest son of the Earl of Mountford. The captain was a dashing young officer, tall, and with the regulation features always pronounced handsome by the novelists. His gallantry was rather that of the drawing-room than the field, it is true, for he had never seen an action in his life. When he does, we should be rather afraid that it will cause him quite as much surprise and nervousness as it would to any ordinary civilian. Lord Durnston was not handsome—quite the contrary; but then he was heir to an earldom, and could not, therefore, be looked down upon with impunity. Both these men had proposed to the Squire for his daughter's hand, during their present visit, and he had asked them, as men of honour, not to breathe a word to Miss Vincent

till he had had the opportunity of first conversing with her. Mr. Vincent, we are bound to confess, displayed in this matter the usual worldly weakness—he leaned towards the nobleman. The bait was very attractive; and yet in the feeling there was a good deal of pride on his daughter's behalf. He thought quite as much of the position it would confer upon her as he did of the honour to himself; only, like too many others in the same position, he forgot that Lucy's real happiness ought to be the first thing studied. What to do he knew not. He had got before him a leap which caused him far more anxiety than any which he had taken in the hunting-field. However, something must be done, and he went into the library to fortify himself for the interview with his daughter by a quiet bottle of sherry.

During this brief period of preparation we will leave him, and take a walk down Granby High Street. It is rather a warm day, and Mr. Stout, the landlord of the Granby Arms, is standing at the door of his hotel, evidently ready to take part in one of those lazy chats of which he is so fond. Coming leisurely up the street is Tomkins, the barber, of whom it is not too much to say that he is *facile princeps* in the scandal and poke-your-nose-into-other-people's-business line. He comes upon Mr. Stout as upon an oasis in the desert. Their conversation must be listened to, however distasteful to us may be the part of the eavesdropper.

"Ha, Tomkins! anything stirring?"

"I should rather think there was!" says the barber, with a knowing smile.

"Anything about the 'All?" says Stout, jerking his thumb in the direction of Granby Hall.

"Exactly what it *is* about," replies Tomkins. "I reckon there'll be fine doings in Granby presently. (This in a whisper.) Miss Lucy's going to marry a lord!"

"Phew!" says Stout, and a moment afterwards qualifies his surprise by incredulity—"Gammon!"

"No, it ain't gammon neither," returns the barber. "I knows what I knows. 'Taint everybody as shaves Lord Durnston, and 'taint everybody as has conversation with his lordship. I've 'ad the *h*onour of both."

Mr. Stout's excitement increases. There is something in it then! He presses for further information; and the two retire into the tap-room, there to discuss more privately the absorbing question.

"From what has passed between me and his lordship," says Tomkins, confidentially, "I announces a speedy marriage!"

Nothing had really passed between Lord Durnston and the barber except the razor; but the latter had a character of importance to keep up—a thing which he never failed to do upon all occasions. Beverages were called for; and the truth must be owned, that Tomkins, who, under the influence of the insinuating fluid, could never keep the profoundest secret, prevaricated so much, and showed such an utterly untrustworthy character, that the landlord was confirmed in his former opinion that there were really no details to communicate. Still, he felt confident that, although the barber had no authorised information, something was really about to take place of the nature indicated. He had simply expressed doubts of the truthfulness of his informant's story, in order to lead him on towards making a clean breast of all that he knew, or that his tonsorial brain conceived. Having thus extracted from poor Tomkins the uttermost supposition of his fertile imagination, Mr. Stout assumed the air which men generally do towards those by whom they have risen to superior knowledge, and regarded him with pity, not unmingled with contempt. This attempted superiority on the landlord's part was utterly lost upon Tomkins, who was not easily inclined to give up the *rôle* of oracle. He insisted in discussing with the landlord the distinguished part which their native Granby must play in the festivities consequent upon the marriage of Miss Vincent. The landlord appeared somewhat bored, and made more than one ineffectual ruse to get rid of his loquacious friend. We should be afraid to say for what length of time Mr. Stout was obliged to keep up a conversation in which he had long ago ceased to have any interest. His mind had travelled farther than that of the barber's. He was already calculating the profits which would accrue to him from the village rejoicings on the occurrence of the expected happy event. Not a bad-tempered man by nature, he was apt to become irate under the infliction of any undesirable person's company when anxious to pursue a mental investigation touching his profits as landlord of that famous hostelry, the Granby Arms. However, we have nothing more to gain by listening to his encounter with Tomkins, and we will consequently leave them to arrange matters as may seem to them wise and prudent.

Meanwhile, what was transpiring at Granby Hall? On the evening of this day the drawing-room presented a brilliant appearance. The Squire's courage had failed him earlier in the day in respect to the projected interview with his daughter; and he had determined to make the attempt after dinner. Lights had been called for, and Miss Lucy was at the piano, trilling forth most melodious strains to a touch which attested both her capacity and her love for music. Lord Durnston was assiduous in turning over the leaves for the fair vocalist and performer, and as far as any expression could be thrown into a face of so material a form, it may be said to have glowed with emotion. Lucy never could venture to exchange

glances with his lordship when he assumed what he considered to be an interesting expression, for fear she should rudely burst out laughing. He was just one of those individuals who can neither do good nor harm. A child in vice, he was equally a failure at the heroic. The Squire, dazzled by his title, could never perceive this; but to suppose that a high-spirited and romantic girl could for a moment think of uniting her fortunes to those of an automaton of this description, was to mistake the whole character of woman—at least, woman of such material as Lucy was made. On the sofa Captain Hawkins was endeavouring to make himself agreeable to Mrs. Vincent. He shrewdly argued that his time would be better employed in winning over the mother's consent to his suit, rather than in professing a sentimentalism to which he could lay no claim, but which his rival was then exhibiting in full force. After giving a new effect to that fine old ballad, "The Last Rose of Summer," Lucy was persuaded by Mrs. Vincent to sing a melody whose rendering caused her some difficulty. Yet it was a simple song of love, and in itself bore no ingredients of sorrow or pathos that were noticeable. Lord Durnston listened to it unmoved, and even ventured to clap his hands mildly when it was concluded. Lucy's voice, however, faltered before she came to the last bar, and when the song was ended she closed the piano hastily, and left the room, making some excuse, and promising a speedy return. Lord Durnston, fixing his eye-glass more securely in its place over the somewhat vacant orb which it usually covered, sauntered towards Mrs. Vincent and Captain Hawkins. The conversation during Miss Vincent's absence flowed in a very wide and general channel, and as there was apparently no prospect of her return, a game at cards was proposed between the parties—Miss Murgatroyd, an elderly niece of the hostess's, forming the necessary fourth in the deal.

While the game was progressing, another scene was taking place in the library. Mr. Vincent had sent for his daughter, to communicate the proposals for her hand. Lucy was not utterly unprepared to hear her father's statement so far as Lord Durnston was concerned. She had striven all in her power—consistent with civility and politeness—to give his lordship no encouragement, and yet she dreaded the influence he would necessarily have upon Mr. Vincent if matters came to a crisis. The Squire was in an awkward fix. It was all very well to be compelled to ask his daughter's sentiments concerning Lord Durnston, but to be compelled to repeat the operation as regarded Captain Hawkins caused him no small concern. He almost wished there were no such things in the world as women, who brought trouble into every household, and upset frequently all the arrangements both of man and of Providence. Yet he loved Lucy with all the strength of a large but uncultivated soul. He knew she was beautiful, but that counted for little with him, except as a matter of pride. He was conscious that, with her disposition, however plain she might have been, she would have completely twined herself round his affections. Some madness filled his brain now, when he had resolved that she should marry the future Earl of Mountford. Had any one assured him that he could ever have behaved harshly towards his child, it would have gone hard with that individual, and he would have lost his friendship for ever. Still, here he was, meditating treason against her, for aught he knew, whilst she unsuspectingly confided in his love to release her from a difficulty, should any arise. With trepidation, rather than astonishment, Lucy obeyed his summons to wait upon him, and when she entered the library, she flung her arms round the old man's neck, just as she always did when she had some end to gain, or desired to persuade him against some crotchet of his own. The Squire was considerably crestfallen and alarmed by her tears, but when she had to a certain extent recovered herself, he discharged the first half of his burden. Captain Hawkins's proposal (which he thought it better to make known first) was declined firmly and unmistakably; and, to tell the truth, the captain would have been nettled at the half-heartedness of his supposed advocate. Lucy was equally decided in refusing the second offer, and begged her father not to press it.

"Press it, child!" he exclaimed, "why, you must be mad! I never could have dreamed you would receive such a noble offer!"

"I am very much obliged," Lucy managed to sob out, at intervals, "but I cannot, cannot yield him any encouragement."

The Squire was amazed. He half thought that the daughter whom he loved was a fool. Marriage with him was rather too formal a thing. He had never loved Mrs. Vincent, in the high and romantic sense. He had a jovial spirit and an excellent temper, and we know in what light such characters view matrimony. His daughter was far more precious to him than to his wife; and he was totally incapacitated from seeing the difference between a good match and a happy marriage. But Lucy was obdurate; nothing that he could say made the slightest impression upon her. She listened, shook her head, and avowed that she could never marry Lord Durnston. He asked, excitedly, "Why?"

"I cannot tell you, papa," answered the miserable girl; and her conduct seemed utterly unreasonable to the stupid old Squire, who had not the wit to divine the real reason of her refusal of his lordship's proposal. Mr. Vincent rapidly lost his temper. He could extract nothing from his

daughter but a simple denial, followed by a tempest of emotion, whenever he attempted to bring her to reason. At last, in a fit of excitement, such as she had never witnessed in him before, he bade her go to her own room, and not address him again till she assumed a more pliable disposition. Sad and dejected, Lucy obeyed his command, and the Squire sent for his wife, to whom he explained the whole circumstances, and who strenuously took his part in the matter. Some excuse or other was concocted to the male occupants of the drawing-room for the absence of Miss Vincent, on her mother's return, and the evening—like all other evenings—passed away. To Miss Vincent, however, it was a period of new and intense suffering.

CHAPTER II.

THE circumstance which prevented Lucy from complying with the wish of Squire Vincent was that her troth had been already plighted to another. Three years ago, John Warrington, a civil engineer, and a very attractive and agreeable suitor withal, had completely won her affections. Afraid to make known the fact to the Squire, who would have stormed and raved at the prospect of what he could not but have regarded as a *mésalliance*, the two lovers had determined to keep their secret, and Lucy agreed to wait until Warrington should rise in his profession. That he would do so she felt confident; and even had she cherished any doubts upon the subject, the persuasive tongue of Warrington would easily have overcome them. He was now as firmly enthroned in Miss Vincent's heart as at the time of their secret engagement, and the stormy interview with her father only revealed to what a depth in her heart the roots of love had penetrated. She had heard from her lover but rarely during their separation, but their mutual trust was unshaken. Warrington had succeeded in the world to a degree beyond his most sanguine anticipations, and the time was now drawing near for him to return and claim his bride.

The excitement in Granby somewhat cooled down when the party at the Hall broke up abruptly, and only the family remained behind. Mr. Stout regarded himself as harshly treated, after speculating upon an anticipated marriage, to find that no such event was about to transpire. Everything went on as quietly as before, and gossip was reduced to discussing events of smaller dimensions and ramifications than Miss Lucy Vincent's future prospects.

In the course of a month the Squire discovered that his daughter was rapidly losing the beautiful bloom which gave her cheek such a peach-like appearance. He was an exceedingly bad hand at reading a woman's heart. He attributed the listlessness and the lack of vigour which he perceived in Lucy to the fact of her requiring a change, and he resolved to give it to her. He little knew how that loving soul had scarcely passed one day's happiness since, for the first time in her life, she found herself so steadily thwarting her parent's will. Nor was it her own conduct alone (which she could not change for the whole world) that had operated so disastrously upon her health. It was the knowledge to her that the Squire treated her less tenderly than of yore. He had been bitterly disappointed, and he vented his spleen upon the delicate and lovely being who had crossed his purposes. If he had known the miserable hours which she passed in consequence of his coldness and studious neglect, he might have repented. Every night, in her own room, she had bent over the portrait of Warrington, and watered it with her tears, her long and magnificent locks flowing over her neck and shoulders, and completely covering her face, so tell-tale of sorrow. All this was hidden from Mr. Vincent and his wife. Many a time and oft had Lucy been on the point of confessing all; but that which restrained her was an unknown dread as to what would occur when her father knew that she preferred a civil engineer to a nobleman. As for the Squire, he was hoping that time, which heals so many wounds, would put matters right. He imagined that Lucy's obstinacy would soon cease when she saw that he was bent upon the match. Doubtless he would have been less harsh had she possessed sufficient courage to reveal to him the exact state of her feelings; whilst she was nursing precisely the contrary impression. Mr. Vincent, after his failure to bring her to reason, as he termed it, engaged his wife to fight the battle. The latter was not a whit more successful, nevertheless. Indeed, Lucy had always felt that a kind of estrangement existed between her and her mother, which prevented that interchange of confession which generally takes place with mother and daughter. Between Mr. Vincent and his only child was a far stronger tie than the one that existed between mother and daughter; and this it was which had rendered Lucy's estrangement from her father so painful.

At length there came a day when the family left the Hall. Perceiving no alteration for the better in his daughter's health, Mr. Vincent resolved to try the restorative effect of a southern climate. When questioned upon the subject of her condition, Lucy contented herself by monosyllabic replies, which only exasperated her mother, and made the Squire more miserable. The jolly huntsman felt a tenderness towards his daughter that he considered himself bound, under the altered circumstances which her conduct had revealed, to repress. He was willing to lose his present happiness, to win an imaginary smile, and a yielding



(*Drawn by* ARTHUR HOPKINS.)

"A touch which attested both her capacity and her love for music."—*p.* 30.

to his wishes, at some future day. Thus foolishly will even the noblest heart act at certain stages in its history. It was given out in Granby, when the Squire's carriage drove through, piled up with packages and boxes, to the railway station six miles away, that the family did not mean to return for a long period. The Squire was sick of England; his daughter was not well, and required a change; and Granby Hall would miss its popular occupants for at least a couple of years. The village was in despair. When the Squire was away its prosperity was at a very low ebb—the tradesmen's accounts were small, and the poor people sadly missed Miss Lucy's bounty. There was scarcely an old woman in the parish who had not at some time or other called down upon her head Heaven's choicest blessings. She had taken a genuine pleasure in alleviating distress; and, what is perhaps more, in some cases she had extended her sympathy, ever genuine and heartfelt, towards the suffering. For a time all this was now over, and the sun of Granby may well be considered to have set during the absence of the Vincents.

The Squire resolved first to go to Switzerland, and to travel by way of the Rhine. He endeavoured to enlist Lucy's interest at every point of the journey from London to Cologne. The poor girl was vexed with herself that she should be the cause of so much anxiety to those whom she loved. But it was her fate; she could not help it, and she was constrained in her inmost heart to confess that, if the experience of the last few weeks were to come over again, she could not act differently. She would suffer any extremity or deprivation rather than give up her love. If Warrington only knew the sacrifices she had made on his behalf, how his heart must have been still more deeply moved for her! Some day, perhaps, it gave her pleasure to think, he might know it, when the storms had passed away from her life, and the sun shone out again brightly as of old. The passage across the Channel was very calm, and Lucy drank in the fresh breeze from the sea, conscious of its invigorating power. Mr. Vincent was glad to find that the change already seemed to benefit his daughter, whose spirits appeared to be reviving rapidly. He yet hoped that he should be able to bend her to his will, or to discover the secret reason for her contumacy. We will not pursue the details of the journey, which are of little interest to the reader, but proceed to record the arrival of the travellers at Cologne. In this city they made a stay of a couple of days, and then intended to resume their journey up the Rhine. But at Cologne an incident occurred which changed the whole complexion of affairs, as well as the current of Miss Vincent's life. The boat, having left the pier, had not proceeded more than a hundred paces, when that familiar cry was heard—

"Overboard!"

Instantly there was great commotion on deck; but before any steps could be taken, a gentleman had plunged into the water. On looking over the side of the boat, the passengers perceived a young lady in the arms of one who was vigorously making for the shore. Mrs. Vincent, who first discovered the identity of the missing passenger, gave a shriek, which attracted the attention of her husband. Then Mr. Vincent perceived the situation, and was impatient till the boat had put back to the landing-stage. Arriving there, he rushed from deck, and was just in time to receive the insensible form of his daughter, as she was borne into the hotel by her deliverer. Mrs. Vincent speedily followed, and it was found that Lucy had sustained no injury save a severe shock, from the effects of which she would doubtless soon recover. Of course, the resumption of the journey was postponed, for the unfortunate occurrence necessitated the confinement of Miss Vincent to her own room for a few days.

One morning, when Lucy was strong enough to sit in the drawing-room, she had a visitor who brought a bright blush to her cheeks such as had not been witnessed for months. The moment he had closed the door behind him, they were locked in each other's arms. When Miss Vincent's emotion had somewhat subsided, she gave her lover—for it was John Warrington who had saved her, and none other—the story of her trouble, her head still reclining on his shoulder. Warrington, in return, assured her that the time had come for him to redeem his promise; and that he felt he could demand an interview from Mr. Vincent with every prospect of a satisfactory termination thereto.

The interview came earlier than he anticipated. The Squire, desirous of seeing how his daughter progressed, was thunderstruck, on opening the door, to perceive the situation. He recognised, however, that the intruder was the gentleman who saved his child's life, and besides a suppressed growl, he could not well give any other vent to his wrath. But as soon as he could collect himself, he demanded an explanation.

"Your daughter gave me her heart long ago, Mr. Vincent," said Warrington, "and I now ask you to give me her hand."

"But by what right, sir, do you approach me in this manner, when my child's gratitude is likely to operate in your favour?" questioned the Squire.

"By right of love!" replied Warrington.

The Squire beckoned the latter to follow him, and they went into Mr. Vincent's room, where a long and earnest discussion took place. The end of it was that Warrington, as he expected, fully convinced the Squire that his daughter's happiness would never be secured unless committed to his keeping. He also demonstrated that his pro-

fessional prospects were such as to justify him in seeking her hand. Lucy's eyes gleamed brightly on their return, and in the course of a few days Mr. Vincent was astonished to find that she had completely recovered her health, and was even more beautiful than in time past.

Granby was not disappointed of its magnificent wedding, though the bridegroom was not Lord Durnston. The Squire surpassed all expectations in the festivities consequent upon Miss Lucy's marriage. She, as Mrs. John Warrington, is now, if possible, more popular than ever. As for Warrington, he well knows the value of his treasure, and grows happier in it day by day.

THE PROFESSOR'S DREAM.

BY THE REV. W. BOYD CARPENTER, M.A., VICAR OF ST. JAMES'S, HOLLOWAY.

HARTELBAD is a quaint little German town. The streets are narrow and crooked; the houses, half timber and half plaster, look as if they were disposed to rest their heads one against the other across the street. Modern improvements have been slow in visiting a place where ancient learning has lingered so long; and, in consequence, there is a close unhealthy atmosphere, which broods about its contracted highways and by-ways. But what is the atmosphere, when from every window, learned professors and beardless students alike launch forth volumes and eddies of azure smoke, which clusters about, and clasps hold of everything?—of the linen which is hung out in snowy copiousness in every street; of the cabbages and onions which are exposed for sale; of the rolls which the baker's boy carries about at morn and eve; till the stranger who visits Hartelbad, goes away with a hazy reminiscence of tomes and tobacco.

Among all the learned who dwelt, in pedantic indolence, within grim Hartelbad, there was not to be found a more ponderously learned or more pedantically indolent a man than Professor Gregory Hochgriffern. His knowledge of books was vast; his enemies declared that it was also vague. His figure and form were vast, in proportion; his hair was abundant; his shaven cheeks were hard and full; his voice was deep and guttural. His enemies said his forte was sound—a voice, and nothing more—and some declared he was not sound, for that he was a noted heretic. His tread was weighty—even his most malignant opponents admitted that he was a man of weight. His memory was good, his industry was great, and his collar was dirty.

He lived in the Esselstrasse, No. 25, with his only child and daughter, Annette, a fair young frail girl of eighteen who was the admiration and the rejoicing of all who knew her. The students used to call her a flower in a library, as she sat among her father's books. Often and often her bright face cheered lonely and desolate houses—children's faces brightened at her approach.

But her visits were not so frequent as she wished. Professor Hochgriffern valued his daughter. The world said he did not value her; but that was an unfounded assertion—he valued her much; her fair fingers had flown on, line after line, as she copied, from the early morn till the last ray of murky sunshine stole through smoke and lowering roofs and rested for a moment on a single spot in the front room in the Professor's house. He thought, and occasionally scribbled, in the back room; she wrote incessantly in the front room. For the Professor had a great work on hand, and though the Professor was phlegmatic in exterior, many and many a dream of hope shaped itself out of the rank clouds which hovered over the bowl of his pipe. He had been years over this great work, and during these years of sad monotony no holiday had been taken, and still her patient pliant hand sped across the foolscap paper, which, not in quires, but in reams, had been brought to the Professor's house.

The bright girlish look had gone long ago. A grave pale face was to be seen where dimple and peach-bloom should have gathered, and still the dull years moved on, leaden and lightning-footed, and the eighteen years of Annette's life had increased to twenty-five, and the Professor held on his iron-handed purpose, demolishing folios and devouring duodecimos, cutting up octavos and giving quartos no quarter. The pale face grew paler; a little cough shook the frail frame, but never disturbed the phlegmatic Professor. If at times he did note that the face of his child looked older and paler than it ought, he soon forgot or put it aside as of small moment compared with the vast importance of the stupendous work on which he was engaged. Friends looked at her, and shook their heads. Some ventured to give the Professor a hint, which he met by removing the inevitable pipe from his lips, and saying, "Eh?" He was not indifferent; but he was abstracted—the philosopher was rapt—lost in some far-off dreamy realms of speculation, and never understood, scarcely heard, the hint. Others spoke strongly to Annette. She ought to go away—there was mischief at work. But she only smiled, and shook her head, and declared herself unwilling and unable to leave her father.

But dreary times come to an end, and hope, however deferred, visits at last the patient and the persevering. The long weary years of plodding toil drew to a close; the Professor's great work was on the verge of completion. It was sent to the printer's; the proofs came home, sheet by sheet, chapter by chapter; the Professor grew gay; he hummed, he whistled, he thrummed with his fingers, he rolled his head, he slapped his sides, he talked to himself, and laughed. His time was come. All Hartelbad—the whole principality of Saxe-Walkenburg-Wölverein — knew that Professor Hochgriffern was engaged on an important work, and inquiries had been made in many quarters when volumes might be expected. Although the last proof was corrected and despatched, an interval of time, so painful to many, must elapse before the book could be ushered into the world. During the interval, the Professor's demeanour changed: he talked little, he ate little, he smoked violently, and gave himself headaches; and even after the goodly stout volumes were in his hands, he continued to show signs of uneasiness; and this continued till magazines, newspapers, and periodicals, came out with various criticisms on his work. Diverse opinions were expressed; some that were adverse the Professor treated with contempt; some that were complimentary irritated and annoyed him, because they were evidently thrown off by careless men who had never read a line of his book; some vexed him by their readiness to seize upon trifles, and to flaunt about with great show a small inaccuracy, while the main principles of his book were calmly ignored; but the minor periodicals he cared little for. The quarterlies he was anxious about; and, of all the quarterlies, he knew how much turned upon the favourable criticism of the *Nördlich Deütschlander*. At last it came. Somewhat tremulously the Professor cut its pages; alone at its study he paused, half afraid to read or to look. Perhaps his book would not even be noticed; but yes! there it was, its full title at the head of evidently a long article. He glanced almost feverishly at the first few lines, they swam before his eyes; he saw words; he could not gather their meaning at first, but soon he understood; his fame was assured! The oracle had spoken; he was welcomed among the profoundest thinkers of the age! His eyes half filled with tears; he thought a moment, filled his pipe, and blew forth a cloud which filled the room. He took the Review into his hand, but he could not read—he was too glad; so he gave it up, and continued to puff away in silence and inaction.

The smoke from the Professor's pipe began to shape itself into many strange forms. Now he saw a bright little rosy face, with merry eyes—then, as he watched it, the face paled and lengthened into womanhood, and finally, melted into smoke again. The smoke whirled about wildly, and a strange scene appeared. There extended before the Professor's eyes a wide sandy desert, covered with a dense mass of people. He had leisure to observe that every conceivable class and character, rank and profession, had its representatives there. Rich men and poor men, old men and young men, tall men and short men, fair girls and wrinkled dames, members of learned professions, military men and merchants, cocked hats, both of beadles and brigadiers. A crowd such as this could not be silent, and the clamour and din was equal to the shouting and jargon of Irish jarvies on Kingstown Pier, or French tide-waiters at Havre. But as the Professor moved among the crowd, curious and interested, he heard a childish voice singing, half to herself and half to another, the verse of a simple hymn; he thought he had heard his daughter sing it. Looking about, he saw that the voice came from a little girl who was seated on a bank by the feet of a feeble-looking old man. While he contemplated this strange, motley crowd, a new phenomenon appeared: the great desert clove asunder, and out of the immense fissure that formed, there began to emerge the topmost branches of a tree. Slowly and majestically it rose from beneath, spreading its noble arms far and wide over the burning sand, until it had reached its full height. All eyes were turned towards this wonderful tree, which now began to put forth its leaves, till it was covered with the most luxuriant foliage. When the tree had robed itself with leaves, the fruit began to appear; but never, before or since, did tree on earth bear such strange and varied fruit; for, wonderful to tell, it was laden with every conceivable thing which the mind of man can fancy or desire. It appeared as a huge Christmas-tree, groaning beneath the weight of very various and very substantial gifts; and the Professor noted that the most glittering and valuable things were on the highest branches, while the plainer and less attractive were within reach. Thus, jewelled necklaces, diadems, and rings, coronets and embroidered robes, sparkled far on high, but none needful in daily life. Loaves of bread, and coarse but strong clothing; turbans and helmets; cocked hats and wigs; musical instruments of all sorts; and mechanical ones of every kind. A plain circlet of gold hung from the central topmost stem, which shot up far above the encumbered lateral branches.

A shout of joy rose from the assembled populace as the noble tree reached its full height, and in disorder and clamour they jostled and trode upon each other, in their eagerness to get near it. Loud cries of pain and disappointment began to rise from various quarters of the throng. Hundreds were carried out by some of the humane, and laid down, mangled, bleeding — and some

even dead—upon the sand. Meanwhile, many had approached the tree, and were anxiously scanning it in search of the object they most desired.

It was a strange medley which ensued when, from out of a little gold-linteled, pearly gate, a white-robed angel came, and proclaimed to all that vast throng that they were free to take one gift each from the Tree of Blessings. Then the clamour increased tenfold, and the cries of pain and woe rose in hundredfold intensity. The Professor trembled for the frail women who, with children in their arms, dashed madly into the thickest of the throng, and, wild and eager, strove to reach from some high swinging bough a gift.

But there was, perhaps, more to move laughter than tears in the scene.

There were stout little fellows, who fled with surprising nimbleness round the outer edge of the crowd, in search of some little creek or gap into which they might thrust their little rotundity, and so draw near the tree. There were spare, wiry little men, who seemed to pass through the closest-packed parts of the crowd, and to run in here, and edge themselves in there, and always to be able to wedge themselves into the smallest conceivable space, till they reached the spot the nearest to the gift they had picked out for themselves. There were genial, jovial-faced men, who managed to get through the crowd, and though they occupied a great deal of space, somehow they had a good-natured way of taking grumbles out of the crossest lips, and bringing a laugh over the hardest and sourest features. There were great, brutal, tyrannical fellows who went like sledge-hammers through the crush, beating down all who came in their way, and thrusting back out of the race pale weaker men, frail girls, or struggling children. These men were always successful in getting what they wanted.

There were some, however, who were equally successful, and much more shrewd, who watched their opportunity, and, with a knowing tone of voice, advised their neighbours to go another way, where the crowd was less, till they had advised everybody out of their own path.

The devices were very diverse and amusing. The majority fastened their eyes and strained their utmost to get some of the number of queer little dull-looking bags or wallets which were suspended in various parts of the tree; but in the greatest profusion they hung in three or four great circles, about three-quarters of the way up the tree. They looked very unattractive, hanging there in their dull leather skins, their necks tied up with a piece of rusty iron wire; yet the striving to reach these was certainly more than for any other gift; and as the crush and rush were greatest for these, so those who sought them displayed the greatest ingenuity in trying to lay hold of them. Some who were fortunate enough to pierce the crowd and reach the tree, tried climbing; but the main trunk, which they had first to pass, seemed very slippery, for it was hard to gain a foothold in the bark. Many fell down, and were hurt, and all had to make two or three starts before they reached the spot where the lateral branches broke from the main trunk. After reaching this, it was easier; and such as could keep their heads cool, and not allow themselves to be distracted by the howling, cheering, or abuse of the multitude below, were, without very much difficulty, successful in appropriating one of these little leather bags. Some were greedy, and endeavoured to carry off more than one; but they never succeeded fully, for as they tried to loose the iron wire which held the second, they either dropped the first, or losing their balance, fell crashing through the boughs, branches, and twigs, to be dashed in pieces below.

But all were not successful in getting near enough to the tree to try the climbing process. Some could only secure a place just beneath the edges of the branches, or at even a more respectful distance; but where men were really in earnest, their ingenuity soon suggested a way of gaining what they wanted. Some supplied themselves with stones, and pelted the branches till they brought down one of the dark little bags. Those who managed it neatly, and did not aim at the bag, but at the branch or twig to which it was attached, were not unfrequently successful in bringing down their game safe and unharmed into their hands, though sometimes a clever climber intercepted it in its fall. But those who were too eager, or too clumsy, struck with their stones the bag itself, and breaking through the skin, let loose a shower of golden coin, to the intense delight of the many, but to his own great mortification.

All, however, did not set their hearts and strain their strength and skill to reach these little wallets of gold.

There were sleek-looking gentlemen, who stole stealthily, and often unnoticed, round about, and in and out, till they found a way, and then would noiselessly glide up the branches with a skill quite wondrous, and deftly grasp a little glittering head-dress, which some called a coronet, but others a fool's cap.

There were gentlemen in black gowns and grey tie-wigs, who gently shook the lower branches of the tree, till down from one of the upper shoots there fell a skull-cap, thickly covered with short grey hair, and a red cloak with an ermine collarette.

There were tall moustachioed fellows, who made many a gallant rush and spring to reach a cocked hat with white and red feathers; and there were beadles who did the same.

There were a great number of lackadaisical

looking youths with guitars in their hands, who approached the tree singing and smiling, and with great eagerness clutched at a few fading leaves, and went away discontented when they got them. There were men of diverse forms and faces—fat and lean, ruddy and pale, gleeful or cadaverous—who seemed intent upon dragging down a number of full-made blue gowns, whose sleeves and collars were turned up with silver lace; and there was one of them who got with his gown a huge massive gold chain, which was so heavy when he put it on that he could not stir a single step.

Some, indeed, had striven to reach the little gold circlet which hung at the top, but the angel then proclaimed that none could reach that crown, but that it would be given to the one who made the best choice among the gifts which hung upon the Tree of Blessings.

Others had turned contemptuously away, had twirled their whiskers, and at length had languidly called out for lemonade, which was brought them, and they sipped it through straws, and looked on.

Many and many there were that tried to reach the loaves of bread which hung just—and only just—within arm's length. Women, mothers, there were, that dashed in and fought bravely till they plucked down a little print frock or pinafore. There were women who put forth the most valiant efforts to get a few flowers, or a nice cushioned mass of silky rolls of hair. There were some who struggled much to get a little phial of auricomous fluid, or pink paste; but what they did with them when they got them it would be quite impossible to say.

Towards the close of the scene, there appeared a little body of old girls and young, who made a steady rush towards the great tree, and began simultaneously to climb up it. They all converged towards one point, where one of the ugliest pieces of gear that mortal man ever devised dangled from one of the upper boughs. It was black in colour, and cylindrical in shape, and at one end there extended around it a black lip or ledge. It was made sometimes of soft flossy silk, and sometimes of beaver. To the ordinary observer, it seemed very unattractive; but this compact little phalanx of plucky girls, one and all, made a dash at it, and thought nothing of the peril or propriety of climbing—and all that could be said was that none of them appeared to great advantage, either when striving to get it, or when they had put it on.

At length the crowd, having chosen for themselves as far as it was possible, began to retire—not without murmurs and mutual accusations; and then, as the multitude began to subside, the Professor noted that one little girl, whose voice he had heard singing among the crowd, was wandering round and round the tree, casting wistful and eager looks in all directions, and yet seemingly unable to see what she wanted. The little worn and wan face began to look shaded with disappointment, as she passed on in her weary search. It seemed strange, too, for she had only one thing to choose, and now, after the crowd and tumult was ended, the ground was scattered over with quantities of bright and valuable things. Necklaces sparkling with jewels and gold—bracelets radiant with pearls and carbuncles—the gayest clothing, and the fairest ornaments, lay in negligent profusion at her feet; but she passed them all unheeded, and still—as though loth to turn away—looked wistfully up and down. At last she uttered a cry of gladness, and darted beneath the spreading lower branches, and seized, as they lay against the trunk of the tree—a pair of crutches! and, gleeful and quick, she flew back to the bank she had left, and gave them, with tearful joy, into the hands of her poor crippled white-haired father.

Just then the angel blew a trumpet, and as the crowd turned to look, he took the golden circlet from the topmost branch, and placed it on the maiden's head, beckoning her and her father to follow him. The Professor watched them as the three—angel, old man, and little girl gold-crowned—crossed over the open space to the pearly gate. He saw them pass in; he saw, an instant after, that the little maid returned, and left the crutches outside the gate, and just as she closed the door he saw her face—a face he knew so well—which had so long and fondly bent over his folios and his MSS. He made a start forward, as though to follow; but she turned, and waved her hand, and smiled, and passed through the gate once more.

Then the people vanished, and the tree and the sand began to rise up in one great column, and then to change its colour from the glaring yellow to a duller azure hue. The Professor's eyes began to unclose, and he saw the last puff rising from the bowl of his pipe. No one ever saw him smoke again.

For an instant he sat, half-dreaming still; but there—there lay at his feet the *Nördlich* Review, which had fallen from his knee as he slept; and he heard a hurried knock at his study door.

Without waiting his sleepy "Come in," there rushed in Mrs. Glaubmann, and blurted out her summons to the Professor to come and see the Fraulein Annette. Scared, and yet sleepy, still the Professor followed. There, in the little front room, beneath the window wainscot, lay Annette, panting and pale, and coughing up blood.

Days of watching and anxiety followed. For once reviews and critiques and folios were forgotten by the Professor. "Away—change of scene—the sunnier South, or the fresh sea breeze. Give her air! Put aside these dingy, dusty, gloomy books. Let us get from home!"

But the doctor (good Dr. Leiniger, whom all

Hartelbad loved), only shook his head, and gently said, "Let her rest." And she did rest, talking low to herself when alone, and smiling on every one who drew near.

While, hour by hour, from the dull dawn which never brightened in that little front room, till the glimmering sheen of sunset, which made a solitary patch of light upon the shutter, unwearied, the livelong day the Professor sat by his daughter's side. But he never said a word, save huskily to ask her how she felt. She did not mean to pain him, when she, smiling, said, in answer to this constant question, "Ready, father, ready!" He had been so quiet and so cold—and she was so guilelessly humble in her thoughts of self—that, though she loved him, she never thought that she would be a loss to him. She only lay and planned how she would ask her friend Lisette to come over and copy and write for her father in her stead.

One day—it was a bright Christmas morning, and the clear sun was shining down from a cloudless sky upon the snow-covered streets—as he sat beside her, she took one of his great tawny hands in both hers, and clasping it with her thin, white, ivory-like fingers, she said she had a request to make. She looked so bright and cheery as she spoke, that he almost smiled as he said, "You mean you would like to go to the South, by the sea?" But she only shook her head, and said, "No. I want you to let my little Sunday scholars come and see me!"

He could not say no; yet he felt faint when she said that. The doctor should decide, he said.

Dr. Leiniger looked at her for a while, and then said, speaking to the Professor, whose head was buried in his hands, "Let them come."

When the doctor had left, and good Mrs. Glaubmann had set off to summon the children, Annette put out her long thin fingers, and drew gently the great big tawny hand into hers again, and said, "Father!" He looked up. "I want to see the children, for I had a dream." He started. "Yes, a dream," she said. "A short one, but so sweet!" she continued, talking half to herself, and winding her pale fingers in and out of his great brown healthy ones. "I dreamed that a white-robed angel came, and took me by the hand, and placed a thin golden crown upon my head, and led me across an open space of sand to a gate of pearl, with lintels and side-posts of gold. And then I awoke. And I thought, if the angel comes for me, I should like to see my children, and tell them my dream, before I go," she added, fondling the great big hand, which trembled in hers. How weak he seemed, and she so strong, when the white-frocked little children, with happy faces subdued, came into the room!

She told them her dream. She talked to them of the fair bright land which lay beyond the pearly gate. She spoke of the good kind Shepherd who carries the lambs, even the smallest, in his bosom, over the rough and briery ways, and never leaves them till he makes them lie down on the soft green grass of the meadows which are skirted by the River of Life.

And then she asked them to sing for her a hymn she had taught them.

It was about the happy land which was far away. They had gathered round her—little soft, chubby hands were linked round hers. Sweet and low and broken were their childish voices, as they sung of those realms "far away," and when they faltered in the song, she smiled, and said, "Not far away." And when they looked, the angel had come, and taken her through the pearly gate.

The Professor was there all the while; but he was like one stupefied. He followed her to the grave. Silent! He was silent in his now lonely house.

On the day of her burial there arrived a huge official blue envelope. Listlessly he opened it, and there dropped out a gay-looking decoration, and the letter which accompanied it stated that it was sent from the king, in recognition of the distinguished services rendered to literature by Professor Hochgriffern in his great work recently published.

It was nothing to the Professor. It left him as it found him—silent and listless. Praise, which he thirsted for before, he valued as nothing.

He still wrote, but his pleasure was not there. He looked nearest like one pleased when he passed through the murky streets, and seeking out some of Annette's Sunday scholars, talked with them of the better land.

Some few years later, Christmas morning dawned upon the little town of Hartelbad. The early sunbeams crept into the Professor's study, and revealed him still sitting in his chair before his table, just as Mrs. Glaubmann had left him the previous night, and his head was resting on his hand, as though he were lost in thought. Yes! he is lost in thought. Move gently, Mrs. Glaubmann, as you dust the room this morning; but you need not fear to disturb your master's thoughts, for they are far away, in the land where his lost daughter dwells, and no call of yours will ever bring them back.

On the table before him lay a neatly-folded packet. Within it were found the decoration sent him by the king, a lock of his daughter's hair, and these words written on the paper which enclosed them:—"He who chooses the crown will find the cross. He who chooses the cross will find the crown."

Much loved for the quiet kindness and unceasing self-denial of his later years, there were few in Hartelbad who did not go to his funeral; and the children sang a hymn around his grave.

SEPARATION:

A TALE OF BROTHERLY LOVE. BY ST. JOHN CORBET, AUTHOR OF "THE CANON'S DAUGHTERS," "THE SQUIRE'S GRANDSON," "MINCE-PIE ISLAND," ETC.

CHAPTER I.
IN THE COLONY.

FAMOUS examples have been given to us of the depth and strength of fraternal affection by both Scriptural and classic history. Fiction, too, on a basis of fact, has made its contributions, and actual personal experience has provided instances almost without number. There is something grand and supremely unselfish in the love of brother for brother, of sister for sister. The strong tie of blood relationship is supplanted by a stronger tie in the heart, mind, and affections. The one brother's interest and pleasure is the other's care and concern, and while the younger leans upon the elder with all the force of unassailable confidence, the elder turns to his junior and asks counsel as freely as he gives it. The love is one that is born in the nursery, and is developed in the school-room, and it is one that begins to put forth all its power and strength in the fulness and bloom of manhood.

And yet there is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother. True, of course, but what does the statement prove? It always seems to me to be an argument in favour of the force of brotherly love; for while pointing directly to the strength of friendship* in its highest human form, it points indirectly to what it takes as a specimen of devoted alliance, namely, the closeness of the affection between brother and brother.

I do not think it will be a waste of time if we subject that alliance to one of the most powerful of moral tests—the touchstone of self-denial.

About five years ago, at the respective ages of twenty-one and nineteen, two brothers, Edmund and Henry Jervis, left England to seek their fortunes in one of the British colonies. Openings offered themselves, and with that promptness of decision which marks the man who is determined to get on, they resolved without delay to fill them. The elder brother, soon after landing, entered the Colonial Civil Service; the younger obtained a clerkship in a merchant's office, a speedy realisation of hopes which gladdened the hearts of all they had left behind. The parting from parents, family, and friends, had been a hard trial for warm and sensitive affections. It had necessarily more deeply affected those staying behind than those going away, for the latter were brothers strong in each other's love, strong in the knowledge that they themselves were not being separated, strong in the sympathetic feeling that their sorrow on leaving home was an equally divided sorrow. Fortified by all the virtues of manliness and hopefulness, they bade good-bye with comparative cheerfulness and buoyancy of heart. Those they loved parted from them with all good wishes, and with as slight a depression of spirits as it was possible to exhibit, and away they went to their distant destination, reaching it in safety after many weeks.

Hopes were fulfilled shortly after landing, and, as I have stated before, Edmund Jervis became a civil servant, and Henry a merchant's clerk. They only who have travelled to a distant colony, and have experienced a separation—destined probably to be long—from friends and relations in the "old country," know the intensity of the pleasure in writing the first letter home. Home is present to their minds exactly as it was when they left it. It has hardly been possible for time to introduce its many changes, so the letter and the familiar writing will find themselves at home at once, even though they travel thousands of miles.

Then, in due course, comes the pleasure of receiving the first letter from England, with a batch of newspapers, and perhaps a book or two, and this delightful excitement over—prolonged by reading neither letters nor papers hurriedly—there comes the gradual settling down to the manners of the new life, and the looking forward to the next mail. The old grief on parting is wearing itself away, the feeling of strangeness in a strange land is diminishing, and the duties of the day are performed with interest and with zeal.

For five years Edmund and Henry worked within a few hundred yards of each other in the chief town of the colony, their separations being few in number and of short duration. Henry was now and then called away up country, and now and then sent on business to a little sea-port, but his absences never exceeded three weeks, and, of course, the brothers always spent their vacations together.

They did not make very many friends, not because they found no one with whom to be friendly, but chiefly because it was necessary to live quietly and economically. However, they were all in all to each other, and only could enjoy in each other's company the unceasing pleasure of "home talks." Their frequent attendances at church, and the possession of good musical capabilities, soon brought them into contact with their vicar and his family, and gradually they

* The Hebrew word signifying husband is three or four times translated "friend" in the Old Testament.

made a few friends amongst the members of the amateur choir.

The vicar possessed one daughter, a bright, intelligent, happy-minded girl, and to her Edmund and Henry were particularly attractive, as they had so recently left the "old country." She herself had not been long in the colony, for she had stayed with an uncle and aunt to finish her education, and then had enjoyed a year's gaiety in London and various parts of the country. She brought away with her all her patriotic love, all her affection for England and things English, and though delighted to be once more with her parents, found a difficulty in accommodating herself to the ways, manners, and appearance of a strange land. She showed no signs, however, of anti-colonialism; she wearied nobody with silly regrets, nor was she guilty of childishly abusing new persons and new things; but it was impossible not to have a few English longings now and then, and impossible not to take especial delight in the society of the last new-comer.

To Kate Stafford the two brothers seemed by far the most charming of recent arrivals, and there always was the certainty of a most pleasant evening whenever they were asked to dinner. Their father's house at home lay but a few miles from a rectory in which Kate had often stayed when in England. They knew every tree and ditch for miles around, and Kate herself was familiar with the majority of those rural objects of interest. Edmund, moreover, had a botanical turn, and when Kate discovered this she discovered a common interest, one which a thousand conver-



"A parting in all its nervous sadness and bitterness."—*p.* 44.

sations could not possibly exhaust. If she had had her own way, therefore, the two brothers would have been asked to dinner every day in the week. They did come usually once a week, and occasionally spent Sunday evening at the vicarage.

Kate, from her goodness of disposition, her beauty, and her cheerful sprightliness, was very generally admired in the colonial metropolis; and when persons came to see how happy she always seemed in the society of Edmund and Henry Jervis, it was supposed that one or both of them had made a conquest.

Friends of the vicar privately asked each other, "Which does she prefer?" and other persons wondered if the younger would give way to the elder, should it happen that both were smitten.

There was not the slightest approach to love-making, however, on the part of either brother. Such a word as love never entered into either's mind, at least, had not entered up to the present moment. That both admired her was undeniable, their admiration arising from their enjoyment of her thorough Englishness, her patriotic affection for "home," and her irrepressible cheerfulness and good-humour. It should be added, also, that there was a likeness in her to their own sister, not so much in face, as in tastes, manners, and modes of expression, and it was impossible not to become attached to her in the course of a long acquaintance. The brothers and Miss Stafford were thrown often together in consequence of the very great liking the vicar and his wife had taken to their new friends, and when Edmund and Henry were casting about for a place wherein to spend their first holidays, the vicar said, "Suppose you join us at the place where we ourselves are going?" The matter was settled at once: a junction was effected at the seaside, and a most pleasant vacation was spent.

The stipendiary magistrate at the seaside place was a nephew of Mr. Stafford, and it was not long before he was introduced to Edmund and Henry Jervis. He shortly became very intimate with them, and they were frequently at his house enjoying his good piano and his fine collection of classical music. Three or four evenings before the vacation closed Edmund was alone with him, Henry being with the vicar at a large cattle "station," forty or fifty miles up the country. Captain Stafford noticed, or fancied he noticed, a very marked liking in Henry Jervis for his cousin Kate, and though entirely free from the least symptom of vulgar inquisitiveness, he was anxious to ask Edmund one or two questions. He led up to the subject very cautiously and circuitously, and altogether failed, by an indirect method, to extract anything from Edmund. He then went straight to the mark.

"I don't want to say anything impertinent, Mr. Jervis," he observed, "but it has struck me once or twice that a slight attachment, so slight that it may possibly end in nothing, has sprung up between your brother and my fair cousin. Please answer me by silence if you think proper, as I have not the least wish to be impertinently inquisitive, I assure you, and pray accept an apology if——"

"No apology needed at all, Captain Stafford," replied Edmund. "I have no doubt my brother admires your cousin to the same extent that I admire her myself, for she is a charming English girl, clever and attractive in many ways; but the sort of attachment you mean is quite out of the question, I am afraid."

"You are afraid?"

"Well, yes; for, to tell you the truth, it would give me the greatest pleasure in life to see my brother in love with a girl worthy of him—that is to say in love with—but——oh, no, there cannot be an attachment, I fancy!"

Captain Stafford asked no more questions. It struck him that Edmund was slightly embarrassed—as, indeed, he was—and that to press him on the subject would be to act inquisitively. So he said no more. Of course he thought a little, and not unnaturally, perhaps, fancied that possibly it was Edmund who was attached to the fair cousin. He was quite wrong, however. But I will not anticipate.

The following evening he was alone with Henry Jervis, and having really his cousin's interests at heart, and thinking it not altogether unlikely she had lost a portion of her affections to one of the brothers, determined to address to Henry much the same observations that he had addressed to Edmund.

"I am nearly positive there cannot be the least fraction of the sort of attachment you mean, Captain Stafford. I most sincerely wish it was in Edmund's power to fall in love with your cousin; but I believe it is not, and I fancy it never will be. She is a most lovable and amiable girl; but were she an angel even, I don't think Edmund would feel able to fall in love with her."

"You puzzle me."

"I puzzle you I dare say, and why? Because I cannot tell you all. In plain English because I cannot tell a secret. The subject is one I don't like to discuss, because it brings to my mind the one secret which I do not share with my brother. We hide nothing from each other: our letters and purses are common property, our interests likewise, and our aspirations; but I fancy Edmund has a secret which, for the best of reasons, he does not tell to me, and I fancy he thinks I have a secret which, for the best of reasons, *I* don't reveal."

"And each thinks he guesses the other's secret?"

"Exactly so."

"Well, I hope my cousin has not lost her heart to either of you."

"I most devoutly hope she has not!"

That night the brothers told each other that Captain Stafford had asked a question touching his cousin Kate, and each repeated to the other as much of the conversation as he felt able. One or two comments only were made; but both Edmund and Henry lay awake thinking for some time. Not a word more, however, was said upon the subject.

CHAPTER II.

SEPARATED.

THE five years seemed to pass with wonderful rapidity. Constant occupation, undisturbed by those little worries and troubles which seem to add minutes to hours and hours to days, kept the brothers' minds in healthful activity. Promotion added to their zeal, and the good opinion of superiors and equals made them happy.

The hoisting of a flag once a month on the high tower of the General Post Office was always a moment of excitement, for it announced that the mail steamer had been telegraphed, and that home letters were near at hand. Though many were the months that had passed, and many the letters that had been delivered, the wonder and curiosity produced by the arrival of the mail had in no degree grown less. Envelopes were opened with undiminished pleasure and eagerness; good news was gratefully received, and what seemed to be bad was made the best of.

The last mail brought news of an exciting nature—nothing less, in fact, than a summons home. But the summons did not come to both brothers: it came to Henry only, and its effects would necessarily be a separation. The request to return to England was as gratifying and flattering as it was unexpected, for it came from the head of the firm under which Henry was serving, and meant not only increase of pay, but promotion, and a high clerkship in the London office. Henry's first impulse on reading the senior partner's letter was to say nothing to Edmund on the subject, and to write a reply expressing the deepest gratitude and a desire to retain his present position. The idea of separation was intolerable. He could not entertain it, and the proffered promotion brought little pleasure, for there was so small a prospect of any for Edmund.

Concealment of the news, however, was impossible; for, by the same mail, Edmund received a letter from his father, in which he stated that the head of Henry's firm had just called upon him, and told him of his intention to promote Henry to a clerkship in London; so one brother knew as much as the other, and the letter that went by the outgoing mail contained Henry's acceptance of the offer.

The younger brother showed far more regret at the impending separation than the elder. Edmund's principal feeling was one of unselfish delight at Henry's great success. A manly, strong-minded fellow, he would not allow thoughts of a parting to unnerve and distress him, and no matter how unnerved and distressed he might very naturally have been, he would have made no exhibition of weakness to his brother. What he did exhibit was strength, for he felt it. He was no dissembler, no actor.

Henry's grief was plain to all; but being so constantly in the company of a manlier nature and a more determined will, he soon overcame it. He drew strength from his brother, and allowed himself freely to enjoy the bright prospect of well-earned good fortune.

His presence in London was not desired immediately. It was not necessary to start by the very first ship leaving for England; but Edmund urged him not to delay, so he took passage in the *Belle Sauvage*, which was to sail eight weeks after the receipt of his master's letter.

It is needless to say that the Staffords were very sorry to lose him, and that Mrs. Stafford and Kate at once entered into a conspiracy to make his cabin as comfortable as possible; and it is needless to add that his return was looked forward to with intensest pleasure at home.

"I am glad it is not Edmund who is summoned home," observed their father, "for Henry's grief at being left behind would be insupportable; but Edmund will bear the parting well."

There was not a little excitement in preparing for the voyage home, and in becoming acquainted with the *Belle Sauvage*, and with some of the passengers occasionally met on board. Henry's mind consequently was diverted; and, drawing strength from his brother's cheerfulness and buoyancy of spirits, he began to feel pleasure in contemplating the prospect of a trip by sea.

"Perhaps it would be wrong to say," he observed to Kate one day, "that home is where Edmund is, seeing that I have the best of parents in England; so I will not say that, but will congratulate myself on having two homes."

"A very sensible view to take," replied Kate. "Well, we will take care of your brother, and try to make your colonial home as happy for him as possible."

Sailing ships are not famous for punctuality in their times of starting. They are advertised to leave on the 10th of a month perhaps, and when the 9th comes, it is found there is still much cargo to be stowed away, or that something unexpected must be done which cannot be finished in time. So the date must be changed, and the last good-

bye postponed. The *Belle Sauvage*, however, her agents and captain, bore the best of names, and as she was advertised for the 21st, Henry knew she would sail at latest on the morning of the 22nd; so when Edmund said it would not be necessary to go on board to-night, Henry at once expressed a wish to be on the safe side.

"I had rather go on board to night, Ned," he said; "for it is not at all impossible we may start soon after midnight. All my traps are in the cabin and hold, and I think I should like to walk down to the station at once."

So, having bidden farewell to all friends, they made for the station, and reached the good ship between nine and ten o'clock.

"Shall we be off to-night, Captain, do you think?"

"Not a doubt of it. The pilot is on board, and the tug alongside, so I think another hour will see us on our way home."

The captain's prophecy came true, and at a quarter to eleven o'clock passengers' friends were requested to leave the ship, and as the harbour clock chimed a quarter past a start was made. The last hour was a trying one for the two brothers; and friends, guessing this would be the case, had discreetly refrained from accompanying them on board; so they had the time to themselves, and there was no one present to disturb the sacredness and impressiveness of "last words."

Eight weeks of preparation for a parting had not been without some effect. They had served, in fact, to break in the two brothers, to school them, and to nerve them for the separation. But they could not beat down and deaden all the breathing, living, pulsating warmth of feeling that ran through and animated two deeply affectionate natures. The parting was a parting in all its nervous sadness and bitterness; but it was bravely faced and carried through.

"Write by the mail, that I may find a letter when I arrive."

"I will. Go and see Bessie the day after you land."

One more shake of the hand, and Edmund stepped on shore. A signal from the pilot, and the vessel was off.

* * * * * *

I think we may accept it as true that *Nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit*, and may take Dr. Johnson as an illustration at that particular moment when he described a ship as "a prison, with the chance of being drowned."

There are few greater pleasures than travelling by sea; and while it is impossible to manufacture much affection for a railway carriage or a coach, it is wholly impossible to resist loving the good ship that is bearing you along. She is interesting from stem to stern, from keel to masthead. Her obedience to orders is really affecting, and her cleverness in bad weather and high seas is something you are bound to admire. Her exquisite beauty under full sail you cannot appreciate while on board, but if you see another vessel passing by with all canvas set, you can guess what is the majestic and imposing beauty of your own ship. Then, who shall fail to grow fond of his own snug little cabin, which a passenger can adorn prettily, if a man of purse and taste? Indeed, a cabin is something to become attached to, no matter how small and bare it may be. Sea voyaging has its drawbacks and uncomfortablenesses, of course, whereof grumblers invariably make the most; but it has pleasures without number, which it does not require a Mark Tapley to find out.

Henry Jervis, having found his sea-legs, set to work to enjoy himself, and to sweeten the bitterness of a parting which he felt he could never forget. He arose early that he might enjoy the surpassing beauty of a fine morning at sea; jumped into the deck-tub and had a good bath; paced the deck with the chief mate; washed and dressed for breakfast; devoured coffee, dry toast, and grilled bones; played at ship quoits; projected a weekly newspaper, and called it the *Binnacle Chronicle;* set penny readings and lectures agoing; got together a choir for the Sunday services; learned the art of taking observations; followed the ship's course on the chart; fished for small sharks, and shot huge albatrosses; watched the signalling to passing vessels; listened to the bubbling and hissing water around innumerable little icebergs; lowered the captain's boat in a calm, and exercised himself with rowing; climbed the rigging, and had to pay footing; sighted the two lights at the Lizard point, and then—then found himself at home! Eighty-four days gone as though they had been eighty-four hours! Eighty-four pleasant, health-giving, enjoyable, interesting days, spent in "a prison, with a chance of being drowned!"

There was no such fun as this for Edmund Jervis. He returned to his lodgings with a heart heavy as lead, but with a stout and stalwart determination to bear up bravely, and to give his brother no gloomy account of himself by next week's outgoing mail. Such resolution as his could not possibly end in defeat. He worked himself into his old buoyancy of spirits, strove to shake off the inevitable feeling of loneliness that naturally clouded over him, and profited on every opportunity by the unceasing kindness of the Staffords.

In due time, that is to say, in about eighteen weeks, the mail brought a letter from Henry. In it was a full and lively account of the voyage, of the arrival at home, of parents, family, friends, and

relations, with a few lines touching his new London office, and the duties of his new appointment. There was also a postscript, which ran thus :—

"I could not possibly see Bessie the day after I landed, because she was visiting in the North. She returned yesterday, however, and I at once drove over to see her. She is exactly the Bessie of early days, with the exception of the more womanly look which the lapse of five years would naturally give her. It has given her greater beauty, to my thinking, and rendered solid, dignified, and substantial all that before was girlish. She sent her best love, and promised to write."

Edmund read and re-read the postscript, and when the day's duties were over, took Bessie's letter into the fields, and read it as he walked along.

CHAPTER III.

BESSIE AND KATE.

Henry Jervis was granted three weeks' holiday, and at the end of that time he entered upon his duties in the City. For some little while he found himself in what De Quincey called the "nation" of London without a single friend to visit. Metropolitan friends he had, but they were now at the seaside or in Scotland, so he was able to live in such repose and quietness as London streets will allow.

To his great surprise, he received a letter one morning, stating that his old friend Dr. Goodwin, a physician of eminence in the Midland counties, and father of the Bessie who has once or twice been alluded to, had resolved to move to London, and that he might be expected in a month's time. The doctor had grown wealthy in his profession, and being now too old for long country journeys, had determined to settle in London, and to content himself with just as few patients as might choose to consult him. He would be sure of the old pulses he had felt in Warwickshire, of the familiar tongues he had inspected in Staffordshire, and of the honoured chests he had stethoscoped in Shropshire, so practice would not wholly desert him. His eldest son would step into his Midland shoes, and the big fees would still remain in the family.

Henry Jervis was not more surprised than delighted.

"With Bessie and the Goodwins in London I shall indeed be well stocked with friends! The abundance of quality will more than atone for the smallness of quantity."

The prospect of enjoying the company of such dear and revered old friends drove Henry's spirits to almost their highest altitude, and by day and night he congratulated himself on the coming good fortune. He was altogether in a happy state now, for Edmund wrote very cheerfully from the colonial home, announcing excellence of health, increase of pay, and possible promotion to a higher appointment. He also mentioned that Mr. Stafford had been made an archdeacon, and that Kate had come into a small fortune through the death of a godmother.

So Henry Jervis could hardly help being in good spirits ; but he knew the spirits could never reach quite their highest altitude until he went to Edmund or Edmund came to him.

Very dear and revered old friends, as I have said before, were the Goodwins. Edmund and Henry had known them all their lives. The good doctor had paid them their very first compliment, for he had said first of one and then of the other that he was the finest baby in the Midland counties. Brought up within a quarter of a mile of Bessie, the two brothers had constantly played with and teased her, and through cloud and sunshine, storm and calm, had gallantly loved her. Their pocket-money was lavishly spent upon her ; their rocking-horse gave her her first lessons in riding, their donkey continued her education, and their pony finished it. From school she received numerous letters, and when she went to school herself the letters were supplemented by copies of magazines and newspapers. So Edmund, Henry, and Bessie were almost brothers and sister, and as they grew up they seemed to grow fonder of one another. We can easily imagine, then, what general grief there was when duty called the two brothers from England, and when it became probable that many years must pass ere happy intercourse could be renewed. They survived the parting, however, and found their spirits again in time, and now Henry was in England, and destined to be almost as near his old playfellow as when all lived in a Midland county.

The time soon came for the arrival of the Doctor in London ; and the evening after he reached his new home Henry found himself once more a guest.

"Old times come again, Harry," said the doctor, "and we only want Edmund to throw us back half a dozen years."

"Let us hope that old patients will produce that effect," replied Henry.

"They are not unlikely ; for two hours after breakfast this morning I was looking at a familiar Salopian tongue, and to-morrow a fine Staffordshire chest is to submit itself to my ear."

Thrown again with Bessie, and now grown up, what more natural than that Henry should fall in love with her? Perhaps he always was in love with her ; undoubtedly he always was boyishly. Boyish affection, however, is very springy ; its saltatory powers rival those of the grasshopper, and of that "incisive" insect of which Mr. Disraeli talked to the electors of Bucks a few years ago. It can jump almost any distance. It spurns intermediate stages, and leaps from almost childish regard to very deep manly affection. It was very natural indeed that Henry should deeply love Bessie.

XUM

Lovable she was in every way. A pure, refined and cultivated mind was hers. A disposition almost angelic in its perfect sweetness was hers. She was amiable, religious, unaffected, sincere. As for her personal appearance, that was in every respect in her favour. She was of middle height, hazel-eyed, fair-haired, beautifully proportioned, stylish, and plump. A musical voice she had, and musical tastes of the highest order. So, altogether, there was ample excuse for Henry Jervis's admiration of her.

But did Henry suffer himself to love her? He did not—at least, if he did permit himself, he was hardly aware of the fact. He knew what his admiration meant, and flattered himself he had self so completely under control as to be able to turn it this way or that, to curb and to check it, with but the slightest motion. But there were times when an invisible whisperer told him that admiration meant LOVE, and then he drew the reins very tightly indeed, put on the drag, and came to a standstill at the earliest moment possible.

And what of Bessie? She was sweet Bessie Goodwin still, the same that she always was—perfect as a sister, perfect as a friend, exactly as a big girl what she was as a little one—always bright, cheerful, and affectionate, always a pattern of goodness, high-mindedness, and love. She could not change her manner towards Henry. Whether she loved him matrimonially or not, she must of necessity love him—she must show how thoroughly she enjoyed his company, how great and unchangeable was her regard.

She had not seemed one whit more attached to Henry than to Edmund all the days that they were together, and were Edmund returning to England, Bessie would be one of his heartiest welcomers. If she had a preference, she had never shown it, and the brothers had long believed themselves on a footing of perfect equality in her esteem.

But why did not Henry allow himself to feel and to tell all his love? Because he had a secret belief—shall I say fear?—that Edmund deeply loved Bessie. Here was the one secret to which Henry made allusion when speaking to Captain Stafford.

Each brother believed the other in love with Bessie, and in the sincerity of his fraternal affection each tried hard to gain the mastery over his heart.

When Edmund heard that his brother was returning to England, he at once reflected that he was virtually returning to Bessie; and when Henry received news of his promotion, her name was the first in his mind. Henry came home with a firm and resolute determination not to attempt to "cut out" his brother, and for some time he was to Bessie the intimate friend he had always been—that, and nothing more. But after Dr. Goodwin had been a month in London Henry felt the ground of his determination slip from his feet, and he knew that he was in love. He knew, therefore, that if he gave his affections free play, he must of necessity cut out Edmund.

This act of unfraternal conduct must on no account be committed.

Without a day's hesitation he gave up his old lodgings in town, and removed to Staines, and so put some little distance between himself and dear Bessie. He was not acting cruelly towards her, he believed, as he felt sure that, were Edmund in England, she would feel and show just the same love for the elder as for the younger brother.

On the morning of the day on which he removed to Staines his sister received a letter from Edmund, in which were the following sentences:—

"Tell me, by return of mail, all you know respecting Harry and Bessie. Write fully, and be very explicit. Is it plain that they are in love with one another? I believe Bessie has loved us equally for years, and am quite certain she has excited in Harry as much affection as she has excited in me. Now and then, perhaps, I have allowed myself to believe that I had one little fraction more of her heart than Harry, and that, consequently, I could make her one little atom happier than he. But doubtless I was deluding myself. Now, please sit down at once and tell me everything. I can trust you, dearest Carrie, to write the whole truth, and nothing but it."

Caroline Jervis did sit down at once, and that which she wrote was the whole truth, and nothing but it. She mentioned her brother's hasty removal to Staines, the infrequency of his visits to Dr. Goodwin, and ended with, "And I am quite certain that Harry and Bessie are most deeply attached to each other." She entered fully into the matter, described the minds and thoughts of Harry and Bessie so far as she was able to read them, and told all her impressions in the plainest language she could command.

Carrie posted the letter and went her ways. There was nothing more to be done. She could and did write by subsequent mails, but there was nothing new to tell on the matter: things remained as they were. Henry and Bessie met once or twice a fortnight, and there was no alteration, she was certain, in the strength of their attachment.

But Henry was not happy. He worked hard and well, and gave his employers unqualified satisfaction. Business affairs seemed to prosper with him, and the outside world could not but think him one of the most fortunate of men; still he was not happy, and his letters to his sister were short, and in many respects different from what they used to be.

And what of Edmund?

In six weeks' time, or rather less, Carrie's letter reached him. He read and re-read it, and went his ways. He lay awake the whole night digesting its contents, and when he went to work in the

morning his face wore no haggard and fatigued expression, but rather the expression of a determined man whose mind had first been exercised and then strung up to a point of iron resolution. He was not a man to act precipitately, but when once his mind was made up, his course of action was as plainly marked out as the foundations of a house.

Harry loved Bessie, and Harry must marry her. He himself must give her up. As one brother must lose, he was undeniably the one to suffer loss, because the loss must be less to the brother at a distance than to the one within sight of her face. Moreover, it had been ascertained that Bessie loved Harry. Who, then, could think of separating them by selfish or other action?

"I believe the voice of preference has spoken," Edmund said to himself; "far be it from me to let it speak to no purpose."

He answered Carrie's letter, thanked her for the whole truth she had spoken in it, and told her various little items of news about himself and the Staffords. He also sent Henry a letter, writing in a most cheerful strain, and detailing a dozen little matters of interest. Then he went his ways again, and made himself happy at the vicarage and at two or three other houses where he was always a most welcome guest.

A month passed by, and the time came round again for sending despatches home. Edmund had something to say to his mother, something to his sister, and then he sat down to give Henry the latest news.

"My Dear Harry,—The plot thickens, as the newspapers say, and I fancy there will be a tremendous explosion at the vicarage before long. Dear Kate and I have dared to grow inextricably attached to each other. The Archdeacon says he cannot possibly separate us, and what, therefore, remains to be done? I hope we shall find a solution of the difficulty before next mail. Till then, and in greatest haste, Ever your affectionate brother,

"Ned."

It would seem that the difficulty was solved ere the departure of the next mail, for by it Henry received a newspaper in which the following paragraph was marked:—

"Marriage of Miss Stafford.—The cathedral was crowded in every part yesterday morning to witness the nuptials of Miss Katharine Hester Stafford with Mr. Edmund Richard Jervis, of the Colonial Secretary's Office. The service was performed with deep feeling and solemnity by the Lord Bishop of the diocese, assisted by the Very Rev. the Dean, the beautiful bride being given away by the Venerable Archdeacon Stafford, her father. After the wedding breakfast, which was given at St. Peter's Vicarage, Mr. and Mrs. Edmund Jervis left for Port Donnerville, where they will spend the honeymoon."

The above paragraph tells its own tale, and may fitly end mine. By way of postscript I may add, however, that Edmund was not the only Jervis married within the year.

HUGH'S HEROISM.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SHAG AND DOLL."

CHAPTER I.

CASTDEAN was a quiet, old-fashioned country town. Life there flowed on smoothly and peacefully, without bustle or excitement. Few changes took place; even the building of a new house was a rare event; and everything seemed to remain just as it had done for years and years.

The inhabitants boasted of the antiquity of their town, and pointed out with pride the remains of the old city walls, which had formerly closed it in all round, but of which the traces had gradually vanished on two sides, as the place grew and overstepped its original bounds.

On the other side, however, the walls still remained, half crumbled away in some parts; and in others forming a broad pleasant walk for the townspeople, covered as they were by a thick carpet of turf, the growth of centuries; and affording, by their elevation, a more extended view over the sunny fields and meadows surrounding the town than could easily be obtained elsewhere; for it was in a flat though fertile district that Eastdean lay.

There were four principal streets, called Northgate, Southgate, Eastgate, and Westgate; doubtless, because in former days they had led to the old city gates. But these had long since totally disappeared; though the wide open gutters running down each side of the streets still remained; whilst the grass, springing up in the crevices between the stones with which they were paved, bore evidence to the fact that, whatever might have been the case in former times, Eastdean had ceased to be a place of much traffic or commerce.

At the end of Southgate Street, close upon the town walls, which, opening just there, allowed a good view out into the country beyond, stood the residence of Mr. Lester, solicitor, as the small brass plate upon the door announced.

It was a good roomy, old-fashioned house, only numbering two stories, but making up in length what it wanted in height. A large garden stretched out at the back and side, upon which most of the sitting-rooms opened, with French windows; and in which grew plenty of shady trees, and sweet-smelling flowers, and abundance of fruit.

Children's voices might often be heard there, filling the air with sounds of merriment; and two little roguish faces might often be seen peeping through the railings of the gate which led from the garden into the street.

XUM

Bright boyish faces they were, with clustering curly hair and dimpled cheeks; whilst, so alike were the two, that one saw at a glance they were twins; for the one seemed but the second half of the other. If one laughed, the other was sure to laugh as well; if one cried, the other cried in sympathy; if one was idle over lessons, the other seemed to fancy it a desertion of the common cause to be industrious; if one was punished, the other never could rest until he, too, had committed some offence, and received a like chastisement.

The six years of their little lives had been happy, peaceful ones, as far as they were concerned; their childish troubles, when they did come, being always lightened by being borne together. And if Mrs. Lester would sometimes wish that they would not always encourage one another in mischief, as they did—for two heads plotting and planning were more difficult to circumvent than a single one—still she could not but feel a true motherly pride and delight as she looked upon the bright loving little pair.

The other members of Mr. Lester's family consisted of two girls: Margaret, who was about fourteen, and Kate, who was two years younger.

But one consequence of this difference of age was, that the two girls seemed to feel they had nothing in common with the two boys. They were too old to join in their games; were becoming too much of young ladies to tolerate their romping boisterous ways; and appearing to fancy that their part was to repress, if possible, and keep in order those turbulent spirits, they set about it in such a way as to stir up every latent feeling of rebellion in the little untamed natures; so that there were frequent skirmishes between the two sets of allies.

The girls went to school by day, whilst Hugh and Bertie did lessons, or were supposed to do them, with their mother; but out of school-time there were many leisure hours, when that famous old garden formed the favourite place of resort for all four. There, in the hot summer afternoons, Margaret would take her book; Kate, who usually followed her lead in everything, doing the same, and, finding a comfortable seat under the shade of a spreading walnut tree, they would soon be absorbed in the interest of their stories.

On this particular afternoon in June they were so seated, when after a while they became conscious of a shower of fine dust falling around them. They brushed it off their pages, and took no notice for a time, until the dust grew into small lumps of earth, which came rattling down upon them, occasionally intermixed with a little gravel. As long as they could, they bore it, knowing well enough from whence it came, and therefore preserving a dignified silence, thinking to tire out their tormentors.

But at length Margaret could stand it no longer. Looking impatiently up into the tree, she saw there two pairs of bright eyes, twinkling with fun, and two little faces brimming over with mischief.

"Hugh and Bertie, come down!" she exclaimed. "You've no business to be up there; and it's very provoking of you to be so tiresome. Can't you go and play somewhere else, and leave us in peace? I'm sure the garden 's big enough."

"Then why can't you go and sit somewhere else?" boldly demanded Hugh, who did not treat his elder sister with the respect to which she thought herself entitled.

"Because this is my favourite seat."

"And so *this* is ours," replied two little voices in chorus. "This is such a splendid old tree to climb!"

"I can't think what you always want to be climbing trees for! Why can't you be content to play on the ground?" said Margaret, a little irritably.

"Because it's much more jolly to scramble up here, where you can't come," and another little shower of earth was allowed to descend upon Margaret's upturned face.

As a natural consequence, some dust got into her eyes.

Smarting from the effects, she exclaimed, "Hugh and Bertie, you shan't stop up there any longer. Come down this instant! You are the naughtiest boys I ever saw!"

"We can't come yet," returned one of the voices overhead; "for we haven't finished raining. Papa said the ground was very dry, so we're giving it a shower. We've still got some cabbage-leaves full of rain, and we must send it all down."

After a little more altercation, Margaret, seeing the hopelessness of the case, desisted from further argument; and, turning to her sister, said, "Come, Kate, let us go somewhere else. It's no good expecting reason from these absurd boys."

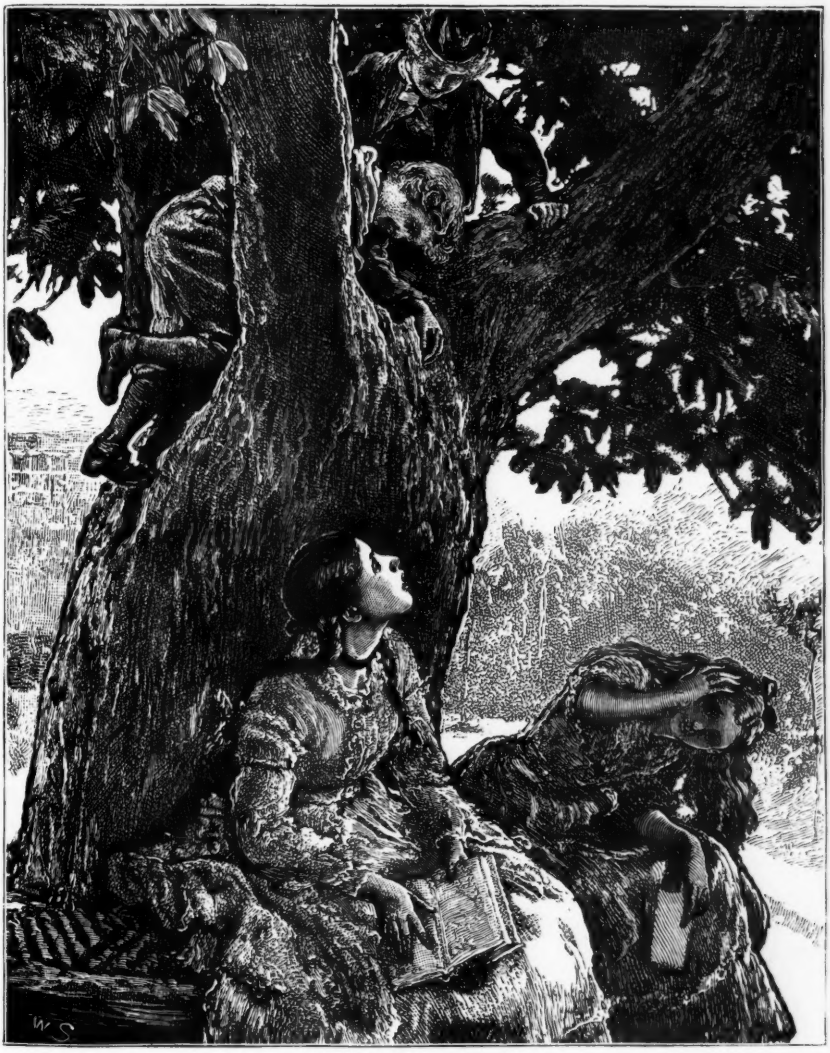
And, accordingly, the two girls went off in search of another retreat.

CHAPTER II.

The next morning, as they sat at breakfast in the dining-room—the only sitting-room which looked out into the street—Hugh perceived the postman approaching the house.

"There he is!" he exclaimed; which was the signal for both boys to scramble down from their chairs, and race to the front door, to take the letters from his hands.

The great thing was to see who would get to him first. Hugh was the happy one this time; but he immediately handed one of the letters he had received to Bertie, reserving the other for himself. Then they rushed back to the dining-room with their spoil, exacting, as their custom was, a kiss in payment, from the happy individual to whom the letter was addressed, who, of course, was nearly always either papa or mamma. But this morning, they little guessed what would be the result of the missive they brought in so joyously!



(*Drawn by* WILLIAM SMALL.)

"Hugh and Bertie, come down!"—*p.* 48.

Eastdean, as we have said, was not a rising place, and therefore did not afford very much scope for a stirring lawyer. But Mr. Lester was not a stirring man; and, having some private means of his own, had been content to go on in a quiet manner, doing such business as came in his way, and paying little heed to the fact that his clients were gradually becoming less and less numerous.

And so things had gone on; the only difference being that, as the income arising from the profession seemed yearly to diminish, so Mrs. Lester found it yearly necessary to make little retrenchments in the expenses; to be more and more careful and economical.

Therefore, they could little afford to bear the tidings which the letter brought in that morning, of the loss of a considerable portion of their property — news which the paper of that day confirmed.

It was a great and sudden blow, seeming to paralyse all Mr. Lester's energies; and sending Mrs. Lester to sit down over abstruse accounts and calculations as to whether they could still, by exercising the most rigid economy, continue to live in the home which had been theirs all their married life, or whether they must turn out and begin afresh.

The conclusion at which she arrived was that, perhaps by dismissing two of the servants and only retaining one, putting down the little pony-carriage, and curtailing every unnecessary expense, they might possibly manage to hold on. At least, they could try it for a time. That was a present relief; but the perpetual daily struggle of endeavouring to make each pound last almost twice as long as it had done before, was a burden to be taken up in the future, and one that must chiefly press upon her shoulders.

So the house for the next few days was pervaded by a sober, subdued atmosphere, which the little boys perceived and felt, although too young to understand its cause.

Then came the postman again; and Hugh and Bertie had their usual scramble over the letter; though not quite so heartily as formerly, the present gloomy state of things having apparently some connection with postmen and letters.

But this one contained news which Mrs. Lester at once communicated to the whole party.

"Uncle Henry and Aunt Mary have arrived at last!" she said, looking towards the children. "They landed safely at Southampton yesterday, and are coming straight on to us, as it was arranged. So they will be here this evening, most likely."

"Hurrah!" shouted Hugh and Bertie, delighted at the prospect of visitors, and of seeing the Indian captain of whom they had heard so much.

Lessons had to be dispensed with that morning, as Mrs. Lester was too much engaged in making preparations for her visitors to have any time to bestow upon the little boys. So they had a fine time in the garden, where they climbed trees to their heart's content, and visited their pets—rabbits, toads, even caterpillars and spiders, it all came alike to them, their fondness for dumb creatures extending even to those less attractive kinds, and investing them with a sort of beauty in their eyes.

And meantime their talk was about uncle Henry, whom they had never yet seen, as he and their aunt had gone out to India before they were born.

He was a great hero in their eyes, for he was a soldier, and had been in battles; and the wildest speculations as to his appearance were made by his little nephews. They evidently expected to see somebody very different from the ordinary race of men, and therefore were a little disappointed when, about six o'clock, on hearing a cab draw up at the gate, they rushed out, and found a lady and gentleman in no way remarkable alighting from it.

They stood hand in hand, absorbed in the contemplation of Captain Norham, whilst greetings with the other members of the family were going on; but, to tell the sober truth, they found he was just an ordinary-looking gentleman, with dark moustache and beard, tall, slight figure, and military air; not maimed or disfigured in any way. Their hero had fallen a little in their estimation. Who was to know that he ever had been in the wars!

The few days of the uncle and aunt's visit soon slipped away, during which time the two boys, little knowing what was in store for them, gave themselves up to the enjoyment of the present.

The little fellows had gone to bed one night, after a delightful day, in which they had all been for a pic-nic to the ruins of an old abbey near, and had run about and tired themselves so completely, that their heads were no sooner on the pillow than they fell fast asleep. So sound were their slumbers, that they were quite unconscious of their mother paying them a visit later in the evening, when all the grown-up party had come up to their rooms.

The two curly heads lay side by side, whilst each little brother had thrown an arm round the other, and in that position had fallen asleep. A pretty picture they made, those two young unclouded faces, with a slight flush upon their cheeks, and a half smile playing around their lips, as if the last thoughts that night had been pleasant happy ones.

As Mrs. Lester stood gazing upon them, every now and then stooping down to press a kiss upon the soft rounded cheeks, her eyes filled with tears; but she tried to force them back, though there was a longing wistful look upon her face, as if she would gladly have caught them up and folded them in her arms had they not been buried in slumber so profound and so peaceful.

Perhaps her look lingered longer upon Bertie; but it fell very lovingly upon both. They slept on, however, unconscious of it all; going over, in their dreams, the joys and delights of the past day.

At length the mother turned away, and, opening the door of their little room, which was a dressing-room leading out of her own, she closed the door behind her, although she generally left it open. But to-night she must have some conversation with her husband, and the little fellows were to be the subject of it.

"I suppose we must decide at once whether we will accept or refuse Henry's offer?" was her first remark to Mr. Lester.

"Yes; because they will be leaving so soon. It is a very kind offer," returned Mr. Lester, "and a most advantageous one for Bertie. Henry promises, if we let him have the boy, to give him a thorough education, to bring him up exactly as he would his own son, and that means something very different from what we could do for him now with our straitened means."

"Yes, that is true," sorrowfully assented Mrs. Lester, feeling bitterly the meaning of that term "straitened means."

"But," she continued, "that isn't everything that we have to consider. There are the home ties and affections, and he is such a loving little fellow."

"But Mary will not let the boy want for love. If she had had any children of her own she would have been certain to have spoilt them. And Bertie seems quite to have won her heart: she has said, again and again, what a very engaging little fellow he is."

"So they both are," murmured Mrs. Lester.

"Yes; but they naturally choose Bertie, because he is their god-child; and as his is a less determined nature than Hugh's, they think perhaps he will be more tractable and easily managed."

Captain and Mrs. Norham had now returned to reside in England, the former having quitted the army; and the latter, whose one disappointment in life was the having no children of her own, had so completely lost her heart to their little god-son, that when her husband proposed that, for the sake of helping the Lesters in their present reverses, no less than for her own sake—as it would be so great a source of interest to her—they should take the boy to bring up as their own, if the parents would consent to it, she was delighted with the idea, and spared no arguments to induce her sister to agree to it.

Before Mr. and Mrs. Lester went to sleep that night, the little fellow's doom was decided upon; the parents believing they were consulting the boy's interests in accepting the generous offer.

CHAPTER III.

MRS. LESTER looked pale the next morning at breakfast time, and a very close observer might have detected traces of tears in her heavy eyelids; but her face wore its accustomed quiet smile, and her voice was as calm as usual, as she busied herself in attending to the wants and comforts of her visitors, scarcely allowing herself to glance at the two bright boyish faces, seated side by side, on her left hand, eating up their portion of porridge with the greatest relish, and keeping their eager eyes upon the window, that they might watch for the postman, for they would not have missed that scamper to the hall-door for anything; it made such a nice change, and rendered it less difficult to sit still till the end of breakfast time.

There was a letter for Captain Norham this morning.

"I find we must leave you a day earlier than we intended," he said, addressing Mrs. Lester, whilst he handed the letter to his wife. "I am summoned to London on business matters that cannot wait; so I hope it won't make much difference to you if we go this afternoon or evening, instead of to-morrow morning."

"We shall be very sorry to lose you so soon," was poor Mrs. Lester's reply, in a low voice. Then, turning to the children, she added, "If you have done, darlings, you may go out and play in the garden and stay there until I call you in."

So the parting was to come even sooner than had been expected.

She had stipulated that the boys should hear the news first from herself; but she put off the evil moment as long as possible. "Let them be happy whilst they can," she said to herself; but when the early dinner was over, she felt the dreaded task could be delayed no longer.

After having broken the news to the little brothers, she went on, addressing Bertie, who, as well as Hugh, seemed struck dumb by the announcement.

"You'll like seeing London, and all the grand things there, and the sights uncle is sure to take you to, won't you, darling?"

"If Hughie came too; I don't want them without him; I don't care for anything without him. Oh, mamma, let me stay here with you and Hughie; please—please do!" and the little arms were flung tightly round the mother's neck, whilst a sob escaped from the child.

"I can't, my darling; I must let you go. But you'll soon come back and see us again; if not before, at least at Christmas; and then you'll have so much to tell Hugh about London, that I'm afraid he'll be wanting to go too."

"No I shan't! and I hate uncle Henry!" exclaimed Hugh, passionately, his little face having darkened as he stood looking on, whilst Bertie and his mother clung to one another in a tearful embrace. "I hate him! I wish he'd never come here!"

"Hush, hush, Hugh! you mustn't speak like that, my boy. You are too young, perhaps, to understand, though I have been trying to explain to you, how very very kind a thing it is of Uncle Henry and Aunt Mary—so kind, that we can never love them enough;

and Bertie, I know, will soon feel as if he had two mothers."

"But he doesn't want two. It would be very greedy of him if he did, when one is enough for other people."

But they could not yet realise all the pain the separation would bring with it; and before the party drove off in the cab that was to take them to the station, certain pleasant visions of wonderful things to be seen and done in London had been opened before Bertie—things of which he might soon learn to write and tell his brother—whilst he held in his hand a half-a-crown given him by his uncle, which he at once made up his mind should all be laid out at the grandest shop in London upon some magnificent present for Hugh.

But the latter had steadily refused a like gift when offered him by Captain Norham; had sternly shaken his head, and resolutely put his hands in his pockets, looking upon it as a sort of bribe, and scorning to accept it.

He would not even say "good-bye" to his uncle; but when at length they tore Bertie from his arms —and they had to use actual force, so tightly were the two clinging together—he rushed away, and flinging himself down on the grass in a distant corner of the garden, gave way to a burst of grief so deep and violent, it seemed as if his little heart would almost break.

At night, after he was tucked up in his little bed —for the first time alone—his mother came and sat beside him, trying to soothe and comfort him by reminding him that Christmas would soon come round. But she herself was thinking sadly all the time of her other little one, away from both mother and brother, wondering how it was faring with him, and feeling, with Hugh, that though they might try to persuade themselves Christmas was near, many long weeks and months must in reality intervene before they would have their little Bertie again with them, and then it would be only for a time.

Hugh, after she had left him, sobbed himself to sleep; and when she came in again that night, as she had done on the previous one, she found a solitary little figure, with tear-stained cheeks and sorrowfully drooping mouth, lying where last night had been two bright smiling faces.

After that he took possession of the side of the bed which had always been Bertie's, lying so close to the edge that his mother asked the reason of it.

"I like to lie where he used to lie, and put my head just where he put his," was the reply.

"But why go so very close to the edge, when you can have all the bed?"

"Because," he answered, with a burst of tears, "I used to be so greedy when he was here, and take up such a lot of room; and one night I gave him a kick, because he said I was just like Juno—that's Mr. Hill's big dog, you know, who takes up all the mat, and won't let Carlo have any share of it. But oh, mamma, I wouldn't do that now! I'd let him have all the bed, and go and lie underneath if he wished it, if he'd only come back. Will you tell him how sorry I am when you write?"

"The better way would be to write yourself, wouldn't it, dear?"

"But I can't yet, mamma; I'm such a dunce; I never can remember how to make the letters."

"But you would soon learn if you tried hard, and gave your mind to it."

"Do you think I could?" asked Hugh, brightening. "I should so like to write him a letter; he'd be so pleased, wouldn't he?'

"Yes, indeed he would."

"Then I'll try, mamma. I won't hide to-morrow when lesson time comes, and I won't be always looking out of window instead of at my copy-book; and I won't dig the pen into the paper to see what a great splutter of ink it will make; but I'll try and be attentive, though it's very difficult, mamma."

"But you'll feel rewarded, darling, when you have got over the first beginnings."

"How soon do you think I shall be able to write—in a day or two? I know how to make two or three letters already—o and *e* and *i*."

The next morning Hugh kept his resolution, and came with an earnest business-like look to his lessons. But the little fat fingers were awkward and unmanageable, and soon got themselves covered with ink, and ached with trying to hold the pen as tightly as he thought necessary. Moreover, the letters came any shape but the right, seeming as if they were dancing all over the paper, defying him, and laughing at his stupidity.

It was such very hard work, and he did so hate sitting there making strokes that seemed to have no meaning in them, that nothing but his love for his brother, and great desire to please him, could have held him chained to his seat so long; but when it all appeared to be in vain, and he was no nearer being able to write a letter to Bertie than when he began, big tears of disappointment rose in his eyes, dropping upon his copy-book, and making the state of things there worse than it was already.

"Never mind, darling," said his mother, encouragingly; "you'll get on better to-morrow, I've no doubt; for it will seem easier to you every day, if you go on trying. And now I think it is time to go out in the garden again."

"I can't play at anything without Bertie, mamma! I don't know how to play by myself; and I want him so—oh, mamma, I want him *so* badly! why did you let him go away?" and there was a touch of reproach in the sorrowful tones as the last few words were uttered.

Mrs. Lester gave no reply, but pressed a silent kiss upon the child's forehead.

"Mamma, *why* did you send him away?" he

repeated. "If it was because he was naughty, you should have sent me, for it was always my fault when we got into mischief. I always proposed it, and he only did the things because I wanted him to. He never was naughty, mamma; and if you'd only let him come back we'd both be *so* good!"

"My darling, it wasn't on that account; it wasn't for any naughtiness we let him go."

"Then what was it, mamma? Couldn't you have prevented Uncle Henry's taking him? I'd have fought him for you, mamma, if I'd thought that."

"No, darling, it wasn't that," replied Mrs. Lester, smiling at her little champion's warlike attitude, though at the same time tears were standing in her eyes. "It is because we have lately lost a great deal of money, and are very much poorer than we were, and so should have found it difficult, and indeed impossible, to give our little boys all we should have liked and intended. But now we know Bertie will have all we could wish for him; and we shall be able to do more for our other little son."

"Then it's because we are poor, mamma?"

"Yes, darling."

"And you haven't enough to get us new clothes?"

"Scarcely, dear. At least we shall all have to be careful; and so of course it will make a great difference having only one little boy to supply with boots and knickerbockers instead of two."

"Oh, mamma, I'd go without boots and knickerbockers if Bertie might stay at home; I would indeed; I shouldn't mind a bit!"

Many such talks had the mother and little son during the first few sad days after Bertie's departure. And Hugh kept all the resolutions he then made, watching and inspecting the state of his clothes with a solicitude that brought a smile into his parents' faces, as they saw him sometimes seated on the ground examining with a grave face the knees of his knickerbockers in hopes of finding them still in good condition. "For," he said to himself, "perhaps when mamma and papa find how little it costs to keep a boy, and how seldom he wants new clothes, they'll see they can afford to have Bertie back again."

But as the dreary days went by, and his longing for his little playfellow grew more and more intense, a sort of aggrieved feeling took possession of him; for he was too young to understand all the reasons for giving up the little brother, and of course was unable to perceive that his parents' pain must be greater even than his. Therefore he felt indignant and angry somehow, though scarcely knowing how or on whom to vent the feeling. So it slumbered for a while, and then broke out like a little volcano.

CHAPTER IV.

One afternoon Margaret and Kate were in their mother's room, trying on some new dresses which had been bought and placed in the dressmaker's hands before the morning on which that fatal letter had arrived, but which, owing to Miss Smith's unpunctuality, had not been sent home until this day.

They were in the midst of a consultation as to whether there was any need of alteration, when Hugh suddenly rushed in, and flung himself into his mother's arms in a burst of grief.

"Mamma, mamma!" he sobbed, "Toadie's dead; I found him out in the garden in the corner where he always used to live, and he's quite dead, mamma, quite dead! What will Bertie say? He was so fond of him; and I believe Toadie died of grief because he'd gone away!" and, opening his little pocket-handkerchief, he displayed to view the body of his little brother's favourite lying cold and stiff.

Margaret and Kate started back with exclamations of horror.

"How *can* you bring that nasty thing into the house! It's bad enough to see you pick it up out of doors, but to bring it into a bed-room!"

"Why shouldn't I? and you shan't call Toadie a nasty thing. He's a great deal prettier than either of you, and I love him ever so much more too!" exclaimed Hugh, passionately, their words and tones jarring upon him in his grief, until he scarcely knew what he said.

"Hush, hush, Hugh!" came from Mrs. Lester; but it was disregarded by the boy, who, looking up indignantly and angrily at his sisters, suddenly perceived their gay attire.

With the tears still standing in great drops upon his cheeks, he ceased his sobs for the moment, and broke off with the words, "What's that you've got on?"

"Our new frocks that have just come home," returned Kate.

"New frocks! Mamma, have they been having new frocks?"

"Yes, dear."

"Then you are unkind, greedy things!" he went on, impetuously, turning to the girls with flashing eyes. "Spending mamma's money when she hasn't got enough to buy clothes for Bertie, and so has to send him away, and yet you go and have lots of finery. It's a great shame, and you're very unkind, and I don't believe you care for Bertie a bit, or you'd go about in rags so that he might stop at home!"

Mrs. Lester had said "Hush, Hugh!" more than once, but he did not even hear her, as he stood there pouring out his angry words, with his cheek flushed crimson by the intensity of the feelings working in his mind.

"You don't understand anything about it," was all the answer Margaret vouchsafed, as she turned from him with a dignified air.

That contempt of his grief, that coldness and indifference, proved just the drop too much in the little heart already overcharged with sorrow and



"Everything seemed to grow dark about him."—*p.* 56.

indignation; and when Margaret, suddenly stooping, picked up the handkerchief which he had let fall to the ground, and, before he could stop her, flung the toad out of window, his feelings proved too much for him. All self-control was gone, and, with upraised fist, he threw himself upon her, dealing blow after blow, as he cried in passionate tones, "How dare you touch our toad! How dare you go and throw it out of window! You're very cruel and unkind, and you don't love Bertie a bit, or you wouldn't treat his toad like that! And I don't love you a bit, and I never shall!"

His mother's hand, laid upon his shoulder, checked him, and helped to bring him to his senses.

"Hugh, I am ashamed of you. How can you think of behaving in such a manner to your sister!"

His head drooped, but still he murmured, "She'd no business to touch our Toadie."

"Perhaps she needn't have thrown it out of window; but, my boy, nothing could excuse your

behaving as you did. Leave the room now; go and think it over until you feel sorry for it, and then come back and say so, and beg Margaret's pardon."

Hugh rushed away, bursting with grief and angry feelings. No tears came, but deep sobs heaved his breast, as he ran down-stairs and out into the garden, to search underneath his mother's bed-room window for the body of his little brother's plaything and favourite.

He found it at last; and, picking it up, made off with it into a retired part of the garden, where, plunging in amongst the laurel-bushes, he threw himself down on the ground, still sobbing, and stroking the cold inanimate body of the creature, which, if repulsive in the eyes of others, was beautiful in his, as having once belonged to Bertie.

After a time he rose, and taking up a stout pointed stick lying near, he began to dig a hole with it, scooping away the earth until there was room in it for Toadie, when he laid him gently in his little grave, and covered him over with the loose earth.

That done, he again sank down on the ground, and buried his little face in his hands.

He had been naughty, and was conscious of it; but he still felt angry and resentful towards his sister. He wanted his mother's forgiveness, but he felt he could not yet go and ask for Margaret's pardon.

How sorely he longed at that moment for the little brother who would have come to him and shared the disgrace with him, and, throwing his arms around him would have said, "If you'll go and tell Margaret you are sorry, I'll go with you, and then you won't mind so much. Let us do it at once Hughie, and then our play will be nicer afterwards."

But now he seemed to have no one to help him; and very miserable he felt.

After he had sat there for a time, however, he heard his mother's voice calling him. He rose to go to her, hanging his head, for he knew how naughty he had been, and half expected some punishment was in store for him.

But Mrs. Lester could feel for and with her little boy; and as she seated herself under the walnut-tree, and took him on her lap, her face was so tender yet sorrowful, that the proud little heart was subdued, and he sobbed out, "I'm very sorry, mamma; indeed, I'm very sorry!"

Such convulsive sobs shook the child's frame, that Mrs. Lester longed to soothe him by saying they would forget all that had happened; but she felt this was the time for pointing out to him how wrongly he had acted, and therefore she replied, "I knew you would be sorry, darling, for it was so very very naughty to behave as you did!"

"But, mamma, I loved Toadie so, because Bertie did; and it was very unkind of Margaret; don't you think it was?"

"I don't think she meant it, dear; she didn't know you would take it so much to heart. So you must go, my boy, and make friends with her again."

"But I'm still angry with her, so how can I go and say I'm sorry? I'm sorry to have vexed you, mamma; but I don't feel as if I loved her a bit."

"It grieves me very much, Hugh, to hear you say so. There should be nothing but love in a little boy's heart."

"I love you, mamma, and Bertie."

"But I'm afraid you don't love Him who gave you mamma and Bertie, or you would not like to vex Him. When you think of His kindness in giving you such a sweet little brother, can you help longing to please Him in return?"

"I do love Him, mamma," whispered the child.

"Then, darling, have you forgotten what I have so often told you, that His little followers must be like Him; must be meek, and gentle, and loving?"

"I'll try," again whispered Hugh.

"Ask Him to help you, my boy; for you cannot do it of yourself. And you must ask Him to forgive you too; for you have grieved Him very much, Hughie."

Again the little face was buried in her shoulder, as the little fellow sobbed out his sorrow.

When next he spoke, it was to say, "It seems so much harder to be good without Bertie; I'm so miserable without him."

"And yet, dear, you are still at home, and have still got mamma and papa with you, and so are better off in that way than poor Bertie, for he is away from all. And yet Aunt Mary says he is so good; not naughty and passionate directly anything is done he doesn't like."

Mrs. Lester little guessed the effect her words would produce. She had spoken them hoping to make Hugh see how much was still left to him which ought to make him happy and contented; but they acted differently.

At that moment they were interrupted by a servant, who came to inform her mistress that there were visitors in the drawing-room awaiting her.

Consequently she was obliged to go to the house, leaving Hugh, who remained for a while after her departure lying upon the grass, with a thoughtful look upon his young face. He was sorry for his conduct now; the tender little heart was melted, and he began to long for a reconciliation with his sister.

So he got up to go in search of her, and found her in her own little garden, watering her flowers.

He made such an humble apology, and looked such a lovable little fellow with that penitent, sorrowful expression in his face, that Margaret gave him a warmer kiss than usual, and even went the length of saying that she was sorry for what she had done.

He remained watching her for a few moments, until the watering can was emptied, and then offered to go and fill it. Margaret was glad to be saved the trouble; and Hugh ran off, feeling his heart already lighter.

When he came back to her, he further proposed pulling up the weeds that he saw springing up. His sister graciously thanked him, saying she should be very glad, as it was a thing she always disliked doing; and taking up her book she sat down on a shady seat near, to keep an eye upon his operations.

But she soon forgot him, and read on, until she suddenly found him standing before her with one ripe strawberry lying upon a leaf in his hand.

"For you, Margaret. I've picked it for you. It's the only one in my garden," said the boy.

"But don't you want it yourself?"

"No, I've brought it for you. Isn't it a beauty?"

"Yes, it's very nice and ripe. Thank you for it; but I think you ought to have had it yourself."

"And I do love you, Margaret; I was naughty and angry when I said I didn't just now."

And then Hugh ran off, whilst Margaret went on with her reading, after saying to herself, "He's not such a bad little fellow after all."

But she did not know how costly in the boy's eyes had been that little peace-offering of his; nor how he had cherished and watched over that one strawberry, which was to have been eaten by no one but Bertie, and which he had intended sending up to London, after he had consulted his mamma about it. But now he said to himself, he would give that up to show Margaret that he loved her; for he had nothing else to offer except a few marbles, and he knew she would not care for those.

CHAPTER V.

Hugh's mind now reverted to Bertie, and the picture his mamma's few words had conjured up. His little brother was more unhappy than himself, for he was away from them all! and he began to wonder however *he* should bear it if he were to be sent away from his mother.

How Bertie must want some one to comfort him! and how he longed to go and do it! Besides, his brother must need some one to defend him from Uncle Henry, for very likely he treated his captive unkindly sometimes; and Bertie had always come to him for protection in difficulties, because he was stronger and bigger.

"I *must* go to him," he said to himself.

He would have liked to have got into his perch in the walnut-tree to think the matter over, as that was a place favourable to meditation; but he would not do that, lest his knickerbockers should suffer. So he flung himself down on the soft turf, lying on his back, with his legs elevated until his little feet rested upon the rustic bench, whilst he pulled some leaves and daisies to pieces with the fingers that never could keep still for very long, meanwhile turning over in his mind what could be done about Bertie. That he must not be left in his lonely unprotected state was certain.

His mamma had been in the habit of sometimes telling them tales from history to amuse them, whilst she sat at her work, and one day had related the story of the imprisonment of Francis I., King of France, by Charles V. How he had been kept languishing in confinement at Madrid; how his devoted sister Margaret had come all the way from France to visit him; and how he had, at length, obtained his freedom only by consenting that his two little sons should take his place, as hostages.

He had always thought how glad he was that Francis was not *his* father; for it seemed so unkind of him to let his two little children be sent away from their home to be kept in Spain, when he himself could not bear being there. But now it seemed to him that Bertie was something—not altogether, of course, but something—like those little boys.

He had been sent away from home, not to prison exactly, it was true; but in one way he was even worse off than they were, for he was *alone*.

But if he could be with him it would be more bearable for him. Then he would go to him; he would do like Margaret did, and visit his brother.

He had arrived at that conclusion when he was called in to tea, which was earlier than usual that afternoon.

Directly the meal was over, Hugh slipped out of the house, prepared to put his plan into execution.

He knew the London road, having often walked or driven along it; so, of course he said to himself, he had nothing to do but to follow it, and he would get there all right. That was plain enough.

Moreover, he had a good long evening before him; and even if he should not get there that night, he had some money in his pocket to pay for anything that he might want—the twopence he had received on Saturday, and had kept to be used in some way for Bertie, and another penny which his papa had given him the day before for pulling up weeds in the garden.

That would surely take him a long way; and when that was gone, he could do like boys he had read of in stories, and beg his way. He wouldn't mind doing that for Bertie's sake; and he felt little doubt of meeting with some kind old woman, like those in books, who, touched by his story, would help him, and bring him to his brother.

And then, how astonished and delighted Bertie would be to see him! and how nice it would be to give each other a good hug once more!

The thought quickened his steps, and made him forget everything save the joy of again seeing Bertie.

His path led through fields and lanes for about two miles, until the first village on the road was reached; and after that he supposed he must keep to the highway. But he knew his way perfectly as

far as the village, as it had always been a favourite walk of the children's.

And so the little feet went briskly forward, the young face glowing with excitement and the newly-kindled hope, and the whole figure expanding with a sense of independence and importance.

At length he had nearly reached Ford. He was crossing the last field but one, when, looking round, he suddenly perceived, in the further corner, several cows of formidable appearance, with great horns and nerce faces.

Now, it must be owned that Hugh was something of a coward where cows were concerned; and, therefore, on discovering his neighbours, he quickened his pace, devoutly hoping that he should be able to reach the gate without their noticing him. But to his horror he saw one or two of them raise their heads, take a good look at him, and advance towards him.

His heart beat fast, as he walked still more quickly, having been told that he ought never to run under such circumstances. But when, on again looking round, he saw one of his enemies tossing his head, and coming after him in a threatening manner, it was all up with him. Every vestige of self-control was gone, and, with screams of affright, he made a rush for the gate, running as he had never run in his life before.

The gate was a five-barred one, which generally stood a little open, so that people could pass through; but now, the cows being in the field, it was fastened, and poor Hugh saw at a glance that he must climb it.

He was fond of climbing in a general way, but not when pursued by cows. However, there was no other course.

With his little limbs trembling and quaking with fright, he clambered up as best he could, all power seeming to be almost gone from him, as he fancied he heard the cow close upon him.

If he could only get to the other side all would be well; the cows could not climb the gate after him. But unfortunately, in his haste and agitation, he caught his foot in the top bar, and fell head-foremost to the ground.

Everything seemed to grow dark about him; cows, fields, and gates, all vanished from his memory, as he lay unconscious upon the hard earth, with the blood slowly trickling from a cut in his forehead.

CHAPTER VI.

Bertie, meantime, was pining for home, and all the dear ones there; but more especially for his mother and brother.

All the sights and grand doings of London awoke but a languid interest in him, because Hugh was not there to share it with him.

He had never been away from him before; never played a game, and scarcely thought a thought, without his brother; and now to be cast upon his own resources seemed very, very lonely. His longing for his little brother and playfellow was so intense, that all the kindness and love his aunt lavished upon him could not satisfy him. He moped and drooped; became more and more gentle and passive and affectionate to those around him, but his cheek lost its roundness, and his eye its brightness; whilst the sound of his voice in merry laughter, which had so charmed the ears of Mrs. Norham in the old garden at Eastdean, was never heard about the house. A sort of wistful half-sad smile was the best he could produce in return for his aunt's efforts to amuse him.

Captain Norham had taken him to the Zoological Gardens, and certainly that would have been delightful if Hugh had been there. But when he saw two young leopards playing together, half fighting, half caressing one another, he thought how he should like to be rolling with Hugh on the lawn at home, or down the steep grassy slopes of the town walls, where they used to get such bumps and bruises, and laugh till they could laugh no more. And his eyes filled with tears, as he watched the two young animals tumbling over one another, knocking each other down, and then picking themselves up again.

Some of the best toy-shops were visited, and he was allowed to choose what he would like for himself.

His choice fell upon the things he thought Hugh would like best; and when he found himself the possessor of a splendid set of soldiers, with cannon that went upon wheels; and besides that, a drum that was most gorgeous-looking, and could be strapped round him as if he were a regular drummer-boy, he could scarcely believe that these magnificent things, so far above anything he had ever called his own, were for him, and he thanked his uncle and aunt warmly.

But even at that moment he gave a little half-stifled sigh at the remembrance of the merry games at home, when a stick or a stone, a penny whip, or a few marbles, had been enough to satisfy the little hearts that were so rich and happy in each other's love.

The only consolation was that all these things should be Hugh's some day: he would take care of them for him until he saw him again at Christmas.

And the same with all the dainties at table—the cake, or preserved fruits, or sweet biscuits, of which they were both so fond. Unnoticed, as he thought, he would slip them into his pockets instead of eating them, and then take them up-stairs, to stow away in his little box for Hugh, not remembering that they might get stale and unfit to eat before they again met, but only feeling that he could not enjoy anything unless Hugh could share in it.

"I'm beginning to be afraid our experiment will not succeed," remarked Mrs. Norham to her husband, one evening after the child had gone to bed. "I'm afraid the little fellow will never learn to be happy here."

"Oh, time will work wonders," returned the



"Two little figures knelt at the mother's lap."—p. 60.

captain. "He hasn't been here long enough to get accustomed to the change; but he is such an affectionate boy that you will soon win his heart, and then he will be happy."

"I wish it might be so; for I have grown so fond of him that I could not bear to part with him. He is the dearest sweetest little fellow I ever knew. But now I see how bound up he is in Hugh, I begin to fear we have all made a mistake in separating the two."

But to return to Eastdean. When Hugh's bedtime arrived he was called, as usual. Finding he did not come at the summons, though it was repeated again and again, search was made for him, it being supposed that he was hiding somewhere for mischief. But when every corner had been explored, some alarm began to be felt, and Mrs. Lester could not rest until she had dispatched one in one direction, another in another, to look for the child.

But all returned unsuccessful, and had to go forth

again to make further inquiries. Soon nearly all Eastdean had heard the news of the child's being missing, and many were the kind hearts that came forward to offer to aid in the search, for almost every one in that small place knew and had a kindly feeling for the merry loving little brothers. They had been sorry to miss Bertie's sunny face, but now, to lose Hugh as well!——

And so, with hearts that grew more anxious as the minutes went by and no traces of him were found, the search was pursued, until a little straw hat was seen by some one floating on the river. It was drawn in, and Mr. Lester gave a groan as they brought it to him.

"Take care your mother doesn't hear a word of this!" he said, turning to Margaret, who had followed him a little way down the lane, outside the garden gate. "Go back, and keep this from her. It's very like his," he murmured, "but still there are plenty of children who have straw hats very similar. It cannot be my little Hugh's! I will not believe or think it!" and he turned away to hunt in another direction.

Margaret returned to the house to keep guard over her mother, lest that dreadful suspicion respecting the hat should reach her ears. And so they sat on in the drawing-room, where Mr. Lester had begged his wife to remain; though she could not long keep her seat, but rose and paced the room in her anxiety, whilst Kate sat on the floor in the window, sobbing.

Margaret, roused out of her usual selfishness into taking thought for others, tried to appear calm, and to speak hopeful words; but as her thoughts dwelt upon the occurrences of that afternoon, on Hugh's penitence for his burst of temper, and the loving reconciliation which had followed, her heart ached, and she hated herself for having been the cause, as she now saw she had been, though, perhaps, not intentionally, of the little fellow's trouble. And as she again seemed to see him standing before her, holding out his gift of the one strawberry, she said to herself, "Oh, if anything happens to Hugh—if he's drowned—what shall I do! I shall never, never forgive myself for having been so impatient with him whenever he did anything I didn't like. I wonder he loves me at all! and yet he said he did. Oh, how glad I am he said he did! though I don't deserve it. But if he comes back, I will never be so unkind again; I will try always to be patient and loving to him."

The room grew dark, but still they did not speak of lighting up, preferring to try and ignore how time was passing, and how late it was really getting. Besides, in this dim light, they could not so well read the anxiety upon each other's faces.

Meanwhile Hugh, after lying long unconscious, had at length opened his eyes, and, looking around him, had not been able to make out for a long time where he was, or how he had come there.

Twilight was already beginning to give place to night; but it was still warm and pleasant, and the child lay still for a while, feeling too tired to care to move, or rouse himself out of that dreamy state.

But at length he suddenly heard a cow lowing very near to him. With a violent start he sprang to his feet, and then, uttering a cry of pain, sank down on the ground again.

He saw that he was on the right side of the gate—that his enemies the cows were safely shut off from him; but still it was not pleasant to see the fiercest looking of them gazing at him through the bars. It sent an uncomfortable feeling through him, and made him wish to put a greater distance between them.

So once more he got up, and tried to walk; but the pain it cost him was so great that he could not bear it, and, sinking down again on the ground, he buried his face in his hands and sobbed aloud.

He felt very forlorn and desolate in his present situation; besides, how was he to get to London if he could not walk a step? and what would become of him if he had to spend the night out in that field?

It was already growing dark, and he was so tired! and those cows might perhaps get through some gap in the hedge and find him out. All the romance of the great things he was going to do for Bertie had vanished; his heroism was gone; he could only for the present look upon the actual state of things, and heartily wished himself back in his little bed at home, with his mother stooping over him to kiss him. And as he thought of her, a misgiving for the first time shot through his heart, that perhaps she might not approve of the course he had taken.

It made him sob all the more, as his longing for her increased with the growing pain and darkness; and when, feeling his forehead uncomfortable, he put up his hand to it, and found traces of blood upon it, he began to wonder what he could have done to himself, and whether he should die, left out there all night, and never see his mamma, or Bertie, or his papa, or any of them again.

He thought at this moment of Margaret and Kate with softened feelings, and sorrowfully remembered the scene of the afternoon.

"What a naughty boy I was! and now perhaps I shall never see her again to ask her once more to forgive me! But I'm glad I gave her that strawberry!"

Such were the sad musings of the tender little heart.

At last it occurred to him that it was so dark it must be long past bed-time, and he had not said his evening prayers. He could not say them at his mamma's lap to-night, and he sobbed at the thought; but he got upon his knees, and clasping his little hands together, and shutting up his eyes, he went reverently through his usual simple petitions. And then he further asked that "he might be brought

home again somehow—that somebody might come to look for him."

For a few moments the sense of loneliness was gone, as he felt his Father in heaven was near him, watching over him. And again he added, "Please make me and Bertie good boys, and let us *both* come home again to mamma."

He did not feel so afraid of the cows now, but he still sat murmuring, "Oh, mamma, mamma!" when a sound suddenly broke upon his ears, which sent a thrill of delight through him. It was his father's voice.

"Papa, papa, I'm here!" he screamed, joyfully; and the next moment, to his infinite relief, he was lifted from the ground, and folded in his father's arms.

Mr. Lester was accompanied by one of his neighbours, and in turns they carried the boy back to his home and his anxious mother.

On the way Hugh told his story to his father, confiding to him his plan of going to London to Bertie. But when he heard what alarm and anxiety he had caused his mother and all of them, he was very penitent; and when, on reaching the house, Mrs. Lester took him in her arms, unable to speak for the deep feelings of thankfulness which filled her heart to overflowing, he sobbed out, "Please forgive me, mamma, I'm *very* sorry; do, please forgive me!"

"Forgive you, my darling!" was all she could say, as she folded the boy in a long close embrace, which told better than words could have done how completely joy at his recovery had swallowed up all other feelings.

But his pale looks, the cut on his forehead, and the injured foot, aroused her fears, and made her send off for the doctor to examine into the state of his hurts, whilst she herself put him to bed, Hugh meanwhile trying to reassure her by saying, "I'm not much hurt, mamma; you needn't be afraid, for now I'm at home again I feel all right."

The tears stood in her eyes as she heard of Hugh's scheme and self-devotion on his brother's behalf.

"But," she said, after a while, "had you no thought for mamma, and what she would feel to find *both* her little boys gone from her, not even knowing where you were, or what had become of you?"

Hugh humbly owned that he had not thought of that—that he had been too full of Bertie just then.

"But, oh, mamma, I did so long for you when I was sitting out all that time in the field alone, and it was getting dark. I wanted you so badly!"

And the mother once more pressed him to her, feeling she could not utter a word of blame for his thoughtlessness, when it had arisen from such deep love for his brother.

The doctor came, and pronounced the wound on the forehead to be of no serious consequence; but the foot was badly sprained by the twist it had received in falling from the gate.

So for a few days the boy had to be a prisoner to the sofa, except when his father carried him out in the garden, and laid him down under the walnut-tree, where his mamma sat working or reading, but always ready to put down work or book to talk to her little son.

Margaret and Kate, too, were kinder than formerly. Those few miserable hours of suspense, during which the search for Hugh was going on, and they thought that perhaps they might never see him again, were not forgotten by them. And when their mother, seizing upon a favourable moment, had dwelt upon the boy's unselfish love and devotion, an uncomfortable sense of their own selfishness had fastened upon them. For they were forced to own to themselves that because the little fellows, in their boyish love of fun and mischief, had often interrupted them in their more quiet pursuits, they had grown annoyed with them, and got into the habit of looking upon them as "plagues," as they expressed it. And so they had repelled and kept them at a distance, instead of sometimes putting aside their own likings and interests to enter into theirs, by doing which they would have drawn out towards themselves a larger measure of the love that dwelt in those two warm little hearts.

They began to see all this now, and to be sorry for it. So, instead of saying to each other, as they had often done, "Mamma completely spoils the boys," they were now too glad to have Hugh back safe and sound, to grudge him the affection lavished upon him.

"We'll try and never be cross or impatient with them again, won't we?" said Margaret, as they were preparing for bed that evening.

"Yes," echoed Kate, "we'll try; for it was so miserable that night we thought we had lost Hugh, to remember all the unkind things I had said to him when he provoked me."

CHAPTER VII.

HUGH'S restless nature would not allow of his long keeping still, and accordingly, as the sprained foot could not yet be used, he took to hopping about on the other, thereby making his mamma nervous, lest, by putting so much strain upon it, he should sprain that one too. But she kept her fears to herself, for she knew how irksome it must be for him to remain long quiet in one place. Therefore he hopped out at breakfast-time to meet the postman, and came back with a letter in his hand.

"Only one, mamma," he said, as he handed it to her, unconscious that that one letter contained a world of joy for him.

Mrs. Lester's eyes grew so wondrously soft and bright as she glanced over it, that even Hugh noticed the change, and cried, "What is it, mamma?"

"You'll never guess. Bertie is coming home!"

"Bertie coming home!" Hugh gave a scream of

intensest joy, and, scrambling down from his chair, hid his face in her lap as he sobbed aloud, the sudden and exquisite bliss of that moment making his heart feel so full that he could scarcely bear it. But when he lifted his face, it shone and beamed and sparkled all over with the great happiness, as he hastily said, "Tell me again, please, mamma; tell me when Bertie is coming. Will he be here soon?"

"Yes, darling, to-day."

"Oh, aren't you glad? Papa, aren't you glad? Margaret and Kate, isn't it jolly?" and in the fulness of his joy the little fellow hopped all round, giving to each in turn one of his rough bear-like hugs.

"But, my dear, what is the reason of this sudden change?" inquired Mr. Lester, addressing his wife.

"Henry, you know, has been unwell for several days, and now it proves to be an attack of rheumatic fever. That is generally a long tedious affair, and Mary says she shall be so much taken up with attending to Henry that she should be obliged to leave Bertie to himself more than would be good for him. Besides, she says, he had not been looking well lately; she fears he is pining for home, and not so happy as she wishes to see him, and therefore a little change would do him good. Mr. Brown had just called in to say he was coming down to Eastdean to-day, and offered to take anything, if she wished, to us; and so she decided upon sending Bertie with him. We shall hear again from her to-morrow, she says."

"Hurrah!" shouted Hugh, "Bertie is coming home. Mamma, I can't eat any more breakfast, so may I go out in the garden at once, because I shall have so much to do to make all nice for him?"

Consent being given, the little fellow hopped off, filling the air with his shouts and joyful hurrahs, and scarcely knowing how to contain all the feelings of gladness that were filling his heart.

"Mamma, I think I shall burst with happiness!" he exclaimed, as he caught sight of her an hour afterwards looking out upon him from the drawing-room window with a sweet smile of content upon her face. "I never felt like it in all my life before, and I don't know how to bear it. Oh, to think of having Bertie back again! Hurrah! hurrah!" and he repeated the last word with every conceivable change of voice and tone, shouting it out till the air rang with it, and filling with joyous sounds the old garden which had been silent so long.

And when at length the two little fellows were locked in each other's arms, they felt such deep, pure, intense gladness, as is seldom experienced in this world; perhaps because there are so few who know how to love with such freedom from all taint of selfishness.

No words could describe Bertie's joy and deep delight at being once more at home. So strange and sweet it seemed that it made him almost quiet and subdued—a contrast to Hugh in his boisterous merriment. But no one who felt the lingering clinging clasp of his little arms around their neck, or looked into his open blue eyes, which expressed such depths of peace and content, could doubt that his happiness and joy were as great as they could possibly be.

Tears dimmed the mother's eyes as she watched the pair going about the garden together once more, their arms round each other's necks, and their lips every now and then stretched out to give or receive a kiss.

How fast their little tongues went! How much they had to tell one another! How restless their joy made them! and how unreal it all seemed every now and then! so unreal that they were obliged to give a mutual hug, and go rolling over and over on the turf to make sure that it was not a dream.

Their happiness was without a shadow or cloud: for they were together once more, and that was enough for them. Childlike, they did not cast a thought to partings that would be sure to come in the future, but gave themselves up to the enjoyment of the present moment, and their bliss was perfect.

Then came the unpacking of Bertie's box. One after another the beautiful gifts he had received in London were brought out, each one calling forth a rapturous burst of admiration from Hugh, who had never seen anything so splendid in all Eastdean.

"For you," said Bertie, briefly, as he placed one after another of his toys in Hugh's arms: "all for you."

"But, Bertie, you won't have any left for yourself!" exclaimed the other.

"I don't want any. I've got *you* now, you dear old Hughie, and you are better than all the toys in London!" and for the fiftieth time the little brothers threw their arms around each other, and this time so tightly that they half strangled one another.

At last, from the bottom of the box was produced a paper bag. Bertie seized upon it, explaining that it contained "all sorts of good things which I saved for you from dessert; but, Hugh, I think, if you don't mind, I'll give it to Margaret and Kate, because you've got the other things, and I've nothing else to give them."

"Yes, give it all to them," said Hugh, pushing the bag from him, after he had first looked in, and perceived various tempting biscuits with pink and white sugar on the top, chocolate drops of different shapes and sizes, and other things for which he had a special weakness. "Give it all to them. And d'you know, Bertie, they are a great deal kinder than they used to be, and I think we won't tease them any more like we used to."

Once more two little figures knelt at the mother's lap to say their evening prayers, when a special clause

of thanksgiving was put in by both, that "God had let them be together again;" and once more two little curly heads nestled side by side on the pillow when Mrs. Lester came to pay her nightly visit.

The children were sound asleep, with happy smiles round their lips; and again the mother lingered long, as she had done the last time they lay there together.

Then she had committed her darlings to His keeping, who would, she knew, watch over and shield them, whether she were present or absent; but now she bowed her head in thanksgiving, that once more she had them both beside her.

Soon came another letter from Mrs. Norham, saying that the doctors pronounced London too cold for Captain Norham after India; and were of opinion that he ought, on recovering from his present attack, to go abroad, and winter in the south of France.

So they had come to the conclusion that it would be best to leave Bertie with his mother, though they would not relinquish their claim to consider him as their own little boy, and to be allowed to bear all the expenses of his bringing up, as they had intended. But they would not separate him from his home again; and, perhaps, when they came back from abroad, they might spend part of the summer at Eastdean, if there was a house to be found for them, and there enjoy seeing the two little brothers both together.

And now again the happy days and weeks sped on, during which there were many merry games of play in the garden; many rollings down and scramblings up the steep grassy slopes of the old town walls; until at length winter began to draw on, and the two busy little minds became full of anticipations of Christmas joys and pleasures.

A few days before Christmas there was a glorious snow-storm, which came down softly and silently, clothing all Nature in its mantle of spotless beauty, and lying so thickly upon the boughs of the old apple-trees in the garden, that they seemed to bend beneath its weight.

On the following morning the two boys rushed out of doors directly they were dressed, to enjoy the delights of snow-balling, and came in to breakfast with glowing cheeks and beaming eyes, ready to do full justice to the fare set before them. Then post-time brought a letter from Uncle Henry, with ten shillings for each of them, as well as for Margaret and Kate, with which to buy a Chrismas present for themselves.

Many eager consultations did the two have together on the important question of how to dispose of so much wealth; their little faces even grew grave and anxious over the difficulty of deciding on such weighty matters. One thing they had soon determined upon: to put their money together, and buy a present for *everybody*. But it was the choosing these presents was the great difficulty, especially as they declined taking any one into their confidence.

Endless whisperings and secret councils were held between the two, the result of which was a parcel placed beside each plate on Christmas morning, done up in paper, and labelled, "Mamma, from Hugh and Bertie," "Papa," &c., in the flourishing hand of the good-natured shopman, to whom they had imparted the perplexing fact that they did not know how to address their presents themselves, now they had bought them.

Christmas Day was a very happy time to the two little boys. Their gifts gave universal satisfaction, and they themselves received no "end of them," to use their own expression; whilst the delights of sliding and snow-balling lasted several days, as a frost set in and the snow lay long upon the ground.

Bertie never forgot Aunt Mary and all her kindness to him; whilst Hugh, having forgiven Uncle Henry for all his imaginary offences, the two brothers mutually looked forward to the summer, when Captain and Mrs. Norham were again to pay them a visit; and the latter, on their arrival, found a very warm welcome from two bright eager little boys, who, if possible, were more than ever devoted to one another. And henceforth there was no talk of separating the two.

THE THREEFOLD MESSAGE OF THE ORACLE.

BY THE REV. S. J. STONE, M.A., AUTHOR OF "THE KNIGHT OF INTERCESSION," ETC.

WE say the world is very small,
And, in the chances that befall,
That all are found akin to all:

That every alien, though he roam
Far o'er the hills or o'er the foam,
Some trace or token finds of home:

A sudden word, a simple sign,
And, lo! the land becomes divine,
The sad, sour grapes seem Eshcoline!

The spirit soars as it hath won,
Beyond the cloud-rack drear and dun,
Glimpse of a lost or doubted sun!

And yet the world is very wide,
And men with men walk side by side
Whom leagues of distance yet divide;

And many a heart throbs close to heart,
And sighs and tears together start,
In souls whom depths abysmal part;

And with unsated sympathies
Men look each other in the eyes,
Longing to know, yet never wise.

There is some secret all must keep,
O'er which in solitude they weep,
Nor breathe it when they wake or sleep.

It chanced upon that sacred Eve
Whereon our hearts are wont to weave
With those high truths our souls believe

Such earthly thoughts, in hopes and fears,
In joys or woes, as on our ears
The sweet or melancholy years

Utter in echo from their tomb,
When forms and faces fill the room
Which long have passed into the gloom,

When old delight and old despair
With ghostly presence crowd the air,
And whisper 'mid our praise or prayer—

It chanced on such an Eve, that three
At night beneath the same roof-tree
Their vigil kept in company.

Well-known, and dear as known, were they,
Each man to each: life's parted way
Drew ever to one point this day:

For never fell the holy-tide
But brought together, side by side,
Whom the long months had parted wide.

Glad was their commune, free and full:
The flowers of talk they stooped to cull
Were not too bright and not too dull

For sober calm and kindly jest;
They spoke as men who knew the best
Of mingled energy and rest;

They spake as thinkers speak who know
The tides of time, the ebb and flow
Of the great sea which to and fro

Bears on its breast the nation's ark:
Who for its sake the courses mark
As each for his own slender bark.

Within their eyes keen was the light
As thus they spake: but as the night
Grew from the afternoon, and bright

Glowed on their faces and the room
The Yule-tide fire—dark winter's bloom—
Then did a tenderer light illume

Friend's face from friend's face, and they drew
Closer, as now they spread to view
The ever old and ever new.

Then each for each, one charmèd hour,
Drew forth with resurrection power
Long-perished fruit, long-withered flower,

To precious taste and sight again;
Fuller the joy, and sweet the pain,
As the dead past resumed her reign.

And each man loved his brother well,
And hoped one mournful inner knell
Only on his own hearing fell.

For yet was each man all alone!
And to his secret heart, unknown,
Each made his solitary moan.

Each made, for comfort or in care,
His lamentation, half in prayer
And half in a resigned despair;

Conscious of an abiding pain,
Each mourned. One cried, "*In vain, in vain!*"
One murmured ever and again,

"*Never:*" the other's soul was riven
With that lament beneath all Heaven
Forlornest, bitterest, "*Unforgiven.*"

He cried "*In vain!*" with secret sigh,
Before whose gaze in years gone by—
When, in world-blindness, hope was high

And fears were few—imperial Fame
Had held to view a glorious name:
And now, for all men's praise, in shame

He saw himself an athlete wan
Who still a race unended ran,
Yet knew he was a beaten man.

"*Never!*" mourned he, before whose eyes
Sweet love, ere death had made him wise,
Had opened earthly paradise.

O blessed ignorance! bright morn
Of fair vain hope! O day forlorn,
When wisdom out of death was born!

"Never to see her sweet eyes shine!
To hear her whisper 'I am thine,'
To feel her gentle hands in mine!"

The third—whose cry might most appal,
Wailed at his own soul's funeral—
He was the noblest of them all.

Yet had he sinned in days long dead,
And evermore by board and bed
That sin did rear its living head,

And uttered, as each day began,
As each day closed, its secret ban
Ever, "Thou art a cursed man!"

So rose the three, at length, to part,
And each from each with loving art
Concealed the wound of his own heart;

And, smiling calmly while it bled,
Each to his own drear future sped
Uncounselled and uncomforted.

And each one thought, "The world is old,
Her heart and mine are growing cold,
The death-mists gather fold in fold.

"They dull the joy and dim the truth
Which showed so bravely in our youth,
With chills of failure, loss, and ruth.

"The world and I will soon be dead;
This night of cheer I droop my head
Uncounselled and uncomforted."

Nay; 'twas not so, by Christ's dear grace!
He had His poets in the place,
Whose angels see the Father's face.

The three beneath the starry light,
O'er the crisp snow-track glittering bright,
Passed out a space into the night:

Then parted by the village school,
Where in that hour, by antique rule,
The children sang a song of Yule.

And, ere the parting, on their ears
The strain, unmarked in other years,
Brought the true music of the spheres:

The music of that spheric song
First uttered by the seraph throng,
Which all the ages shall prolong:

The one true music of the Morn,
Waking from night a world forlorn
With God's evangel—"CHRIST IS BORN."

Set to this oracle the strain,
As once upon the Eastern plain,
Flowed softly with its one refrain:

The one refrain of happy yore,
The one refrain for evermore,
To these its holy burden bore.

Waken, waken, Christians all,
Let your incense musical
Greet the morn;
Father, mother, grave and mild,
Children of the Holy Child,
Youth and maiden, glad and gay,
Let your carol crown the day—
CHRIST IS BORN!

Sing as it was sung of yore,
Both the love and glory tell
Of the morn.
Now console and now adore,
Singing Peace for evermore,
Hymning the Emanuel—
So, the chords shall sink and swell!
CHRIST IS BORN!

Unto Adam's sons forlorn,
Sick and weary, sad and worn,
Sing Nowell!
If upon this morning only,
Let the laden and the lonely
Lose the burden and the pain,
Listening your sweet refrain—
CHRIST IS BORN!

Unto God and man Nowell!
Sang the seraph sentinel
Of the morn;
Chanting "Peace," to mortals given,
Chanting "Glory," high in heaven:
Pax in terrâ, and, for aye,
In excelsis Gloria:
CHRIST IS BORN!

Yea, the song shall sink and swell,
Echoing on the oracle
Of the morn!
Carol! to the deepest woe
Let the tender tidings go;
Carol! to the utmost skies
Let the mighty music rise—
CHRIST IS BORN!

They did but hear the old refrain;
But as it sank and swelled again,
It smote their hearts with sudden pain—

The sudden pain of one surprised,
The sudden pain of love despised,
Now in a moment seen and prized.

With such a voice, "Behold! 'tis true;
Have I not spoken, and to you?
And hear ye this as tidings new?"

With pain, and yet with sudden hope,
Which grew in light, and power, and scope,
Till very Heaven began to ope;

Till each one, parting, homeward sped
As one with blessing on his head,
So counselled and so comforted:

Till this one cried, "'Tis not in vain!
There is the crown for toil and pain
In His exceeding glorious gain!"

And one, "I smile despair to scorn!
She sleeps but till the day be born,
Her feet are lying toward the morn!"

And he, the saddest, "Even so,
His love came down, and came so low,
He will not leave me to my woe!"

And each one thought, "The world is young,
And her true life hath found a tongue
In song, the sweetest ever sung.

"Her heart and mine, once dimmed and sad,
Divine apocalypse have had,
And are with hope immortal glad.

"Nor death is ours, nor life forlorn;
Our eyes await the living morn
That shall not tarry—CHRIST IS BORN!"

CHRIST IS BORN!

Words by the Rev. S. J. Stone, M.A. *Music by* John Stainer, M.A., Mus. D.



* For succeeding verses see page 63.